

The Role of Entrepreneurship Skills Training in the Economic Reintegration of LRA Ex-Combatants in Post-armed Conflict in Northern Uganda

Mshilla Maghanga*

Faculty of Business & Development Studies, Gulu University, Uganda

*Corresponding author: mshilla2000@gmail.com, m.m.mshilla@gu.ac.ug

Received June 26, 2018; Revised August 29, 2018; Accepted October 08, 2018

Abstract Reintegration of ex-combatants has been a concern after every armed conflict the world over. Northern Uganda experienced two decades (1986-2006) of such conflict. After the Juba Peace Talks that ended the hostilities between the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) rebels and the government forces, many LRA ex-combatants, under the Amnesty Act, have returned and are being reintegrated into their communities. This is under the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programme. Some received a reinsertion package between 2005 and 2009 to allow them reintegrate economically but this has not been effective. The purpose of this study was to assess the relevance of entrepreneurship skills training in the economic re-integration of the LRA ex-combatants. It was conducted in Gulu, Nwoya and Kitgum districts in Acholi Sub-region in northern Uganda. A sample size of 99 respondents was drawn from ex-combatants, their family members, business persons and Civil Society Organisations staffs. Forty eight were ex-combatants who were proportionately and randomly drawn from the three study districts. Both descriptive and inferential analyses carried out using SPSS software version 16. It was established that majority of the ex-combatants have extreme financial burdens arising from their marital status, polygamous type of marriage, number of children, and number of dependants that they have. Majority of them had no formal education while many had only primary education. Most were in the youth age group (18-35yrs) and 47.8% of them had no formal education. They had poor employability and low financial independence. Entrepreneurship skill training was established to be correlated to economic reintegration and that 44.7% of economic reintegration can be explained by entrepreneurship skill training. Business skills and financial literacy training were statistically significant predictors of economic reintegration. It was recommended that the government leads in financially supporting and cultivating the environment suitable for entrepreneurship skills training of ex-combatants.

Keywords: *entrepreneurship skills training, economic reintegration, LRA ex-combatants, northern Uganda*

Cite This Article: Mshilla Maghanga, "The Role of Entrepreneurship Skills Training in the Economic Reintegration of LRA Ex-Combatants in Post-armed Conflict in Northern Uganda." *Journal of Behavioural Economics, Finance, Entrepreneurship, Accounting and Transport*, vol. 6, no. 1 (2018): 12-21. doi: 10.12691/jbe-6-1-2.

1. Introduction

The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) war that ravaged northern Uganda for two decades (1986-2006) ended when, despite the failure of the conclusion of the Juba Peace Talks, the LRA rebels shifted their base to Garamba Forest in Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). This paved way for the relative stability that has been witnessed ever since. Way before that, and more after, many LRA ex-combatants returned to their ancestral homes in northern Uganda, albeit with mixed receptions by their families and local communities at large. Many of them had been abducted when they were very young, as was the strategy by the LRA, and this meant that they largely missed out on formal education. According to the Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN) report

of 2010, 25% of primary school-going age children in northern Uganda were out of school, despite the government implementing the Universal Primary Education (UPE) which is a free education programme [1]. While this is for the general population, it is to be expected that majority of the LRA ex-combatants missed out even on the Primary Leaving Education (PLE) having been abducted when they were still young. Some may have been in the lower classes while others may have actually dropped out of school by the time they were being abducted. As such, those that have returned so far have found it difficult to get any formal employment due to lack of qualifications. Yet, "reintegration is a social and economic process with an open time-frame by which ex-combatants acquire civilian status and gain sustainable employment and income in communities at the local level" [2]. As such, economic reintegration of the LRA ex-combatants is a challenge since they cannot easily get employment.

Self-employment may be an option although this is hampered by their lack of business start-up capital as well as entrepreneurial skills. Many who tried to engage in business generating activities using the financial support they received from Amnesty Commission (2000-2008), may have failed because of lack of entrepreneurial skills. As evidenced in the reintegration of ex-combatants in the DRC, the private sector is absent from the current reintegration approach, yet this is what is missing for the reintegration to be sustainable [3]. The sector can provide a labour market with jobs and training opportunities for ex-combatants, and that, being demand-oriented, local capital generation and entrepreneurship may be fostered [3]. Considering that there is goodwill from several quarters including the Government of Uganda, local, and International NGOs to support the reintegration process, training them on entrepreneurial skills besides giving them the reinsertion support and other forms of business start-up capital, may go a long way in enabling them become self-reliant, and hence reintegrate better.

1.1. Background

Northern Uganda was one of the most affected regions by LRA war (1986-2006) which was characterized by abductions of young boys and girls who served as child soldiers and sex slaves to the rebels respectively. Many LRA ex-combatants have since returned to their homes but their reintegration has not been easy. The communities are still struggling with resettlement and land conflicts that have escalated ever since, let alone being required to participate in the reintegration of these LRA ex-combatants. This is despite the amnesty extended to them.

