

## Moderating Effect of Entrepreneurial Training on the Relationship between Government Intervention and Entrepreneurial Intentions of the Retiring Military Personnel in Nigeria

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**ABSTRACT:** This paper reveals how entrepreneurial training moderate on the relationship between government intervention and entrepreneurial intentions of the retiring military personnel in Nigeria. The government intervention has been identified to have a positive impact on the entrepreneurial intentions and when positioning entrepreneurial training as the moderator, act as the potential enhancement of the individual towards entrepreneurial intention, speeding up the dire need for the government to provide a better enabling environment would stimulate the retiring military personnel towards becoming entrepreneur upon retirement. A sample of 423 respondents of the retiring military personnel on the pre-retirement entrepreneurial and vocational training at the Nigerian Armed Forces Resettlement Centre, Oshodi, Lagos was identified to test the proposed hypotheses and the results show that the research framework holds in explaining the entrepreneurial training has a direct positive moderating effect on the relationship between government intervention and entrepreneurial intention. It shows that there is a need for the Nigerian government to hold to the current intervention or improve the intervention so that the current intention level can be maintained and furthermore, create a better enabling business environment and ensuring the provision of specific entrepreneurial skills training that impacts specific knowledge and skills needed to succeed as entrepreneur upon retirement. It is also concluded that the entrepreneurial training can stimulate the individual retiring military personnel towards entrepreneurial intention, who later become entrepreneurs.

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurship; entrepreneurial training, government intervention; older entrepreneur; retirement.

### 1. Introduction

Entrepreneurship has received tremendous attention in recent years among nations, academics and economic development practitioners (Minai, Uddin & Ibrahim 2014; Shane, 2012; Muller, 2011). According to Kuratko (2005), the attention has accelerated in the mid 1990s with intervention makers began to explicitly recognize the importance of entrepreneurship and making general efforts about their commitment to increasing entrepreneurship in their countries. Ahmad and Huffman (2007) supported the fact claiming that many countries and international organizations develop policies to improve the entrepreneurial environment through directly targeted actions such as subsidies or by removing obstacles that impede entrepreneurial activities.

The role of governments in any country is to foster environments that will create and sustain a continuous supply of new entrepreneurs as well as create the conditions that will enable them to be successful in their efforts to start and grow the business venture. Entrepreneurship is a system that involves the entrepreneurs (and potential entrepreneurs), institutions and government actions, therefore, the desired government policy

outcome is an increased level of entrepreneurial activity (Lundstrom & Stevenson, 2005).

Retirement is a natural process of self-renewal and a process of disorientation and reorientation that marks the individual turning point in the path of growth is a natural process of self-renewal and a process of disorientation and reorientation that marks the individual turning point in the path of growth, therefore, like any transition, retirement must be seen in the context of people life's journey (Force, 2010). Moreover, retirement is an abrupt and complete discontinuation from paid employment of people in later life (van Solinge, 2014). Studies have shown that self-employment increases substantially later in life after retirement, partly because of the growing personal, social, and economic needs of the retired individual ((Kautonen, Tornikoski, & Kibler, 2011) and in addition, self-employment provides retired individual with opportunities and flexibility not found in paid employments Cahill, Giandrea & Quinn, 2013). The retiring military personnel, upon retirement, are still at the productive age and they can still able to contribute significantly to the economy and development of their country (Smaliukiene, 2013).

The policies on entrepreneurship development of the retiring military personnel require specific entrepreneurial skills development programmes that would utilize the individual competencies, specific knowledge, and skills needed within a business environment, to create a conditional atmosphere for the successful reintegration of retiring military personnel into civilian life (Smaliukiene, 2013). Furthermore, Hantman and Gimmon (2014) views that studies suggest that individuals who have found a sense of meaning in life doing something tend to enjoy better physical health and experience fewer symptoms of depression than the people who have not been able to derive a sense that their lives have meaning at old age, therefore, entrepreneurship can help not only to keep individual active, but also contribute to the accomplishment of those ideas that the individual could not pursue in earlier age, thus, the older and retired individuals with a stronger sense of meaning also tend to be happier and report higher levels of satisfaction with their lives being entrepreneur. Using the motivational theory of expectancy (Vroom, 1964) in explaining these phenomena, Hse, Shinnar, and Powell (2014) view that training the people with the art of entrepreneurship to build necessary knowledge, skills and competence to perform as an entrepreneur, motivates the individual intention towards becoming an entrepreneur.

