Vol. 3, No. 03, pp. 157-168

Journal of Organizational and
Human Resource Development Strategies
journal.iistr.org/index.php/OHDS
DOI: 10.56741/IISTR.ohds.002641

Financial and Human Resource Mobilization for Public Entrepreneurship Training

Evidence from Ondo State, Nigeria

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history
Received XX Month 2026
Revised XX Month 2026
Accepted XX Month 2026

ABSTRACT

Entrepreneurship training programmes are widely used in resource-constrained economies to support self-employment and local economic participation, yet programme effectiveness depends on the organizational resources required to deliver training consistently. This study assessed financial and human resource mobilization in the Entrepreneurship Training Programme (ETP) of Ondo State, Nigeria. A descriptive cross-sectional survey involved 90 programme personnel, with five respondents selected from each of the 18 local-government-area centres. Data were collected with a researcher-developed four-point Likert questionnaire and analysed using frequencies, percentages, and item means. The detailed methods section reported a test-retest reliability coefficient of 0.76. After correcting the interpretation of negatively worded items, the financial-resource domain produced a mean of 3.29, indicating generally favourable perceptions of resource adequacy; however, 92.2% of respondents also indicated heavy dependence on government funding. Personnel indicators were similarly positive, with a corrected mean of 3.34 across interpretable items. The findings suggest that the programme has a perceived resource base sufficient for routine operation but remains vulnerable to fiscal concentration and weaknesses in resource governance. Sustainable programme management therefore requires diversified financing, transparent monitoring, competency-based staffing, and stronger links between resource allocation and participant outcomes.

Keywords
Entrepreneurship
Training
Financial Resources
Human Resources
Programme Management
Resource Mobilization

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Introduction

Entrepreneurship training programmes are frequently positioned as instruments for improving employment prospects, income generation, and local economic participation in settings where formal wage employment is insufficient. In Nigeria, this policy logic operates against a difficult socioeconomic background. The 2022 Nigeria Multidimensional Poverty Index estimated that 62.9% of the population—approximately 133 million people—were multidimensionally poor, while Ondo State recorded a substantially lower but still material incidence of 27% [1]. More recent World Bank analysis indicates that macroeconomic stabilization has not yet translated fully into improved living standards and that poverty and food-price pressures remain major policy concerns [2]. Labour-market conditions also remain challenging. The National Bureau of Statistics reported a national unemployment rate of 5.3% in the first quarter of 2024 and a youth unemployment rate of 8.4% under the revised labour-force methodology [3]. At the regional level, the International Labour Organization has continued to emphasize the scale of insecure and informal work among young people in sub-Saharan Africa [4].

These conditions explain why entrepreneurship and skills interventions remain prominent in Nigeria's employment policy landscape. Evidence from Owo Local Government Area in Ondo State suggests that entrepreneurship skill acquisition can support self-employment and local job creation, although financing and implementation constraints limit the reach of such programmes [5]. Earlier Nigerian scholarship similarly argued that entrepreneurship development programmes can operate as short-term employment interventions when labour-market absorption is weak [6], while entrepreneurship education has long been framed as a route to self-employment and sustainable development in higher education [7]. Contemporary evidence, however, is more cautious about assuming that training alone produces durable outcomes. A systematic review of non-formal entrepreneurship training in sub-Saharan Africa found substantial variation in programme design, target groups, evaluation quality, and effectiveness, highlighting the importance of contextualized content, participant selection, and entrepreneurial ecosystems [8]. Nigerian studies also show that experiential pedagogy and out-of-class exposure matter for entrepreneurial outcomes, suggesting that programme quality depends on how resources are converted into learning experiences rather than on the mere existence of training [9].