After any war, transition to peace process comes with security, political, social, and economic aspects. Security transition requires that crime and violence are brought under control; political transition requires that the rule of law and participatory governance thrive; social transition targets national reconciliation that allows former combatants return to a peaceful coexistence with local communities; and economic transition sustainable way [4]. Economic reconstruction should involve activities ranging from the economics of boosting yields for small farmers to the business of getting initial access to capital, technology, and infrastructure for the creation of small- and medium enterprises, among others [5]. It further indicates that reintegration programmes that place qualified ex-combatants in existing jobs have a higher success rate compared to them themselves starting new micro-businesses. The challenge though is that such opportunities are few and that business owners are often unwilling to employ ex-combatants. While the recovery and expansion of the private sector should be encouraged, reintegration programmes should also ensure that many different kinds of small businesses are started, to avoid distorting the balance of supply and demand in local markets [5].

Apparently, many ex-combatants are increasingly reintegrating into urban settings than rural [5], suggesting that they are possibly being marginalized by their families and communities or the urban settings have more accommodative reintegration opportunities. It was a common practice under the Amnesty Act and during the period 2005-2009 in northern Uganda to grant the ex-

combatants an insertion package under the DDR process which was regarded as a peace building component through which the post-conflict socio-economic needs are addressed [6]. They, however, face the challenge of competition for jobs and opportunities because they lack basic education and skills. To this effect the UN recommends that they be provided with adult literacy classes, adult education, and technical and vocational training. For the reinsertion packages to add value to the reintegration process, they should have been given in the context of family units and not individuals, since some ex-combatants were encouraged to marry immediately they returned [7].

Of the three aspects of DDR (disarmament, demobilization and reintegration), the ex-combatant reintegration is one of them [5]. While some authors have talked of DDRR (disarmament, demobilization, reinsertion and reintegration) and other DDRRR (disarmament, demobilisation, repatriation, reintegration and resettlement) this study was premised on DDR and focused only on economic reintegration. Much as sustainable social and economic reintegration should be the ultimate objective of DDR, ex-combatants may fail to reintegrate partly because of hostility meted on them pegged on the atrocities they may have committed in or near their own communities. Inaccessibility to land by the ex-combatants as being another economic impediment yet land is very crucial in the success of the reintegration process, agriculture being the backbone of Uganda's economy [1]. The Acholi Sub-region being endowed with vast tracks of land and adequate rains suitable for commercial farming and agri-business would have been ideal entrepreneurial venture options had it not been for the current land conflicts and challenges associated with access to land by the ex-combatants. Also, the fact that the war affected all aspects of the economy to the extent that currently northern Uganda comes last on the economic scale of all the four regions in the country implies that there are many entrepreneurial opportunities. In this study, therefore, it was conceptualised that by giving the ex-combatants entrepreneurial skills they will be better positioned to explore these opportunities and to sustainably reintegrate.

1.2. Problem Statement

Reintegration is a social and economic process with an open time-frame, primarily taking place in communities and that it often necessitates long-term external assistance [2]. The LRA ex-combatants in northern Uganda were granted amnesty and have been going through the DDR process [1]. While the disarmament and demobilisation have been very effective, reintegration has not. Reintegration process can be started, but probably it cannot end as it is a life-long process for those being reintegrated. It is a process whose success is on the balance everyday throughout the life of those being reintegrated. To this effect, economic independence may be pivotal in the process where the ex-combatants acquire civilian status and gain sustainable employment and income. As per the Amnesty Act (2000-2008), the ex-combatants received a reinsertion amount equivalent to 3 months' salary of a police officer or teacher and some little more for medical and transportation expenses; seeds; information and

counseling on available reintegration options among others. However, this only ran from 2005 [8] and ended in 2009 [9]. In essence, reintegration in has been going on without a reinsertion package since then and this has further complicated the economic reintegration of the ex-combatants.

Based on research, the reintegration program in northern Uganda focuses more on physical or psychological trauma and yet education and livelihoods may lead to better reintegration outcome [10]. Indeed, income generation and livelihood opportunities are arguably vital for the success of reintegration processes [11]. Beyond that, entrepreneurial skills and mindset may be pivotal in sustainable economic independence. A beneficiary analysis in Uganda indicated that low education achievement and lack of training could be considered to be barriers to economic reintegration even though their overall impact on reintegration may not appear to be significant [12].

