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*Original Research Paper*

## Effectiveness of Entrepreneurship Training and TO-LO-PO-SO-GO Creativity Technique in Enhancing the Entrepreneurial Intentions of Prison Inmates in Osun and Oyo States, Nigeria

PO Oyebiyi and RA Animasahun\*

University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria

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Prison management in Nigeria has focused mainly on punitive measures until recently when the principle of prison reforms which emphasizes the importance of reform and rehabilitation became a major focus, thus providing alternative service delivery arrangement for prison management. With this backdrop, this study examined the effectiveness of training in Entrepreneurship and TO-LO-PO-SO-GO creativity technique in enhancing the entrepreneurial intentions of Prison inmates in Osun and Oyo States, Nigeria, with the mind of preparing the prison inmates to be well integrated into the society after incarceration. The study utilized the pre-test, post-test control group experimental design with a 3x2x2 factorial matrix, whereby the rows consist of the two intervention techniques and control, and the column is crossed with entrepreneurial self efficacy and time spent in prison (both at 2 levels each). A total of 102 prison inmates was randomly selected and distributed into the 3 groups to participate in the study. Two validated instruments were used and three hypotheses tested at 0.05 level of significance. The results showed that there is a significant main effect of treatments on the entrepreneurial intention of prison inmates ( $F_{(2,101)} = 510.104, P < .05$ ), Participants exposed to Entrepreneurial Training (ET) had the highest mean score ( $26.1_{(19.54 + 6.56)}$ ), followed by prison inmates exposed to TO-LO-PO-SO-GO Technique (TT) ( $21_{(19.54 + 1.46)}$ ), and there is a significant interaction effect of treatment and entrepreneurial self-efficacy on the entrepreneurial intention of prison inmates ( $F_{(2,101)} = 6.848; P < .05$ ). The study has several implications which include, among others the fact that the study proved that Entrepreneurial training and TO-LO-PO-SO-GO creativity techniques are effective interventions in fostering the development of entrepreneurial intention of prison inmates. It is therefore recommended that Prison officials should undergo trainings in Entrepreneurial skills and TO-LO-PO-SO-GO creativity technique so as to be skillful enough to train the inmates, thereby providing alternative service delivery arrangement for prison management, different from the former punitive measure. This would help to foster the entrepreneurial intentions of the inmates which would aid them to believe in themselves and adjust positively to their challenges during incarceration and get prepared for life after incarceration.

**Key words:** Entrepreneurship training, TO-LO-PO-SO-GO, Creativity technique, Prison inmates, Incarceration.

### INTRODUCTION

Rehabilitating and reorienting convicts before their reunification with the society can be perceived as an essential focus for adequate social moral transformation. The rehabilitation of prisoners is, and has always been, a vital, though contentious aspect of the modern prison system (Agomoh & Ogbozor, 2006). Indeed, Christian religious leaders who wanted to reform the lawbreakers through a strict regime that included religious edification first founded the western model of the prison, the penitentiary (Clear, Stout, Dammer, Kelly, Hardyman & Shapiro, 1992). Ever since the apparent failure of these early reformatory measures, there have been ongoing attempts to alter the criminal character by using similar intrusive techniques (Bottoms, 1980). Entrepreneurial intentions are crucial and first in a series of actions as the driving force for the achievement of economic development and job creation, contributing at the same time to personal development and effectively dealing with numerous pathogenic social phenomena (Nurwahida, 2007; Sarri & Trihopoulou). In this sense, entrepreneurial intentions would be the first step to understand the evolving nature and sometimes, long-term process of venture creation (Lee & Wong, 2004).

Thus, enhancing the entrepreneurial intention of prison inmates would serve a useful tool of making them useful to self and environ when released to the society. However, prisoners hail disproportionately from economically and socially disadvantaged circumstances in which violence, substance abuse, family disruption, and other traumatic experiences are common. This is because the

prison is generally perceived very negatively as the receptacle of society's worst and wayward members. There are cases of misfortunes, psychopathological disorders, accidental occurrences and or unfortunate situations that have preceded prison inmates' incarcerations. Overall, they have experienced many more potentially damaging life experiences than their never-imprisoned counterparts. The problem is exacerbated on release to the society with many becoming the pawns for social and political violence, robberies and assassinations. This, perhaps, account for recidivism that is the reason why many return to the prison no sooner than they left. The importance of Prison as an institution is not limited to punishing the offenders; it includes the protection of society, reformation and indeed the rehabilitation of inmates. It cannot be clearly established if the Nigerian prisons can be said to be serving any of these purposes effectively such that the social structure of prisons and prison practices can actually enhance rehabilitation and reintegration.

