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AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF GOVERNMENT-
FUNDED YOUTH GROUP ENTERPRISES IN KENYA**

MWAGANDI SHADRACK MWAKIO
BITANGE NDEMO

AWINO ZACHARY BOLO
MUYA NDAMBUKI

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THE INFLUENCE OF ORGANIZATIONAL SIZE ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP TRAINING AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF GOVERNMENT-FUNDED YOUTH GROUP ENTERPRISES IN KENYA

Mwagandi Shadrack Mwakio¹, Bitange Ndemo², Awino Zachary Bolo³,
Muya Ndambuki⁴

Abstract

One of the avenues of reducing unemployment rates is entrepreneurship. Youth seem to be the age group that is hit the hardest by lack of or inadequate opportunities for income generation. This has seen governmental and non-governmental organisations front initiatives aimed at empowering young people to start and run their ventures. They have, amongst other things, created training programs that endeavor to build the capacities of youth in this area. Despite these interventions, unemployment rates have been seen to rise, which could be attributed to the small size of the outfits started by the beneficiaries of such training. The purpose of this study was, therefore, to establish the influence of organizational size on the relationship between entrepreneurship training and organizational performance. A cross-sectional survey was carried out on 262 youth groups which were registered with the Youth Enterprise Development Fund of Taita Taveta County as of April 2019. 156 were sampled. Questionnaires were personally distributed and a response rate of 62% recorded. Entrepreneurship training was measured using the following indicators: technical, business management, and personal entrepreneurial skills. The organizational size was deduced using questions regarding the number of employees and money capital. Organizational performance was broken down into questions pointing at fiscal, client, processes and advancement aspects. Regression analyses were performed on the data. It was established that the size of an organization does have a significant moderating effect on the relationship between entrepreneurship training and performance. This study enriches the apprehension of the conjugation between entrepreneurship training and organizational performance as moderated by organizational size. This study recommends that the government puts in place measures that encourage the growth of organisations. It also emboldens policy-makers and managers of entrepreneurship training programmes to consider emphasizing the importance of size and growth of startups.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship training, organisational size, organisational performance, government-funded youth enterprises

¹ University of Nairobi - mwakiomwagandi@gmail.com

^{2,3,4} University of Nairobi

Introduction

Unemployment is a challenge that faces almost all nations. The International Labour Organization's (ILO) World Employment and Social Outlook Report for 2021 reports that 187 and 220 million people were unemployed in the years 2019 and 2020, respectively. In the same order, the percentages were 5.4 and 6.5. In Africa, the unemployment rates in 2019, 2020, and 2021 were, respectively, 6.8 percent, 7.2 percent, and 7.5 percent. These correspond to 34, 35, and 38 million people, in the same order. The figures of unemployment for the lower-middle-income countries, in which Kenya is classified, were 56 (5.1 percent) million people in 2019 and 67 (6.3 percent) million people in 2020. The report also depicts that the global unemployment rate for youth was 13.5 percent in 2019 and 14.6 percent in 2020, and; for lower-middle-income countries, it was 15.1% and 15.4% for the same years in the same order. These numbers tell the need for creation of employment opportunities.

The creation and management of small businesses and entrepreneurial ventures have been adopted by many countries as potential solutions to unemployment. The United States of America and the United Kingdom were quick to put business incubation models in place in their respective markets (Al-Mubarak & Busler, 2010). The Africa Entrepreneurship Policy Forum in 2017 noted that the majority of African countries have established special business development programs such as business development funds, business advisory services, and community processing centres. This is done with the hope that entrepreneurial performance will be enhanced.

Entrepreneurship training (ET) is defined as activities that instill in a person the mindset required for identifying and pursuing opportunities for the creation and operation of new ventures (Mayuran, 2016). It covers topics like idea generation, innovation, identifying

opportunities, starting and growing a business. It also instills entrepreneurial attitudes and skill sets (Ediagbonya, 2013). It induces and sustains personality changes that enable a person to engage in legally profitable activities (Nyello, Kalufya, Rengua, Nsolezi & Ngirwa, 2015). Training can benefit both new and established entrepreneurs.

