


Chapter 11

Military Enterprise and Entrepreneurship: A Case Study of the Nigerian Armed Forces Resettlement Centre

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ABSTRACT

The chapter investigates military enterprise and entrepreneurship through the prism of the Nigerian Armed Forces Resettlement Centre, Lagos. Through a mixed methodology, the chapter unveils innovative schemes and entrepreneurship culture in the centre. However, some tension exists between the military culture and entrepreneurship culture at the centre. Suggestions are offered to improve on the centre's service delivery. Generally, there is a need for NAFRC to further enhance its dynamic collaborative efforts, involve more in skills mapping of both its trainers and trainees, boost its mentoring capacity, and provide employment support through rigorous articulation of the value of retired military personnel to potential employers or funders. It is also suggested that NAFRC should liaise with other relevant stakeholders to support projects that deliver long-term solutions to the challenges faced by the retired military personnel community. The combination of all these activities will enable NAFRC to realise its vision and mission.

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INTRODUCTION

Retirement from the military service into civilian life can be very difficult for ex-Service personnel in many countries, especially in countries struggling with difficult economic conditions like Nigeria. In recognition of the sacrifices made by the military, many countries endeavour to fulfill their moral obligation to their ex-service personnel. The moral obligation is usually articulated in terms of the Armed Forces Covenant (Sparrow, 2008), which is a recognition of the need to develop effective approaches to meeting the social and economic needs of ex-service personnel. Thus, the Armed Forces Covenant represents the assurance of a nation to ensure that those who are serving or who have served in the Armed Forces, and their families, are treated fairly and reasonably resettled in retirement. Resettlement, a term the military uses for the shift back to civilian life, is characterised by a huge amount of significant life changes. Among the series of ways to increase the level of fulfilled resettlement procedure for ex-service personnel in Nigeria is entrepreneurship training for those leaving the Nigerian Armed Forces. Entrepreneurship training and skills acquisition are carried out in the Nigerian Armed Forces Resettlement Centre (NAFRC), Lagos. The Centre's mandate, among other things, is to enable retiring service personnel to integrate into civil society and enjoy post-service life. To actualise this, NAFRC came up with training objectives aimed at helping retirees establish their own businesses and to adequately prepare the retirees for gainful employment after retirement, as well as to prepare them psychologically for resettlement into civil life (Usman, 2011).

Moreover, like any other transition, retirement from the military into entrepreneurship presents some unique challenges. Though there exist some resettlement projects that help in the transition, there is not much analysis of their impact on veteran entrepreneurship. In the end, however, the appraisal of the quality of the intervention programmes can be important to ensure successful entrepreneurial outcomes among veteran entrepreneurs.

Essentially, this chapter seeks to highlight NAFRC activities in promoting veteran entrepreneurship and empowerment schemes for retiring military personnel. Thus, the main question this chapter will focus on is: To what extent is NAFRC fulfilling its mandates? Flowing from this question is a subordinate question: In what ways could NAFRC improve its services? The chapter is arranged into four sections. In section one the literature is reviewed, in section two the conceptual framework is examined. The methodology is laid out in section three, while section four is the finding and analysis. The last section discusses the recommendations and further studies.

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