## 2. Theoretical framework

Further, Gomezeij and Kusce (2013) argued that entrepreneurship is an involving activity that includes exploitation or creation of opportunities. Minai (2015) suggests entrepreneurs as people who can recognize the opportunity, grab the opportunity and gain something from such an opportunity. Yusuf (2014) views entrepreneurial-minded individuals exploit business opportunities to create new products, generate employment, and services to improve the quality of life of the people. Minai, Ibrahim and Kheng (2012) believe that entrepreneurship play important roles in the economic development of all countries and Rasli (2013) claim that entrepreneurship has a positive effect on the economic growth and as a strong force towards economic development.

Vidal-Sune and Lopez-Paniselo (2013) recognised the importance of government intervention in enhancing the entrepreneurial intention through government facilitation of identification of business opportunities; programme of subsidies and financial aid; providing information and advice; and entrepreneurial training programmes. The Nigerian government has recognized the importance of fostering an enabling entrepreneurial environment in the creation of job and for the growth of small businesses (Lucky & Minai, 2012). The poor state of the country economically, for a long period, has triggered for the high number of graduates and youth unemployment.

Chukwuemeka (2011) view that in the realisation of the magnitude of the unemployment phenomenon in Nigeria, necessitate that the government must embark on the programmes and policies aiming to reduce unemployment in the individuals, especially older and retired individuals, by allowing them to acquire necessary skills and resources to start new businesses.

Introducing entrepreneurial policy measure allows more individual to move through the entrepreneurial process, which begins with the creation of entrepreneurship awareness as a viable career option and continues through to the early stages of survival and growth of a business (Lundstrom & Stevenson, 2005). The government should come out with policies with the objective aiming at consolidating and strengthening the enabling entrepreneurial environment for all sectors for enhancing the entrepreneurial intention. Levie, Hart, & Anyadike-Danes (2009b) suggest that the policies on promoting cohesive entrepreneurial environments and its related ease of financing are an important element in nurturing more entrepreneurs. Lundstrom and Stevenson (2005) views that entrepreneurship policy is about positively influencing the environment in favour of entrepreneurship, they asserts that, the entrepreneurial policy aims to stimulate higher levels of entrepreneurial culture by influencing more individual towards becoming a new entrepreneur.

Studies have defined older aged entrepreneurs as being aged 50 and above when setting up their business, this age has attracts the government policy recognition (Kibler, Wainwright, Kautonen & Blackburn, 2011, January). The expansion of entrepreneurship for older people could reduce the old-age dependency ratio on the working population and government expenditures; considerable benefit to the economy; and development of business opportunities beyond 'retirement' may assist individuals financially (Hantman & Gimmon, 2014, Kibler, et al., 20001, January).

The theory of expectancy theory provides a framework for understanding why and how individual choose to be entrepreneurs. Kibler, Wainwright, Kautonen and Blackburn (2015) observes that older people appear less willing to start a self-business that does not provide immediate returns, they argue that, as individual aged, people are less keen to engage in activities that do not provide the prospect of immediate returns. However, Shaver, Murdaya, and Frailey (2001) assert that the people who beliefs in their entrepreneurial skills and abilities are motivated to put forth the necessary effort. Hsu, et al. (2014) assert that expectancy is the belief that putting forth significant effort by the people will lead to high performance, invariably leads to high expectation,

and therefore, high expectancy is likely to motivate individuals to engage in specific behaviors.

Within the context of the military personnel, the government intervention in the form of financial and technical support is hypothesized to make a measurable difference for their entrepreneurial intention. The presence of 'soft factors' such as providing vocational and entrepreneurial training to the individuals and encouraging banks to partner with the individuals or group towards entrepreneurship development, shall ignite, develops and nurtures their entrepreneurial intention, characteristics and motivation and development. Goetz et al. (2010) view that such government intervention influences the ventures' startup activities, especially through entrepreneurship development. However, the pursuit and development of these policies that affect and benefit entrepreneurs are still hampered by the empirical information relating to these factors and benefits (Ahmad & Huffman, 2007).