Typically, entrepreneurship training programs are organized around specific skill areas (Kutzhanova, Lyons, & Lichtenstein, 2009); Cooney, 2012). These include technical abilities, business management abilities, and personal entrepreneurial abilities. Technical skills comprise communication, scanning the environment, problem-solving, and technology; business management skills encompass planning, goal setting, decision making, human resource management, marketing, finance, accounting, customer service, quality control, negotiation, business expansion management, and rule compliance. Personal entrepreneurial skills include, but are not limited to, creativity, anger management, perseverance, leadership, system building, and intuition (Cooney, 2012).

Organizational size (OS) denotes the extent of the production capacity in the possession of an organization; it refers to the amount and range of products that an organisation is able to avail to its customers (Shaheen & Malik, 2012). Demirguc-Kunt, Laeven, and Levine (2008) define organisational size as connoted by production technologies that are specific to industries, like capital intensities. The concept of size brings about the categorization of enterprises into micro, small, medium, and large enterprises. The Micro and Small Enterprises Act of 2012, No. 55 by the Government of Kenya, defines a micro-enterprise as an industry, commerce, company, or commercial activity whose annual revenue is less than five hundred thousand Kenya shillings and engages less than ten persons in its employment. It also defines a small enterprise as an industry, commerce, company,

or a commercial activity that posts annual revenue of between five hundred and five million shillings and whose number of employees ranges from ten to fifty.

The development of a sustainable structure of management that can allow for suitable departmentalization requires a size that is large enough to do this. Theodore (2009) studied the role of OS in the evolution and growth of enterprises in economies that are developing, a case of Ecuador. The study established that most of the ventures in the study area did not meet the threshold of the size that would enable the development of a sustainable organisational structure, and could therefore not contribute effectively to microeconomic development. The size of an organization does have a positive ramification on its fiscal performance. This is made possible through the exploitation of economies of scale (Liargovas & Skandalis, 2010). Therefore, as size increases, so does performance (Doğan, 2013). However, Radipere and Dhliwayo (2014) did not observe a statistically significant link between the two. It has also been reported that the moderating impact on the association between supply chain management practices and long-term performance by organisational size is significant (Wang, Zhang, & Goh, 2018).

There exist various parameters that may be used to indicate the size of an organisation. Liargovas and Skandalis (2010) used the total number of employees to measure size while Kartikasari and Merianti (2016) measured it using total assets and total sales. Money capital may also depict organisational size (Baumol, 1959). Manojlović (2016) indicated organisational size using the number of staff engaged by the organisation and its total budget.

Organizational performance (OP) is the end result of all of an entity's decisions and operations (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996). Performance measures how well various objectives are met (Daft, 2007). It is the

achievement of expected outputs and outcomes in relation to the resources used to achieve them, according to Manojlovi (2016). Kaplan and Norton (1992) introduced balanced scorecard that can be used to measure four facets of the performance of an organisation. It is a collection of ephemeral measures and indicators of organizational performance. These are measures on finances, customers, internal processes, and growth and learning. Small and Medium Enterprises typically rely on monetary measures of performance rather than non-financial measures of performance due to time and resource constraints (Perera & Baker, 2007).

According to the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics' Economic Survey for 2018, 20.4 percent of employed persons in the working-age population were underemployed in 2017. This rate is higher than the 15.2 and 18.7 percent rates in 2009 and 2005/06, respectively, and the majority of the unemployed were between the ages of 15 and 19. The highest unemployment rate, 19.2 percent, was recorded in the age group of 20 to 24 years. This is despite the fact that the government is committed to empowering youth, as evidenced by the creation and designation of the Youth Enterprise Development Fund as a strategic project under the vision 2030's social pillar. This fund provides funds and entrepreneurship training to youth and disadvantaged groups in order for them to start and run their own businesses. It was expected that this move would create employment opportunities for the youth. The foregoing situation indicates that the fund is yet to deliver one of its main goals. The question that begs, hence, is 'Is the performance of youth group enterprises negatively affected by their small size?' Thus, the objective of this study was to establish the influence of organisational size on the relationship between entrepreneurship training and organisational performance.