Given the relationship between entrepreneurial skills training and economic development and the widely accepted fact that entrepreneurial ventures are the key to innovation, productivity and effective competition [13], the LRA ex-combatants may reintegrate better upon acquiring entrepreneurial skills considering that they currently do not receive any reinsertion package and those who did, may not have successfully engaged in any meaningful livelihood activity. This assertion is supported by the evidence that the teaching of entrepreneurial and small business management skills aids new venture creation and success [14]. It is to be appreciated that “as much as personality traits are difficult to influence, the vast majority of knowledge required by entrepreneurs can be taught” [15]. Additionally, based on a ten-year (1985-1994) literature review on enterprise, entrepreneurship and small business management education it was established that entrepreneurship can be taught, or at least encouraged, by entrepreneurship education” [16]. As such, an entrepreneurial mindset and attitude may be imparted into the ex-combatants despite their low literacy level. This may be the missing link needed to economically reintegrate the ex-combatant sustainably [3]. It is on this

basis that this study explored the role entrepreneurship skills training can play in the effectiveness and sustainability of the economic reintegration of the LRA ex-combatants in northern Uganda.

1.3. Purpose of the Study

The study was conducted to establish whether entrepreneurship skills training can play a significant role in the economic re-integration process focusing on the LRA ex-combatants in northern Uganda.

1.4. Scope of the Study

This study was conducted in three districts (Gulu, Kitgum and Nwoya) out of the eight that make up the Acholi sub-region in northern Uganda. It explored the possible role of entrepreneurship skills training in the economic reintegration of LRA ex-combatants basing it on the premise that an entrepreneurial mindset may empower the ex-combatants more over and above the financial support as prescribed under the Amnesty Act. The study focused on a twelve year (2006-2017) post-armed conflict period being the period following the cessation of hostilities between the Government and LRA rebel forces.

1.5. Conceptual Framework

The conceptualization of this study was as shown in Figure 1.

Formal entrepreneurial training was considered as the independent variable while economic reintegration of the ex-combatants as the dependent variable. As indicated in Figure 1, the dimensions of entrepreneurship skills training were livelihood training, financial literacy training, entrepreneurial mindset and attitudinal change training. On the other hand, economic reintegration was operationalised through improved employability, self-employment, livelihood engagement, and improved saving culture. This in turn leads to successful and sustainable economic reintegration.

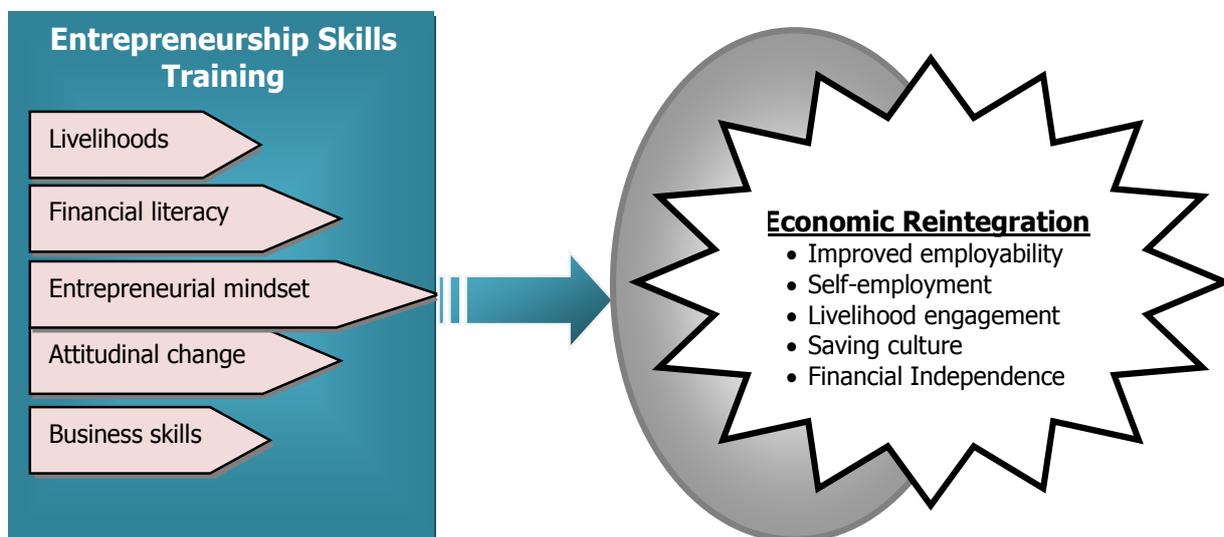


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework (Source: Adopted with modifications from Body and Brown (2005))

2. Methodology

2.1. Research Design

This quantitative study adopted a cross-sectional research design. This allowed for the collection of quantifiable data from the field. An extensive literature review on published works on the topic of DDR and more specifically economic reintegration of ex-combatants, consulted.

2.2. Study Population and Sampling Procedure

The study population comprised of the LRA ex-combatants, their family members, staff of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), and businesspersons. While the ex-combatants were the key respondents who could tell their own personal stories, their family members were also included because they are the immediate beneficiaries of the successful economic reintegration process. They were, therefore, expected to supplement the data from the ex-combatants. The business community was included because it was conceptualised as the one to provide the platform onto which the economic ventures can operate. Specifically, the businesspersons were included since they are knowledgeable about the successful, competitiveness, innovativeness and creativeness of reintegrated ex-combatants in business.