The same logic applies to the organizational side of programme delivery. Entrepreneurship programmes require financial resources for facilities, materials, trainer remuneration, monitoring, logistics, and participant support, as well as human resources with appropriate technical, pedagogical, and administrative capabilities. Recent African evidence shows that soft-skill development, entrepreneurial processes, and contextual support jointly shape entrepreneurial readiness [10]. Longitudinal Nigerian evidence further indicates that entrepreneurship education can lose effectiveness over time if programme design does not adapt to changing participant profiles and implementation conditions [11]. Experimental evidence from Rwanda shows that well-designed entrepreneurship training can generate short-run behavioural changes, but such effects are tied to the quality and intensity of programme delivery [12]. Broader studies of entrepreneurship education similarly find that different activities produce different outcomes: practical workshops and start-up exposure can be more influential than curricular participation alone [13], while systematic reviews emphasize the diversity of theories, technologies, and learning models used across the field [14]. A recent South African review also identifies institutional support, curriculum design, educator capacity, and experiential exposure as determinants of successful entrepreneurship education [15].

Resource mobilization is therefore not a background administrative issue; it is a core implementation mechanism. Nigerian evidence on non-governmental organizations shows that financial-resource mobilization strategies are associated with organizational sustainability and that dependence on a narrow funding base can create vulnerability [16]. In resource-constrained environments, the way organizations search for, combine, and optimize resources can influence performance [17]. Digitalization has also broadened the channels through which organizations mobilize and govern financial and human resources [18], while comparative organizational research shows that governance arrangements and resource-mobilization choices jointly shape performance [19]. Recent work on education-support organizations likewise finds that diversified resource-mobilization strategies are associated with operational efficiency [20].

Human-resource quality is equally central. Evidence from large organizations indicates that human-resource practices affect performance partly through organizational learning [21], and firm-level research shows that expenditures on human-resource development create value only when investments are appropriately organized and embedded in supporting structures [22]. A recent meta-analysis of 159 studies confirmed a positive association between organizational-level training and organizational performance, while also showing substantial variation by context and training design [23]. Public-sector evidence similarly links structured training programmes with organizational performance [24]. These findings suggest

that assessing an entrepreneurship programme requires attention to both financial capacity and the availability, competence, and commitment of personnel, consistent with the Job Demands-Resources perspective on enabling work resources [25].

The present study examines these issues in the Entrepreneurship Training Programme (ETP) of Ondo State, Nigeria. ETP operates through centres across all 18 Local Government Areas and is intended to provide entrepreneurship training to diverse participant groups. Despite the policy importance of the programme, evidence on its organizational resource base remains limited. Existing discussion has focused more heavily on poverty reduction, unemployment, and entrepreneurship outcomes than on the financial and human resources required to sustain programme delivery. This study therefore focuses on resource adequacy as an implementation condition and distinguishes perceived operational sufficiency from longer-term funding resilience.

The study addresses two questions: (1) To what extent do programme personnel perceive financial resources for the ETP as adequate? and (2) To what extent do programme personnel perceive staffing and human-resource capacity as adequate? The article also considers what the observed resource pattern implies for sustainable management of public entrepreneurship training.

Literature Review

A. Entrepreneurship Training as Human-Capital Development

The rationale for entrepreneurship training is closely aligned with human-capital theory. Training can increase productive knowledge, skills, and capabilities that improve an individual's capacity to generate economic value. Becker's human-capital framework treats education and training as investments whose benefits can be realized through higher productivity and improved economic opportunities [26]. In entrepreneurship research, a meta-analysis of 42 independent samples found positive relationships between entrepreneurship education and training and both entrepreneurship-related human-capital assets and entrepreneurial outcomes, although effect sizes varied considerably across study designs [27]. This variation is important: programme resources matter because training quality, duration, instructional methods, and participant support shape whether investment is translated into capability.

In the Nigerian context, the policy case for entrepreneurship training has historically been linked to youth unemployment and the need to expand self-employment [6], [7]. More recent evidence reinforces this rationale while also showing that experiential learning, soft skills, mentoring, and ecosystem support are essential to programme effectiveness [8]–[15]. The implication is that programme management cannot be evaluated solely by enrolment or the availability of a training centre. Financial and human resources must be sufficient,

appropriately configured, and linked to the actual learning and enterprise-development processes that participants need.

B. Resource Mobilization and Organizational Capability

Resource mobilization concerns the acquisition, allocation, combination, and governance of resources required to pursue organizational goals. Contemporary work shows that organizations in constrained environments may combine optimization, bricolage, partnerships, and digital channels to access critical resources [17]–[20]. For public training programmes, this means that budget allocations, external partnerships, facilities, trainers, administrative personnel, information systems, and monitoring capacity should be considered as an integrated resource portfolio.