Theoretical Foundations

Entrepreneurship training, according to policymakers, is critical to achieving entrepreneurship growth (European Commission, 2006). The notion is anchored on Van Vuuren and Nieman's (1999) training model on business training and performance. The model demonstrates how entrepreneurial performance is influenced by motivation, entrepreneurial, and business skills. They proposed that business skills and business performance have a direct linear relationship. According to studies, the above-mentioned relationship is not always valid. Some studies have yielded contradictory results. Karlan and Valdivia (2011) investigated the marginal effect of business training for Peruvian women micro entrepreneurs using randomized control trials. They found no evidence of a change in key outcomes like business profits, net income, or employee recruitment. According to a study conducted by Martinez et al., entrepreneurship training has a minor impact on financial performance (2016). They also discovered that it improves entrepreneurs' use of good business practices. Training in entrepreneurial aspects has no effect on income (Cho & Honorati, 2013).

Baumol theory states that the rate of return posted by an organization increases with an increase in its size. Baumol (1959) argued that the amount of financial capital held by an organization has the potential to positively affect profitability as well as earnings on investment. This is made possible by the fact that large organizations have the capacity to seize opportunities because of the huge resources at their disposal compared to small organizations (Bayyurt, 2007). Baumol argues that high amounts of money capital may put the respective organisation at a higher pedestal of imperfectly competing groups which has a positive bearing on financial indicators of performance. He further contends that large organisations have at their disposal all the

options of smaller ones and more. They are able to do what the small enterprises can do as well as what they cannot do, for instance investing in product lines that are out of financial reach or capabilities of the small firms.

The size of an organisation is vital to the economic development of a country. Essentially, an ample organisational size is a precondition for the development of viable management structures; with about three levels of hierarchy and proper departmentalization. Theodore (2009) studied the role of OS in the advancement and growth of enterprises in less advanced countries, a case of Ecuador. The study established that a large number of the outfits in the area of research did not meet the threshold of the size that would enable the development of a sustainable organisational structure, and could therefore not contribute effectively to microeconomic development.

This theory has been corroborated by some scholars. Among them is Vijayakumar and Tamizhselvan (2010), and Liargovas and Skandalis (2010). They uncovered a significant positive nexus between organizational size and effectiveness of firms operating in South India and Greece respectively. However, some studies, like the one by Radipere and Dhliwayo (2014) contradict the foregoing findings. They did not detect a significant linkage between business size and achievement of its goals. Abbasi and Malik (2015) observed an effect that is negative and weak of size on the growth of an organisation.

Organizational size does as well have an influence on associations between some variables and performance that is moderative in nature. It has been seen that the moderating impact on the association between the practices of administering supply chain and long-term effectiveness by organisational size is significant (Wang, Zhang, & Goh, 2018). This effect of size is as well observed in the association between organizational growth and

performance (Abbasi & Malik, 2015). It is, therefore, safe to expect that the size of an enterprise has the potential to moderate the nexus between entrepreneurship training and the attainment of goals set by an organisation.

Methodology

The target population of this study was all government-funded youth enterprises. A cross-sectional survey design was used. All youth entrepreneurship organizations registered with the YEDF in Taita Taveta County were included in the study's sampling frame. This

county was selected because in the year 2015/2016, 38.9% of its population experienced food poverty, which is higher than the national average of 32% then (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics [KNBS], 2018). Furthermore, no studies on the efficacy the funds by YEDF in the county were found by the researcher. As of April 2019, there were 262 registered groups. Using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sampling formula, a sample figure of 156 was calculated, as shown below.