The importance of entrepreneurial training to promote entrepreneurship is undeniable (Muller 2011). Entrepreneurial training helps the individual

to conceptualize the entrepreneurial ideas, updates knowledge, drives opportunity, learning to work in entrepreneurial ways and assist individual inexperienced accumulation (Wang & Chough, 2014). Most studies examine the direct effect of entrepreneurial training on entrepreneurial performance, however, none observes the fact of entrepreneurial training as a moderator to the specific government intervention and the entrepreneurial intention. The entrepreneurial training, as a process aiming at improving the individual entrepreneurial attitudes, skills and competence (Fayolle, et al., 2006), and is supported by the Vroom theory of expectancy, according to Hsu, Sharnah and Powel (2014) relate to the entrepreneurial intention (valence), the desirable outcome for each Nigerian retiring military personnel undergoing a pre-retirement entrepreneurial training programme (Ndibe, Dauda & Abdulazeez, 2013).

In our model, the following research model of understanding the entrepreneurial intention influenced by the government intervention and moderated by entrepreneurial training is given as in the following diagram.

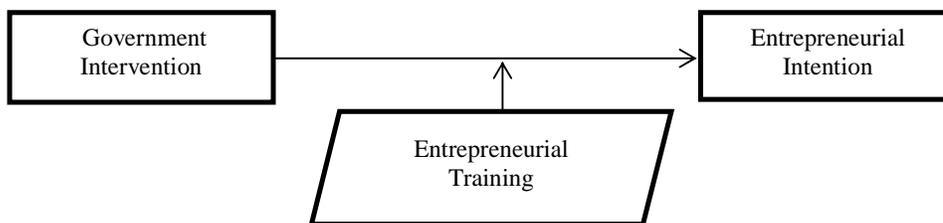


Figure 1 : The Research Framework

Levie and Autio (2008) have also highlighted the importance of government intervention as a key determinant factor in the individual perception of the entrepreneurial opportunity, which is evidenced in the entrepreneurial intention.

The hypotheses formulated and tested are the following.

- H<sub>1</sub>: Government intervention is positively and significantly influences the entrepreneurial intentions of the retiring military personnel in Nigeria.
- H<sub>2</sub>: Entrepreneurial training moderates relationship between government intervention and entrepreneurial intentions of the retiring military personnel in Nigeria.

### 3. Research Methodology

The study collected a total of 443 out 620 samples from the retiring military personnel pursuing a pre-retirement entrepreneurial and vocational training course at the Nigerian Armed Forces Resettlement Centre, Oshodi, Lagos, Nigeria. This research

study adopted the census sampling method (Israel, 2013) as a total of 620 questionnaires was self-administered of which 13 of the 443 collected questionnaires were unusable because a large part of those questionnaires were not completed, thus makes the remaining 430 useable questionnaires available for further analysis.

This research opts for quantitative approach, using structured questionnaire of which five were devoted to demographic factors (gender, age group, experience, military service & area of vocational interest) and a modified questionnaire developed based on Kolvereid, (1996); De Noble et al. (1999); Ahmad and Huffman, (2007) were used for measuring entrepreneurial intention, entrepreneurial training, and government respectively. The scales used to measure the relevant constructs were 7 Likert scales ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

Multicollinearity test to detect a high correlation between tests variables with the increase and standard error coefficient, constructs of the variance inflated factor (VIF) and tolerance value

to detect the multicollinearity problem (Pallant, 2010). The threshold for this study as suggested by Hair, Ringle, and Sarstedt (2011) VIF value should be less than 5 and tolerance value higher than .20. For this study, the VIF values are 1.818 and tolerance values is 0.550 for the independent variables. In the sample, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test was notably high with the value 0.695 and Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant with the p-value value .000, which suggests that the data are suitable for factor analysis (Pallant, 2010).

Using the PLS 2.0, the individual item reliability was assessed through convergent validity by examining the outer loadings of each construct measured (Hair et al., 2012; Hulland, 1999).

Table 1 Hypotheses testing

Hypotheses	Relationship	Std Beta	Std Error	T value	P value	Decision
H1.	Gov Pol -> Ent Int	0.070	0.033	2.102*	0.018	Supported
H2.	Gov Pol * Ent Trg -> Ent Int	0.014	0.165	0.086**	0.466	Not supported

\*p < 0.05; \*\*p < 0.05

The above result shows that the direct relationship hypothesis 1 is fully and significantly supported. At  $\beta = 0.070$ , it shows a significant change in entrepreneurial intention with government intervention and such significant changes cannot be ignored in developing and promoting entrepreneurship in Nigeria.