The Job Demands-Resources model provides a complementary human-resource perspective. It distinguishes demands that consume effort from resources that enable performance, learning, motivation, and well-being [25]. Although originally developed for employee well-being, the model is relevant to programme management because staffing adequacy, role clarity, competence, and organizational support influence whether personnel can deliver services consistently. Recent evidence on HRM, HRD investment, and organizational training similarly shows that resources generate performance only when they are embedded in coherent management systems [21]–[24].

C. Ondo State Programme Context

The ETP forms part of a longer history of entrepreneurship and economic-empowerment initiatives in Ondo State. The state's economic development strategy identified employment creation, enterprise development, and capacity building as policy priorities [28]. The present study focuses specifically on the operational resource base of ETP centres rather than on participant-level employment effects. This distinction is important because perceived resource adequacy is an implementation condition, not direct evidence that the programme reduces poverty or unemployment.

Material and Methods

A. Research Design, Population, and Sampling

A quantitative descriptive cross-sectional survey design was used. The population comprised personnel working in the Ondo State Entrepreneurship Training Programme. The study covered 18 programme centres corresponding to the 18 Local Government Areas of Ondo State. An equal allocation of five personnel per centre was used, with respondents selected randomly within each centre, producing a total sample of 90. The analysis therefore represents the perceptions of programme personnel and should not be interpreted as a beneficiary survey or a financial audit.

B. Instrument, Validity, and Reliability

Data were collected with a researcher-developed instrument titled "Questionnaire on Level of Resources Mobilization for Effective Management of Entrepreneurship Training Programme of Ondo State, Nigeria." Responses were recorded on a four-point Likert scale: Strongly Agree = 4, Agree = 3, Disagree = 2, and Strongly Disagree = 1. The instrument was reviewed by two experts in Measurement and Evaluation, and test-retest reliability was assessed over a two-week interval. The detailed methodological documentation reports a reliability coefficient of 0.76.

C. Data Processing and Consistency Corrections

Frequencies, percentages, and item means were used to summarize responses. A cut-off of 2.50 was retained for the four-point scale. Because the instrument included both positively and negatively worded items, negatively framed statements were reverse-scored before domain-level interpretation. For financial adequacy, items 2, 4, and 8 were reverse-scored; items 5 and 6 were treated separately as indicators of funding-source concentration rather than as adequacy items. For personnel adequacy, items 10 and 16 were reverse-scored. Two personnel items were excluded from the composite because the available questionnaire documentation was internally inconsistent: item 12 had negative wording that conflicted with its response pattern and decision label, while item 14 duplicated the wording of item 13 but reported different frequencies. These exclusions were made explicitly to avoid assigning unverified meanings to ambiguous items.

After directional correction, the six-item financial-adequacy composite (items 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, and 8) had a mean of 3.29. Funding-source items 5 and 6 showed strong dependence on government subvention and were interpreted separately. The personnel composite, based on six unambiguous items (9, 10, 11, 13, 15, and 16), had a mean of 3.34. These descriptive means summarize respondent perceptions; no causal or inferential claims are made.

Results and Discussion

A. Financial Resource Mobilization

The financial-resource responses show a broadly favourable perception of funding adequacy, but also reveal substantial dependence on government financing. As shown in Table 1, 80.0% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the programme's financial subvention was adequate, and 77.8% reported that government released funds promptly. At the same time, 92.2% agreed that ETP relied only on government funding for its operations. This combination is important: respondents perceived the existing level of funding as adequate for current operations, but the financing structure itself appears concentrated and potentially vulnerable.

Table 1. Financial-resource indicators after directional correction (N = 90).