$$S = \frac{X^2NP(1-P)}{d^2(N-1) + X^2 P(1-P)} = \frac{1.96^2 * 262 * 0.5(1-0.5)}{0.05^2(262-1) + 1.96^2 * 0.5(1-0.5)} = 156$$

Where:

S = Required Sample size

X = Z value (1.96 for 95% confidence level)

N = Population Size

P = Population proportion (expressed as decimal, assumed to be 0.5)

d = Degree of accuracy (5%), expressed as a proportion (.05); It is margin of error

The respondents were then randomly drawn from the frame. This was done through the use of the Microsoft Excel application. The researcher and his research assistants then personally administered structured questionnaires to the selected respondents. This approach allowed for clarification of questions because some of

the respondents had low levels of formal education. One of the office-bearers of the self-help groups responded to these questions. This was either the chairman, the secretary or the treasurer. The concepts were operationalized as shown in table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Operationalization of Key Study Variables

Variable	Nature of variable	Operational indicators	Supporting Literature
Entrepreneurial Training	Independent Variable	Technical skills Management skills Personal entrepreneurial skills	Cooney (2012) Kutzhanova, et al (2009)
Organisational Size	Moderating Variable	Number of employees Money capital	Liargovis and Skandalis (2010) Baumol (1959)
Organisational Performance	Dependent Variable	Profit Loan repayment Customer satisfaction Process improvement Product improvement	Rasula, Vuksic, and Stemberger, (2012) Kaplan and Norton (1992)

Source: Researcher (2021)

Questions about entrepreneurship training were crafted to capture venture-specific skills, business administration skills, and personal entrepreneurial abilities. The ones about organisational size captured number of employees and money capital. Those discussing organizational performance emphasized fiscal, client, process, and advancement aspects.

The reliability of these measures was established by calculating the Cronbach's Alpha coefficients for the items in the individual constructs. The summary of the outputs of these analyses is presented in table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Coefficients of Cronbach's Alpha

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items
Entrepreneurial training	0.887	0.927
Organisational size	0.821	0.827
Organisational performance	0.847	0.853

Source: Research data (2021)

The constructs of entrepreneurial training, organisational size, and performance were 0.887, 0.821, and 0.847 in that order. Since the indicators of the reliability of the measures of the variables are all above 0.7, they were all considered acceptable (Heale, & Twycross, 2015). The researcher ensured content validity of the measurement instrument by conducting extensive literature review on the constructs and by consulting professors from the Faculty

of Business and Management Sciences of the University of Nairobi.

The testing of hypotheses requires that the values of the population be normally distributed (Hanusz, Tarasinska, & Zielinski, 2016). Normality for the data collected in this study was tested by running the Shapiro-Wilk tests on the variables. The accompanying results are shown in table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Results for Shapiro-Wilk Tests for Data on the Variables

Variable	Statistic	Df	Sig.
Entrepreneurial training	.930	97	.000
Organisational size	.927	97	.000
Organisational performance	.970	97	.027

Source: Research data (2021)

Table 3.3 shows that the statistics for the Shapiro-Wilk tests for entrepreneurship training, organisational size, and performance are 0.930, 0.927, and 0.970 in the same order. All these values are significant and greater than 0.05. It was, therefore, inferred that the data was collected from a normally distributed population and is thus fit to be subjected to tests of hypotheses. The multicollinearity of the data was checked by determining the Variance Inflation Factors of the variables. These values were 1.538 and 1.478 for entrepreneurial training and organisational size respectively. Since they were all lower than five, multicollinearity was considered not to pose a challenge to the analysis (Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2011).

The objective of the study was to establish the effect of organisational size on the relationship between entrepreneurial training and organizational performance of youth group enterprises. To achieve this objective, the null hypothesis ‘Organisational size does not have a significant moderating effect on the relationship between entrepreneurship training and organizational performance groups’ was tested using the steps indicated in table 3.4.