However, Hypothesis 2 proposed to predict entrepreneurial training to moderate the relationship between government intervention and entrepreneurial intention of the retiring military personnel in Nigeria the result is not significant at a p-value of < 0.05, beta (0.014).

In terms of the total variance being explained by the model, the result shows that research model explains 56% of the total variance in the entrepreneurial intention. This is moderate (Chin, 1998) and value acceptable value (Hair, Black, Babin & Anderson, 2010). Similarly, Duarte and Raposo, (2010) views that the predictive relevance is usually used as a supplementary assessment of goodness-of-fit in partial least squares structural equation modelling, therefore, a cross-validated redundancy measure ( $Q^2$ ) was used to assess the predictive relevance of this research model (Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt 2013). The result shows that study has a predictive relevance ( $Q^2$ ) of 0.319 and according to Henseler, Ringle, and Sinkovics, (2009) a research model with  $Q^2$  statistic (s) greater than zero is considered to have predictive relevance.

The results of this study found a significant and positive relationship as shown in hypothesis (H1) thus, suggesting that government actions and

Following the rule of thumb for retaining items with loadings between .40 and .70 (Hair et al., 2014), it was discovered that out of 14 items, 2 were deleted because they presented loadings below the threshold of 0.40. Therefore, in the model, only 12 items were retained as they had average variance extracted (AVE) loadings between 0.552 and 0.647, while, composite reliability (CR) loadings is between 0.809 and 0.860.

#### 4. Research findings and discussions

The hypotheses tables for the mentioned tests are given as in tables 1 and 2. It is evidenced that these are highly significant results.

policies can promote and foster entrepreneurial activities and entrepreneurial intention of the individuals in a society especially retiring military personnel in Nigeria. Similarly, the result suggests that Government intervention is a key determinant factor in the perception of the individual towards entrepreneurial intention (Edoho, 2015b; Martin et al., 2013; O'Connor 2013; Levie and Autio, 2008).

Though the result shows that the moderating effect of entrepreneurial training on the relationship between government policy and entrepreneurial intention is not supported, the result thus, suggest that entrepreneurial training positively moderate relationship between government intervention, and the entrepreneurial intention of the retiring military personnel in Nigeria suggesting that, despite the non-significant of the relationship, the result suggest that entrepreneurial training is important factor stimulating individual towards entrepreneurship, especially among retiring military personnel. For instance, Edoho (2015a) view that regulation partly accounts for the minimal level of entrepreneurial activities. Similarly, Choo and Wong (2006) views that policymakers should develop a number of programs, in collaboration with a public or private training institute, to prepare the individual with the necessary knowledge, skills and competence needed to start and manage a business in specific business area such as business set up, marketing, venture capital, accounting, legal issues and managing growth.

Hence, the government should create an enabling entrepreneurial environment through intervention

measures that would promote entrepreneurship and enhances the inclination of the individual towards entrepreneurship. Moreover, entrepreneurship training is a set of activities that aim at enhancing individual participant motivation towards entrepreneurial intention.

## 5. Conclusions

The result of our study provides evidence that government intervention through improvement of entrepreneurial climate, the creation of an innovative and creative society that exploits market opportunities fosters entrepreneurial intention. The study suggests that the retiring military personnel need to be reintegrated into the labour market in order to sustain a similar level of well-being for themselves and their families upon retirement. Accordingly, the entrepreneurship training is not only to prepare the retiring military personnel for the new economic activities but to enable them a successful reintegration into civilian life.

The analysis shows that the impact of entrepreneurial training is quite limited in moderating the relationship between government intervention and entrepreneurial intention. In addition, entrepreneurial training has been shown

to be one of the means of enhancing entrepreneurial intention through its influence on the relationship between government intervention and entrepreneurial intention of the retiring military personnel in Nigeria. Promoting older individuals entrepreneurial activities benefits the individual as well as the economy, therefore, policy interventions could be drawn in the area of specific entrepreneurial training programmes that utilizes the retiring military personnel knowledge, competencies and skills needed within a business environment that would assist retiring military personnel upon retirement to become self-employed.

The current study has contributed to management practice in revealing the importance of promoting entrepreneurship as a tool for creating employment for the retiring military personnel upon retirement and the importance of government intervention, as well as entrepreneurial training in promoting entrepreneurship among the retiring military personnel in Nigeria, while, relying on the motivational theory of expectancy. Further, the study uses PLS tool to provide a new framework for comparisons of results obtained from previous studies that used different tools of analysis.

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