Of the 8 districts in Acholi Sub-region in northern Uganda, three (Gulu, Kitgum and Nwoya) were randomly selected. Stratified random sampling was employed in determining the respondent sample size. Proportionate sampling was used to determine the sample size of ex-combatants the based on the census population since their actual number in Acholi Sub-region is unknown as much as according to the Uganda's Amnesty Commission about 5,335 out of 26,288 ex-combatants (mainly LRA ex-combatants) had been reintegrated by 2012 [18]. More ex-combatants were drawn from Gulu District based on statistics that as of mid-2017 the populations of the districts were Gulu (297,700); Kitgum (212,500), and Nwoya (175,400) giving a ratio of 1.7:1.2:1.0 respectively [19]. This ratio was used to calculate the proportionate sample sizes of ex-combatants per district out of a targeted sample of 60 ex-combatants. Equal numbers of the other categories of respondents were allocated for each district adding up to a sample size of 99 respondents as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Sample Size Determination and Data Collection Methods

SN	Category	District			Total Sample
		Gulu	Kitgum	Nwoya	
1.	LRA Ex-Combatants	26	19	15	60
2.	Family members	5	5	5	15
3.	Business Community members	5	5	5	15
4.	Civil Society Organisation (CSO) staff	3	3	3	9
	Grand Total	36	29	25	99

Source: Primary data.

2.3. Data Collection and Analysis

Data were collected using close-ended questionnaires. The respondents filled in the questionnaires but those who were semi-illiterate and, therefore, could not read or write, were assisted by the research assistants. The questionnaire contained closed-ended questions and a five-point Likert scale was used for most of the questions to allow respondents give their opinions about the different dimensions of the study variables. Data were coded, checked for accuracy and consistency before being loaded onto the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16. Both descriptive and inferential analyses which included correlation analysis and regression analysis respectively were carried out. The results were as presented in the subsequent sections.

3. Results and Discussions

The results presented here are about the background information of the respondents, Pearson Correlation results and regression analysis results. The discussions of all the results are done concurrently with the presentation.

3.1. Background Information of the Ex-combatants

A Cronbach's alpha coefficient value of 0.868 was established on running the reliability test. This implied that the data collected were credible enough to allow for further analysis considering that this value passed the credibility test pass mark of 0.7. Further analyses were conducted on the background information of the ex-combatants focusing on their districts of residence, gender, age, academic level, marital status, type of marriage, number of children, and the number of other dependants (other than spouse and children). The findings were as presented in Table 2.

According to the results, male respondents accounted for 56.3% of the total respondents with their female counterparts representing 43.7%. In terms of age, 67.7% of the ex-combatants fell in the youth category (18-35 years). Majority of them are poorly educated. Apart from only one who had a bachelor's degree 60.4% had no formal education while those who had primary level education [PLE] and secondary school level certificate of education (O-Level) accounted for 27.1% and 10.4% respectively.

Majority (77.1%) of the ex-combatants were married and of these, 85.7% were engaged in monogamous type of marriage while 14.6% in polygamous marriage. Majority of them (43.8%) had 4-6 children; 35.4% had 1-3 children while 10.4% had none. Those with 7 children and above accounted for 10.4%. In terms of dependants other than spouses and biological children, majority (52.1%) had 1-3 dependants, 33.3% none; 14.6% had 4-6 dependants. None of the respondents had more than 6 dependants. Considering the number of children and that of dependents, it shows that the many ex-combatants are heavily burdened economically. This is couple by the fact that most of them have very low level of education and this in turn implies that their employability is very low. Such a situation can be very challenging to the economic reintegration which is the last of the activities under DDR.

Table 2. Background Information of Ex-Combatants

SN	Variable	Dimensions	Frequency	Percentage
1.	District of Ex-combatant	Gulu	22	45.8
		Nwoya	11	22.9
		Kitgum	15	31.3
2.	Gender	Male	27	56.3
		Female	21	43.7
		Total	48	100.0
3.	Age group (in years)	18-22	3	6.3
		23-27	11	22.9
		28-32	8	16.7
		33-37	10	20.8
		38-42	4	8.3
		43-47	6	12.5
		48-52	2	4.2
		53-57	1	2.1
		58-62	3	6.3
	Total	48	100.0	
4.	Highest academic level	No formal education	29	60.4
		PLE (Primary)	13	27.1
		O-Level (Secondary)	5	10.4
		A-Level (High school)	0	0.0
		Certificate Level	0	0.0
		Diploma Level	0	0.0
		Bachelor's degree	1	2.1
		Master's degree	0	0.0
		PhD	0	0.0
	Total	48	100.0	
5.	Marital status	Single	6	12.5
		Married	37	77.1
		Separated	1	2.1
		Divorced	1	2.1
		Widowed	3	6.3
		Total	48	10.0
6.	Type of Marriage	Monogamous	36	75.3
		Polygamous	6	12.5
		Not Applicable (Single)	6	12.5
		Total	48	100.0
7.	Number of children	None	5	10.4
		1-3	17	35.4
		4-6	21	43.8
		7-9	4	8.3
		10 & Above	1	2.1
		Total	48	100.0
8.	Number of dependants (other than spouse & children)	None	16	33.3
		1-3	25	52.1
		4-6	7	14.6
		7-9	0	0.0
		10 & Above	0	0.0
		Total	48	100.0