Indicator	Supportive response*	Original mean	Interpretation
Financial subvention is adequate	80.0%	3.32	Favourable
Subvention is not adequate	75.6% disagreed	1.78	Favourable after reverse scoring
Government releases funds promptly	77.8%	3.24	Favourable
Government delays fund release	83.3% disagreed	1.67	Favourable after reverse scoring
ETP relies only on government funding	92.2%	3.48	High funding concentration
ETP does not rely only on government funding	77.8% disagreed	1.92	Supports funding concentration
Funds are sufficient for smooth operation	81.1%	3.37	Favourable
Government does not budget sufficient funds	75.6% disagreed	1.74	Favourable after reverse scoring

*Supportive response is Agree + Strongly Agree for positively framed statements and Disagree + Strongly Disagree for negatively framed statements. Financial-adequacy composite mean = 3.29 based on items 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, and 8; items 5 and 6 describe funding-source concentration and are not included in the adequacy composite.

The corrected mean of 3.29 is substantially above the 2.50 cut-off and supports the descriptive conclusion that programme personnel generally regarded financial resources as adequate. This finding is compatible with resource-mobilization research showing that stable funding improves the capacity of mission-driven organizations to maintain services [16], [20]. However, adequacy should not be confused with resilience. The strong reported dependence on a single public funding source creates exposure to fiscal shocks, budget delays, and political reprioritization. Recent research on resource-constrained organizations shows that diversification, partnerships, optimization, and alternative resource channels can reduce dependence and improve adaptability [17]–[19]. For ETP, the strategic issue is therefore not only whether current funds are sufficient, but whether the financing architecture can sustain programme quality over time.

B. Human Resource Mobilization

The personnel data also indicate a generally positive staffing profile. Eighty percent of respondents agreed that ETP was well staffed, while 80.0% disagreed with the opposite statement. A larger majority (85.6%) reported that the programme had the right personnel, 88.9% judged staff to be competent, and 82.2% reported that staff were dedicated to their work. Similarly, 83.3% disagreed that personnel were not committed to their duties. The corrected six-item personnel mean was 3.34.

The personnel result is consistent with the view that human resources are not simply a head-count input but a productive capability. The Job Demands-Resources model identifies staffing, support, and competence as resources that can sustain performance under demanding conditions [25]. Human-capital theory likewise emphasizes the productive value of accumulated knowledge and skills [26].

Table 2. Interpretable personnel indicators after directional correction (N = 90).

Indicator	Supportive response*	Original mean	Interpretation
ETP is well staffed	80.0%	3.27	Favourable
ETP is not well staffed	80.0% disagreed	1.88	Favourable after reverse scoring
ETP has the right personnel	85.6%	3.53	Favourable
Staff are competent	88.9%	3.28	Favourable
Staff are dedicated to work	82.2%	3.40	Favourable
Staff are not committed to duties	83.3% disagreed	1.53	Favourable after reverse scoring

*Item 12 was excluded because its wording conflicts with its response pattern/decision; item 14 was excluded because the source table duplicated item 13's wording. Corrected composite mean for the six unambiguous items = 3.34.

In entrepreneurship training specifically, programme effectiveness depends on the quality of the learning process and the ability of trainers to translate content into practical, context-sensitive learning [8]–[15], [27]. The present findings suggest that respondents perceive the human-resource base as relatively strong, but they do not establish trainer effectiveness objectively because the study contains no performance tests, participant ratings, or post-training outcome measures.

C. Integrating Financial and Human Resources for Programme Performance

Taken together, the financial and personnel results point to a programme that is perceived as operationally resourced but structurally dependent. The financial composite (3.29) and personnel composite (3.34) are both favourable, yet the dominance of government funding creates a sustainability risk. This pattern supports a resource-orchestration interpretation: organizational performance depends not merely on the quantity of resources but on how they are assembled, governed, and linked to programme objectives [17]–[23]. Adequate staffing without stable and flexible funding can produce underutilized capability; conversely, adequate funding without competent personnel may fail to generate meaningful training outcomes.

These findings also caution against treating perceived resource adequacy as equivalent to effective programme management. The data are perceptions of inputs and operational conditions, not evidence of participant-level outcomes. Entrepreneurship-training research repeatedly shows that programme design, experiential pedagogy, soft skills, and context affect whether resources translate into durable entrepreneurial behaviour [8]–[15]. In Nigeria, recent evidence suggests that entrepreneurship education may influence entrepreneurial intention and poverty-related outcomes, but programme effects vary with participant characteristics and implementation conditions [29], [30]. The ETP should therefore connect resource decisions with indicators such as completion, skills acquisition, business start-up, business survival, income change, and employment creation.