Table 3.4 Details of the Data Analytical Models

Analytical Models	Hypotheses Tests and Interpretation of Results (SPSS)
Step 1: $OP_3 = \beta_{30} + \beta_{31}ET + \beta_{32}OS + \epsilon_3$	r-value: strength and direction (\pm) of the correlation. R^2 : The ratio of the variability of the DV explained by the explanatory variables
Step 2: $OP_3 = \beta_{30} + \beta_{31}ET + \beta_{32}ET*OS + \epsilon_3$	p-value: the statistical significance level; reject H_0 if $p \leq .05$ Infer moderation if the effect of the interaction between the predictor and the moderator on the criterion (step 2) is greater than the effect of the independent variable and moderating variable on the dependent variable (step 1)

Source: Researcher (2021)

The symbols and abbreviations used in the analytical models are explained below:

β_0 – is the intercept

β_{xy} – coefficients

ϵ - is the error term that describes unexplained variations

OP – Organizational Performance

ET – Entrepreneurial Training

OS – Organisational size

The moderating effect of a variable on the relationship between an independent and a dependent variable is considered present if the effect of the interaction between the predictor and the moderator on the criterion is greater than the effect of the independent and moderating variable on the dependent variable. Consequently, two regression models were run. The first one is with respect to entrepreneurship training and organisational size on performance. This gave the effect before moderation. The second considered the effect of ET and the interaction between ET and OS on OP to get the effect with moderation by OS.

Findings

Ninety-seven of the 156 youth group businesses that were contacted for data collecting accepted to participate in the exercise. This amounts to a 62 percent response rate. Data collection success rates of roughly 60% are deemed satisfactory for a survey-research study (Fincham, 2008). The objective of the study was to establish the effect of organisational size on the relationship between entrepreneurial training and organizational performance of youth group enterprises. To achieve this objective, the null hypothesis ‘Organisational size does not have a significant moderating effect on the relationship between entrepreneurship training and organisational performance’ was tested. The upshot of the regression analysis produced the results presented in the tables that follow.

Table 4.1: Regression Results for Entrepreneurial Training and Organisational Size on Performance

(a) Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.554 ^a	.307	.292	.50543

a. Predictors: (Constant), Organisation Size, Entrepreneurial Training

Source: Research data (2021)

It is illustrated, by the upshot depicted in table 4.1 (a), show that the effect of entrepreneurship training and organizational size on organizational performance is positive (R =

0.554). It is also indicated that 31 % of the variation in organizational performance is explained by the variation in entrepreneurship training and organizational size.

(b) Analysis of Variance^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	10.650	2	5.325	20.844	.000 ^b
	Residual	24.014	94	.255		
	Total	34.663	96			

a. Dependent Variable: Organisational Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Organisation Size, Entrepreneurship Training

Source: Research data (2021)

Table 4.1 (b) shows that the model expressing the association of entrepreneurship training and organisational size on organizational performance fits the data well (F= 20.844, p < 0.05). It may, thus, be concluded that the data provided by the sample supports the supposition that the regression models are better fits to the data compared to the models without independent variables. Hence, the predictor variables can be said to predict, with reliability, the outcome variable.

(c) Regression Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	.585	.280		2.086	.040
	Entrepreneurial Training	.082	.119	.068	.689	.493
	Organisation Size	.706	.134	.518	5.246	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Organisational Performance

Source: Research data (2021)

Table 4.34 9(c) puts on display that the beta for organizational size was significant ($\beta = 0.518$, $t = 5.246$, $p < 0.05$). However, the one for

entrepreneurship training was not significant ($\beta = 0.068$, $t = 0.689$, $p = 0.493$).

Table 4.2: Regression Results for Entrepreneurial Training and the Interaction between Entrepreneurial Training and Organisational Size on Performance

(a) Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.578 ^a	.334	.319	.49571

Predictors: (Constant), ET*OS, ET

Source: Research data (2021)

Table 4.2 (a) show that the influence of entrepreneurship training and the interaction between it and organizational size on organizational performance is positive ($R = 0.578$). The table does also exhibit that 33 % of

the variation in organizational performance can be significantly explained by the variation in entrepreneurship training and the interaction between ET and organizational size.