Going by the assertion that economic reintegration can be evaluated by the incidences of crime/illegal activities attributable to ex-combatants or by the level of poverty/financial autonomy among ex-combatant households as compared to the community average [20], it implies that the higher the household economic burden the ex-combatants bear, the less likely they are to effectively and sustainably reintegrate.

3.2. Correlation Analysis

Pearson Correlation analysis was conducted focusing on the relationship between entrepreneurship skills training and economic reintegration of the LRA ex-combatants. This involved the dimensions of these two study variables. The results were as presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Correlation between Entrepreneurship Training and Economic Reintegration

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Business skills	Pearson Correlation	1									
	Sig. (2-tailed)										
2. Financial literacy	Pearson Correlation	.402**	1								
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000									
3. Livelihoods training	Pearson Correlation	.232*	-.091	1							
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.028	.395								
4. Entrepreneurial mindset	Pearson Correlation	.229*	-.020	.219*	1						
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.030	.850	.038							
5. Attitudinal change	Pearson Correlation	.343**	.194	.330**	.734**	1					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.067	.002	.000						
6. Employability	Pearson Correlation	.341**	.276**	-.103	.153	.108	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.008	.334	.150	.312					
7. Self employment	Pearson Correlation	.028	-.174	.407**	.112	.231*	-.117	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.796	.101	.000	.292	.029	.273				
8. Livelihood engagement	Pearson Correlation	.337**	.188	.440**	.373**	.427**	.156	.583**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.077	.000	.000	.000	.141	.000			
9. Saving culture	Pearson Correlation	.227*	.503**	-.289**	-.331**	-.226*	.429**	-.521**	-.182	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.031	.000	.006	.001	.032	.000	.000	.086		
10. Financial independence	Pearson Correlation	.209*	.703**	-.240*	-.226*	-.149	.313**	-.459**	-.103	.621**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.048	.000	.023	.032	.160	.003	.000	.335	.000	

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 4. Abstract of correlation between dimensions of Study Variables

	Business skills	Financial literacy	Livelihoods training	Entrepreneurial mindset	Attitudinal change
Employability	.341**	.276**	-.103	.153	.108
	.001	.008	.334	.150	.312
Self employment	.028	-.174	.407**	.112	.231*
	.796	.101	.000	.292	.029
Livelihood engagement	.337**	.188	.440**	.373**	.427**
	.001	.077	.000	.000	.000
Saving culture	.227*	.503**	-.289**	-.331**	-.226*
	.031	.000	.006	.001	.032
Financial independence	.209*	.703**	-.240*	-.226*	-.149
	.048	.000	.023	.032	.160

As shown in Table 3, a number of dimensions from the two variables were positively and statistically significantly correlated. However, most of the correlations are considered to be fairly strong other than that between financial literacy training and saving culture ($r = .503$, $p < 0.00$) which was strong; and that between financial literacy training and Financial independence ($r = .703$, $p < 0.00$) which was very strong. Others were established to be negative, very weak and statistically insignificant. In summary, entrepreneurship skills training can be considered to be correlated to economic reintegration suggesting that improving the former should lead to improving the latter. Table 4 shows an abstract of the results focusing only on the correlations between the dimensions of the two study variables.

Specifically, it was established that training the ex-combatants in business skills training, as a dimension of entrepreneurial skills training, was positively, fairly strongly and statistically correlated to employability ($r = .341$, $p = .001$) and to livelihood engagement ($r = .337$, $p = .001$), both being dimensions of economic reintegration. It was also positively but weakly correlated to the saving culture of the ex-combatants ($r = .227$, $p = .031$) and financial independence ($r = .209$, $p = .048$). While the first set of correlations were significant at 99.0% level of significance, the second set was significant at 95.0%. Apparently, the business skills training

dimension was not correlated to self employment. These findings suggest that ex-combatants upon gaining business skills are likely to become more employable, engage more in livelihoods, have a better saving culture and become financially independent. However, business skills-training does not lead to self-employment.

The above results closely agrees with the assertion that improved employability, self-employment and livelihood engagement by ex-combatants can be used to assess how effective an economic reintegration process may have been [20]. This is because they all lead into the ex-combatants becoming financially independent. Financial literacy training was positively, strongly and statistically significantly correlated to financial independence and to saving culture as already mentioned. It was also correlated to employability, although weakly but statistically significantly ($r = .276$, $p = .008$) at 99.0%. It was not correlated to self employment and livelihood engagement. This implies that once trained on financial literacy, ex-combatants are likely to get into self employment, improve their saving culture and ultimately become more financially independent.