D. Management Implications

Four management implications follow. First, funding should be diversified. Government subvention may remain the principal source, but partnerships with development agencies, private-sector firms, financial institutions, foundations, and credible non-governmental organizations could provide equipment, mentoring, seed support, and specialist expertise. Evidence from Nigerian and East African organizations indicates that resource diversification and collaborative mobilization can support sustainability and operational efficiency [16], [20]. Second, resource allocation should be transparent and linked to centre-level performance. A simple resource dashboard can track budget release, expenditure, trainer-to-participant ratios, equipment availability, training hours, and participant outcomes.

For implementation across Ondo State's 18 local-government-area ETP centres, programme administrators could begin with a centre-level inventory of funding needs and existing partners. A standardized partnership framework could then invite local businesses, chambers of commerce, microfinance institutions, development agencies, and civil-society organizations to contribute equipment, specialist trainers, apprenticeships, or targeted grants. Contributions should be recorded separately from government subvention, governed by written agreements, and reviewed annually to reduce dependence without compromising public accountability. A pilot in a small number of centres could assess administrative feasibility before wider adoption. These are proposed actions rather than interventions evaluated in the present survey.

Third, staffing should be competency-based rather than purely numerical. Recent evidence on organizational training indicates that the quality and design of training systems matter for organizational performance [23], [24]. Trainers should therefore be selected and developed on the basis of entrepreneurship experience, facilitation capability, digital competence, mentoring skills, and familiarity with local enterprise ecosystems. Fourth, the state should protect the programme from resource complacency. Current perceptions of adequacy should be treated as a baseline for continuous improvement, not as proof that the programme is fully effective.

Operationally, competency-based staffing could begin with a skills matrix for each centre, covering business start-up experience, vocational expertise, facilitation, digital literacy, mentoring, and local market knowledge. Management could use structured recruitment criteria, practical teaching demonstrations, and annual skills assessments to identify gaps; targeted professional development and practitioner partnerships could address them. A common minimum competency framework, adapted to each local economy, would enable comparisons across centres while retaining flexibility in trainer deployment. Monitoring should link staff development to training completion, participant skill gains, and subsequent

enterprise outcomes, rather than treating favourable staff perceptions as direct proof of effectiveness.

Conclusion

This study examined financial and human resource mobilization in the Ondo State Entrepreneurship Training Programme using survey responses from 90 programme personnel across 18 centres. After correcting the treatment of negatively worded items, respondents expressed favourable perceptions of both financial resources (corrected mean = 3.29) and personnel resources (corrected mean = 3.34). The financial profile, however, also revealed strong dependence on government funding, indicating that perceived adequacy does not necessarily imply long-term resilience. The findings indicate that the ETP is perceived as adequately resourced by its personnel, but its sustainability depends on resource diversification, transparent allocation, competency-based staffing, and stronger monitoring of how resources translate into participant and enterprise outcomes.

Limitations and Suggestions

Future research should combine personnel perceptions with audited expenditure, staffing records, trainer competence assessment, participant surveys, and longitudinal outcomes. A multi-level evaluation across ETP centres could test whether financial and human-resource indicators predict training completion, enterprise formation, business survival, income growth, and employment creation.

Recommendations

1. Ondo State Government should maintain predictable subvention while diversifying the programme's resource base through transparent partnerships with private-sector, development, and civil-society organizations.
2. ETP management should introduce centre-level resource and performance monitoring that links budget use, staffing, equipment, and training activity to measurable participant outcomes.
3. Staffing decisions should be based on explicit competency requirements, including entrepreneurship practice, facilitation, mentoring, digital skills, and knowledge of local business ecosystems.
4. The state should establish periodic financial and operational audits to verify whether perceived resource adequacy corresponds with actual availability and utilization.
5. Future programme expansion should be evidence-led, with additional resources targeted to centres where demand, participant outcomes, and local enterprise opportunities justify increased investment.

Conflict of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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