(b) Analysis of Variance^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	11.565	2	5.782	23.532	.000 ^b
	Residual	23.099	94	.246		
	Total	34.663	96			

a. Dependent Variable: Organisational Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), ET*OS, ET

Source: Research data (2021)

Table 4.2 (b) shows that the model expressing the influence of entrepreneurship training and the interaction between it and organizational size on organizational performance fits the data well ($F= 23.532$, $p < 0.05$). It may, thus, be concluded that the data provided by the sample

supports the supposition that the regression model is a better fit to the data compared to the model without independent variables. Hence, the predictor variables can be said to predict, with reliability, the outcome variable.

(c) Regression Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.037	.266		7.643	.000
	Entrepreneurial Training	-.530	.190	-.441	-2.781	.007
	ET*OS	.291	.051	.902	5.686	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Organisational Performance

Source: Research data (2021)

It is depicted, by table 4.2 (c) that the beta for entrepreneurial training was significant ($\beta = -0.441$, $t = -2.781$, $p < 0.05$). The one for the interaction between ET and OS was also significant ($\beta = 0.902$, $t = 5.686$, $p < 0.05$).

The difference between R in the model derived in step two (0.578) and the R in the resultant

model for step one (0.554) is 0.024. The differences between the R-square and the Adjusted R-square are also positive, both at 0.027. Since steps one and two show the results before and after moderation respectively, it can be implied that organisational size does have a moderating effect on the relationship between entrepreneurship training and organisational

performance. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected. The resultant model is shown below:

$$OP = 0.585 + 0.068ET + 0.518OS$$

Where:

OP – Organisational Performance

ET – Entrepreneurship Training

OS – Organizational Size

Discussion

The findings of this study indicate that organisational size does have a moderating effect on the relationship between entrepreneurship training and organisational performance. These results support the postulations of Baumol's Theory. In 1959, Baumol hypothesized that the rate of return posted by an organization increases with an increase in its size. He argued that the amount of financial capital held by an organization has the potential to positively affect profitability as well as earnings on investment. The same effect is expected on the number of employees on performance.

These findings support those of a study conducted by Doğan (2013), which demonstrated that there exists a positive relationship between measures of organizational size and the profitability of an organisation. Using multiple regression and correlation methods, he analysed data collected data from two hundred firms that were in operation in Istanbul Stock Exchange in the years between 2008 and 2011 in Turkey. A study by Abbasi and Malik (2015) on 50 firms listed in Karachi Stock Exchange showed that organization size has a moderating effect on the association between growth and performance.

This finding contributes to the body of knowledge on entrepreneurship training, organizational size and performance. The

salience of the contribution of this outcome is underscored by the fact that of all the literature reviewed, the researcher did not come across studies that specifically studied the moderation effect of OS on the interconnection between ET and OP. Contribution is also made to the body of knowledge of interactions between ET and OS, and between OS and OP. It follows that the size of organisations must be increased if ET programmes are to be beneficial to government-funded youth groups.

Conclusion

The objective of this study was to ascertain the moderating effect of organisational size on the association between entrepreneurship training and organisational performance. It established that the size of an organization does have an effect on the nexus between entrepreneurship training and performance that is moderative in nature. The difference between R in the model derived after introduction of the interaction between ET and OS (0.578) and the R in the resultant model before the interaction (0.554) is 0.024. The corresponding null hypothesis is, hence, not supported. The main size challenge faced by youth is inadequate production staff and lack of enough money capital.

Implications

Given that the size of a youth group enterprise was found to moderate the nexus between ET and performance, the study recommends that every attempt should be made to grow these enterprises. This is also supported by the finding that when all the variables were at play, only the coefficient of OS was found to be significant. Managers of the enterprises should develop and implement business expansion strategies. Policymakers need to incorporate measures that encourage the growth of youth group enterprises. Trainers can consider including in their programmes, aspects of enterprise size and its importance

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