Livelihoods training was found to be fairly strongly and statistically correlated at 99.0% level of significance to self employment ($r = .407$, $p = .000$) and to livelihood engagement ($r = .440$, $p = .000$). It was not correlated to employability but negatively, though weakly, correlated to

saving culture and financial independence. Whereas the positive and non-correlations may easily be understood, the negative correlations may not. This is because the correlation between the livelihood training and saving culture ($r = -.289$, $p = .006$) seems to imply that the more the training the less will be the saving culture and the less will be the financial independence ($r = -.240$, $r = .023$). Whereas it may be argued that by engaging in livelihoods they will spend the little money they may be having and so save less and lose financial independence since they will have spent the money in engaging in livelihoods and self employment, this ideally should be the case only after the initial stages on engagement and the situation should reverse in the long run. These findings could also be true in case failed venture as a result of engaging in self employment and livelihoods.

Entrepreneurial mindset training was established to be correlated positively and fairly strongly to livelihood engagement ($r = .373$, $p = .000$). It was not statistically correlated to employability and self employment but negatively correlated to saving culture ($r = -.331$, $p = .001$) and to financial independence ($r = -.226$, $p = .032$). The training leading to livelihood engagement implies that the more ex-combatants are training on livelihoods the more of them will engage in different types of livelihoods. The negative correlations could possibly be explained as in the case above on the correlations between livelihood training and the two dimensions of economic reintegration (saving culture and financial independence).

Finally, attitudinal change about entrepreneurship training was found to be positively and fairly strongly correlated to livelihood engagement ($r = .427$, $p = .000$) and weakly to self employment ($r = .231$, $p = .029$); not correlated to employability and financial independence; but negatively and weakly correlated to saving culture ($r = -.226$, $p = .032$). These findings suggest that when the ex-combatants are trained to acquire an attitudinal change to entrepreneurship, they are likely to engage more in livelihoods and seek more for self employment. As discussed earlier about a negative saving culture correlation, this could also mean that they think more of spending in the livelihoods and that the more they invest the less would be their saving culture, at least while the businesses are still young and not making profits.

3.2.1. Discussion of the Correlation Results

The results above were presented on the premise that entrepreneurial skills training can impact on the success and sustainability of economic reintegration of ex-combatants. Literature points out to the existence of gaps in the current reintegration approaches and to which entrepreneurship skills training may help bridge. For instance, the main functions of the Amnesty Act were to provide amnesty to ex-combatants; facilitate an institutionalized resettlement and repatriation process; and provide reintegration support, including skills training and reconciliation [21]. However, reintegration is the most challenging of the DDR phases and its implementation is not as easy as it sounds. Some ex-combatants in northern Uganda and the DRC were rejected by their families upon their return in spite of going through the DDR process [22]. A robust labour market could, however, absorb such and enable them to gain access to income-generating

activities and join their communities' social networks. Using entrepreneurial skills, such ex-combatants can exploit the available economic opportunities and become self-supporting without being a burden to their families and community. It is possible that once economically stable, they can win back the "lost" family love and enable them reintegrate even better.

Ideally, financial capital must come at the right time and in the right form to meet the needs of the entrepreneur [23]. It is debatable whether this was the case under the Amnesty Commission, although going by logic, this may not have been so considering that the financial assistance was given under the reintegration package. Considering that entrepreneurship is associated with improved rural livelihoods since it can increase the income of individuals and families who eventually can accrue assets and create wealth, entrepreneurship training may positively contribute towards sustainable economic reintegration.

3.2.2. Scatter & Normality Tests

After the Pearson Correlation test, the data were tested for suitability in undertaking a regression analysis by running a scatter plot and the Normality P-P plot tests. The results were as shown in Figure 2 and Figure 3.

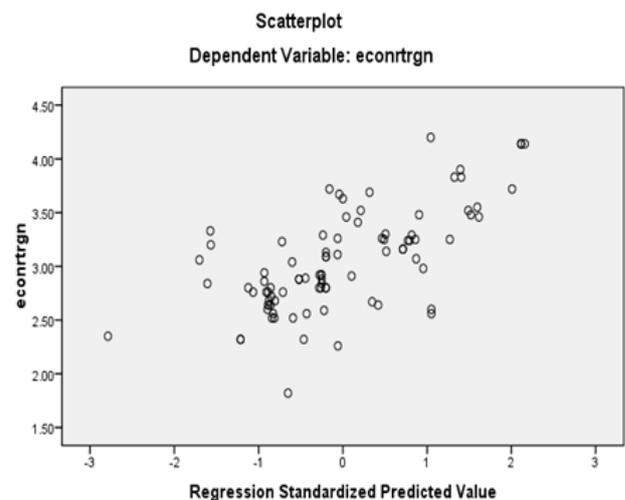


Figure 2. Scatter Plot Results

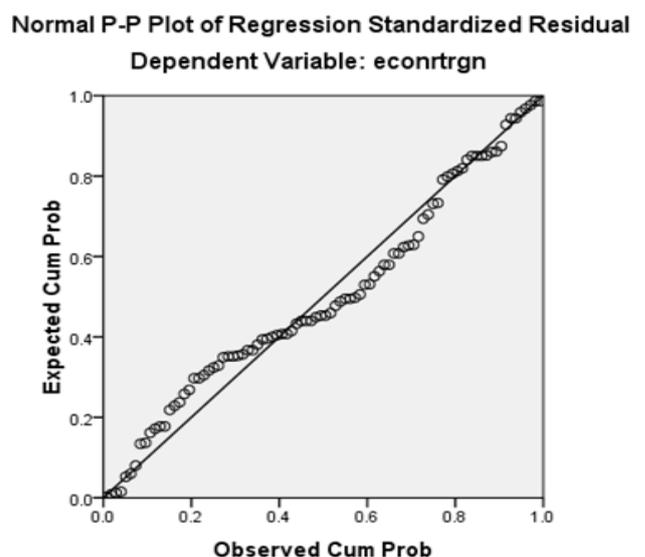


Figure 3. Normal P-P Plot Results

From the scatter plot results it can be seen that the best line graph if drawn would slope upward from zero. This shows that there is a positive correlation between entrepreneurship skills training and economic reintegration. The implication of this graph is that an increase in entrepreneurship skills training would lead to improved economic reintegration of the ex-combatants. The results in the normal P-P plot (Figure 3) which is a probability plot for assessing how closely two data sets agree shows that the sets in this study do agree and that there is no skewness. These results proved that the data sets were suitable for conduction of a regression analysis.

3.3. Regression Analysis Results

Three outputs were derived from the regression analysis. They included a model summary, the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) table and a coefficient table as presented below. The model summary results were as shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.691 ^a	.478	.447	.35983

a. Predictors: (Constant), attitude, financial literacy, livelihood, business skills, mindset

According to these results, the R square value is 0.478, which indicates that correlation exists. The R² value of .447 means that 44.7% of economic reintegration can be explained by entrepreneurship skills training. As such, the other 55.3% is predicted or explained by other factors outside the entrepreneurship skills training. The second regression analysis test output was the ANOVA (Table 6).

Table 6. ANOVA^b

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	9.964	5	1.993	15.391	.000 ^a
	Residual	10.876	84	.129		
	Total	20.840	89			

a. Predictors: (Constant), attitude, financial literacy, livelihood, business skills, entrepreneurship mindset

b. Dependent Variable: economic reintegration

Table 7. Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.815	.287		6.329	.000
	Business skills training	.135	.054	.232	2.512	.014
	Financial literacy	.341	.053	.587	6.385	.000
	livelihood training	.030	.055	.047	.539	.591
	Entrepreneurial mindset	-.015	.071	-.025	-.212	.833
	Attitudinal Change	-.073	.080	-.116	-.907	.367

a. Dependent Variable: economic reintegration.

According to the results, the P-value (Sig.) is .000 and this indicates that, overall, the regression model statistically and significantly predicts the outcome variable (that is, it is a good fit for the data). This leads to the last output, the Table of Coefficients (Table 7).

Looking at the sig. column (last column), it was only the contribution by business skills training ($p = .014$) and Financial literacy training ($p = .000$) among the dimensions of the independent variable that could be considered to be significant contributors to the outcome of economic reintegration of the ex-combatants. While the significance of the former was at 95%, that of the latter was at 99% level of significance. As such, livelihood training, entrepreneurial mindset training, and attitudinal change training were not significant contributors of economic reintegration.

4. Discussions

4.1. Economic Reintegration

The above results agree with the definition that reintegration of ex-combatants is essentially a social and economic process implying that economic independence is a desirable in this process [2]. The findings also support the assertion that among the determinants that are necessary for its success are demand for labour, business opportunities, skills level, education level, entrepreneurial ability, age, and gender among others [20]. This implies that ex-combatants can respond to the demand and take advantage of the business opportunities especially in agriculture if land is available. All these can be exploited if the ex-combatants are skilful, educated, and have entrepreneurial ability. While the mature ones are likely to reintegrate better if the above determinant are available, the male ex-combatants are better placed to reintegrate compared to their female counterparts.

The findings faults the Amesty Act under which 'reinsertion packages' were given because as much as they were attractive in local standards, the payment were done in piece meal or were delayed for years after the return of the ex-combatants [10]. Minus entrepreneurial skills, both instances could not lead to economic independence of the ex-combatants. It has been also been argued that the package should have corresponded to the duration in captivity and possibly the rank held by the ex-combatant [10]. The reintegration process in northern Uganda has not been successful going by an example whereby 300 supposedly reintegrated children were absent in those communities just three months thereafter [24]. Other data that show that over 70% of juvenile in Gulu District northern Uganda are former child soldiers facing rape, assault and theft charges among others [10] These, as the results suggest can be the gaps of the current approach.

About 38.8% of Uganda's population lives below the poverty line, and that northern Uganda accounts for at least 63% of this [25]. Further, Gulu District suffers from low productivity, low levels of business and investment among other challenges [26]. All this implies that the economic situation of northern Uganda is low and that this is a limitation to the economic reintegration of the LRA ex-combatants. Such a situation can be improved when

communities embrace micro-enterprises [20], or according to the findings of this study, entrepreneurship skills training is introduced for the larger population beyond the ex-combatants.

4.2. Entrepreneurship Skills Training

The findings of this study are important because they have shed some light about entrepreneurship whose role has not been studied in the context of post-conflict reconstruction after cessation of an armed conflict yet it is evident that such conflicts cause immense damage requiring a long time to reconstruct and to which the capacity of the public sector in the affected communities is weak [27]. Northern Uganda, for instance, still lags behind the other regions in Uganda economically about ten years after cessation of hostilities between the LRA and the Uganda Government in 2006.

The findings also support the statement that major objectives of entrepreneurship training “are to develop enterprising people and inculcate an attitude of self-reliance using appropriate learning processes” [28], and that the training provides learners with opportunities to gain the knowledge and skills needed to generate a business concept, determine its feasibility, launch and operate a business, and develop exit strategies [29,30]. The importance of entrepreneurship training has been on the increase in the last 25 years. Among the key areas of training are business skills, financial literacy, apprenticeship, and livelihoods [31]. Above all, innovation and creativity are important as they create a positive business mindset and attitude. Entrepreneurship has been associated with improved rural livelihoods as the businesses created through entrepreneurship can enable individuals and families to increase their income and eventually begin to accrue assets—create wealth [23]. They further posit that “human capital embodied in a region’s labour force is an asset that can influence entrepreneurship development and the potential success of programs and policies designed to encourage business start up and growth” (p.3). Research has established a positive relationship between human capital and employer establishment births implying that the entrepreneur creates employment opportunities for others [32]. Further, entrepreneurship has the potential to accelerate economic recovery while improving access to basic services [27]. As such enterprising ex-combatants can play an important role in reintegration. Considering that literature has it that lack of skills and entrepreneurial training can constrain the growth of business, entrepreneurial training is desirable.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

This research has established that there are all good intentions to fully re-integrate ex-combats under the DDR programme for sustainable peace and stability in northern Uganda. However, the approach used is not realising that dream. The key conclusions of this study were that:

- Most LRA ex-combatants belong to the youth age group (18-35yrs) implying that they are strong and energetic to engage in employment or other livelihoods but most of them cannot because of

their low education level where as high as 47.8% have no formal education.

- Many of the ex-combatants are heavily economically burdened arising from lack of employment and the large households they head as a result of polygamy (for some), high number of biological children and that of dependants
- Entrepreneurship skills training can contribute up to about 45% of the economic reintegration of the LRA ex-combatants and this implies that it is strongly correlated to the economic reintegration.
- Training the ex-combatants in business skills training will improve their employability considering that many are still youthful; engagement in livelihoods; saving culture; and financial independence.
- Financial literacy training will entice the ex-combatants into self employment, improve their saving culture and in turn financial independence.
- Training ex-combatants on livelihoods would spur them into self employment into livelihood engagement and to a lesser extent, improve their saving culture and financial independence.
- Although entrepreneurial mindset training was not statistically correlated to employability and self employment, it can lead to livelihood engagement.
- Training the ex-combatants to acquire an attitudinal change to entrepreneurship is likely to spur them to engage more in livelihoods and self employment.

5.2. Recommendations

Arising from the results and discussions above, a number of recommendations have been made to different stakeholders for the sake of realizing sustainable economic reintegration of the LRA ex-combatants in northern Uganda. The government of Uganda should play a key role in supporting, creating awareness and setting up an environment conducive for entrepreneurial skills training. On their part, the community leadership should contribute towards the reintegration by supporting the introduction of entrepreneurial skills training over and above any other support given to the ex-combatants. The ex-combatants and their families should adopt an attitudinal change from focusing on reinsertion package (which is no longer being given) to long term benefits that come with entrepreneurial training. Finally, further research tailored on the role entrepreneurship training in the effectiveness and sustainability of economic reintegration and ex-combatant reintegration in general should be carried out to bring out more salient aspects on the relationship between the two variables. Considering that the plight of un-employability and lack of financial independence affects even the non ex-combatant youth, most of who also dropped out of school due to insecurity due the war, a study on role entrepreneurship skills training can play towards them attaining financial independence would be welcome.

Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge VLIR-UOS for funding this research under the Project, “Governance & Post-Conflict

Reconstruction in Northern Uganda” and Antwerp University (Belgium) for offering me a one-month Study- Stay to develop this article.

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