Although there have been prior attempts to assist prison inmates recover psychologically from and during incarceration (Esere, 2007; Agali, 2004; Animasahun 2002) the majority of these studies focused on issues that are more ephemeral than to provide self help to the prison inmates. While these factors are significantly relevant, adjustment and psychological well-being may be unachievable without a patent look at the self-image of the individual. In other words, exploring the self-image of the prison inmates, efforts on their adjustment and effective psychological well-being will only be temporally felt and would fizzle out with time. Hence, the proposal of certain techniques as entrepreneurial skills and creative thinking to foster entrepreneurial intention is quite imperative. A dearth exists in the understanding of possible relationships between certain human attributes such as entrepreneurial intention and the individual's creative and social performance. In other words, without fostering the entrepreneurial intention of the prison inmates, efforts on their adjustment and effective psychological well-being will only be temporally felt and would fizzle out with time. It is on this basis that the authors are considering the use of entrepreneurial and creativity strategies in fostering the entrepreneurial intention of prison inmates. Entrepreneurship training is able to address some of the deficiencies in the existing educational system. Firstly, the development of entrepreneurial skills in the educational system increases the supply of future entrepreneurs in the country. A venture support system based on entrepreneurship education designed to stimulate and facilitate entrepreneurial activities, could result in a lower unemployment rate, increased establishment of new companies, and fewer failures of existing businesses. Empirical evidence on the efficacy of entrepreneurship training abounds (Peterman & Kennedy, 2003; Wilson et al., 2007; Charney & Libecap, 2000; Athayde, 2009). Moreover, given the unemployment problems in most developing countries (such as in the case with Nigeria) as well as rising unemployment levels in developing countries in the face of globalization, the development of entrepreneurial skills as well as knowledge and skills in the venture creation process prepares individuals for the realities of life. Therefore, the application of entrepreneurial competencies in daily life may empower prisoners to learn business and enhance their social and life skills. In so doing, efforts are made to foster values and skills that are so dearly needed in building enduring entrepreneurial intention.

To say that inability to secure white collar jobs as well as high rate of unemployment is vital to able bodied men's involvement is to state the obvious. Hence, the entrepreneurial skills of the incarcerated individuals need to be fostered to equip them adequately for future challenges and to be meaningfully employed and busy doing something worthwhile. Otherwise, the incidence of recidivism will aggravate. On the other hand, creativity is concerned with bringing about new ideas and updating old ones. Animasahun (2002) made the definition comprehensive by describing creativity as conscious cognitive processes stimulated by problematic situation, guided by interest and resulting in the generation of statistically infrequent unique, valuable and appropriate ideas, useful in turning challenges of life into fruitful, beneficial and profitable outcomes. Surprise is sometimes added as a third criterion, while quality and appropriateness are also added to the definition of creativity (Boden, 2004). In creativity, there are diverse techniques that could be utilized to foster entrepreneurial intention of an individual. TO-LO-PO-SO-GO is one of them and employed in this study.

TO-LO-PO-SO-GO, a focused thinking strategy, according to De bono (1999) describes a five step divergent thinking approach towards a creative end. The TO implies an awareness of where one is or would want to go to. LO, entails exploring information, PO, synthesizes possibilities generated, SO centres on the decision among the possibilities, and GO stands for action taken to the decision taken at the SO stage. There is a long tradition of describing entrepreneurship and innovative business behavior as an act of creativity (Amabile, 1996), and the two are often used synonymously (Ward, 2004). Evidence shows that beliefs are determinants of the quality of one's thinking and intellectual performance. Animasahun (2002) postulated that creativity changes belief patterns positively, reforming positively the entrepreneurial intentions of prison inmates using a creativity technique such as TO-LO-PO-SO-GO may be a significant attempt.

Entrepreneurial self efficacy is a moderating variable in this study. A growing body of research attests to the predictive power of entrepreneurial self-efficacy on entrepreneurial factors. For instance, Chen, Greene, & Grick (1998) demonstrated that entrepreneurs' self-efficacy is significantly higher than that of managers in two domains-innovation and risk taking. Krueger, Reilly and Carsrud (2000) associated self-efficacy with the perceived feasibility and formation of entrepreneurial intentions, while Chandler and Jansen (1992) used self-efficacy to explain employment choice intentions. Summarizing the state of the field in a meta-analysis, Rauch & Freese (2007) showed that entrepreneurial self-efficacy for starting a new business is a crucial factor for increasing the likelihood of business start-up activity. Tang (2009) reported that entrepreneurial self-efficacy enhances commitment to their new ventures.

Negative life events such as incarceration are known to predict various measures of psychological discomfort and malady. Therefore, research in the area is often grouped under the generic term distress. Distress researchers concur that the specific quality of exposure to potentially damaging experiences, individuals' pre-event characteristics, and post event resources significantly influence the outcome of traumatic events (Benotsch, Brailey, Vasterling, Udo, Constans, & Sutkers, 2000; Gold, Engdahl, Eberly, Blake, Page & Freuh, 2000). The same may apply in the case of a poor entrepreneurial intention. Therefore, a prisoner's condition probably is determined by variation in what happens during incarceration, in resources for overcoming and managing the experience, as well as in individual characteristics on prison entry. The current research contributes to the entrepreneurial intention literature and seeks to determine effectiveness of two therapeutic approaches in fostering entrepreneurial intention among prison inmates.

## Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested for significance at 0.05 margin of error.

1. There is no significant main effect of treatments on the entrepreneurial intention of prison inmates.

2. There is no significant main effect of entrepreneurial self-efficacy on the entrepreneurial intention of prison inmates.
3. There will be no significant interaction effect of treatment and entrepreneurial self-efficacy on the entrepreneurial intention of prison inmates.

## Method

### Research design

The study utilized the pre-test-post-test, control group experimental design with a 3x2x2 factorial matrix. In essence, the row consists of the two intervention treatments (Entrepreneurial training and TO-LO-PO-SO-GO creativity technique) and the control. The row is crossed with entrepreneurial self-efficacy varied at two levels (high and low) and time spent in prison at two levels (old and young).

Population, Sample and sampling technique

The population consists of all prison inmates who are currently serving terms in all prisons in South West, Nigeria. The purposive random sampling technique was used for selecting the sample for this study. Two states from South West Nigeria (Osun and Oyo States) were purposefully selected for the study. Out of these three prisons (two in Osun and one in Oyo) were selected. The prisons were then randomly assigned to the two interventions and control group. Using simple random sampling of one hundred and two (102) participants were randomly selected using the simple balloting method. Participants in each group were selected using the cap method of simple random sampling. A number of criteria were satisfied by the participants before being deemed qualified for selection into the experimental programme and the control.

### Instrumentation

Two valid and standardized instruments were used in this study.

#### Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy Scale (ESES)

Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy Scale (ESES) was used as the measure for entrepreneurial self-efficacy of the prison inmates. The entrepreneurial self-efficacy scale was developed by DeNoble, Jung and Ehrlich (1999). This scale consists of 15 items measuring an individual's abilities in performing entrepreneurial tasks with each item measured on a 5 point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Examples of items on the scale include: "I can identify potential capital sources for the venture" and "I can develop relationships with people who connect to sources of funds". A 16th item "Do you have the abilities (knowledge, skill and experience) to start a new business?" was also added independently of this list. The 16th item is answered 1= none of the abilities to 5= all necessary ability format. Cronbach alpha of 0.87) was obtained by DeNoble et al. (1999). A pilot testing was conducted using twenty prison inmates from Oyo prison. A Cronbach alpha of 0.73 was obtained in order to verify the suitability of this scale in the Nigerian context.

#### Entrepreneurial Intention Questionnaire (EIQ)

Entrepreneurial intention Questionnaire (EIQ) was used as the measure of prison inmates' intention to start a new venture after incarceration. A set of questions proposed by Liñan (2005) was used. This instrument consists of six items aimed at unveiling the respondents' intentions to start their own businesses in the future. The items are built on a seven-point Likert scales, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) and 5 (strongly agree). Sample items on the scale include I am ready to do anything to be an entrepreneur and I have the firm intention to start a company someday. The internal consistency of 0.95 was obtained by Liñan (2005) for the Spanish version of the instrument. The researchers obtained an alpha value of 0.72 for the scale which has helped to ascertain its adaptability and suitability for the present study.

## Procedure

- The study was carried out in three phases: pre-seasonal activities, pre-test, treatment and post-test. At the pre-session, activities include the recruitment and assignment of participants to the two experimental and control groups.

### The Treatment Phase

The participants that received the treatment were those in the two experimental groups. The experiment was carried out over a period of six weeks with the first week used for the screening and final selection of participants. The experimental treatments package was executed through a series of instructions, coaching, discussions, take-home assignments and behavior rehearsals. The lectures were arranged in such a way that one lecture built on the next. At the conclusion of the treatment phase a post-test was administered to all the participants.

### Data Analysis

Data generated in this study was analyzed using the analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA), the Multiple Classification Analysis (MCA) and the post hoc test.

## Results

Results of the three hypotheses generated are hereby presented in Tables 1 and 2.

**Table 1:** Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA)

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Squares	F	Sig. (f)
Covariates	8.231	1	8.231	2.547	.114
Treatment	3297.341	2	1648.670	510.104	.000
Entre. Self efficacy	156.378	1	156.378	48.384	.000
Year in jail	3.472	1	3.472	1.074	.303
TRT x Entre. Self efficacy	44.268	2	22.134	6.848	.002
TRT x Yr in jail	4.405	2	2.203	.682	.508
Entre. Self efficacy x Yr in jail	.330	2	.330	.102	.750
TRT x Entre. Self efficacy x Year in jail	4.195	1	2.097	.649	.525
Explained	3497.693	12	90.183	.000	
Residual	287.650	89			
Total	3785.343	101			

**Table2:** Multiple Classification Analysis (MCA) on Post-test Mean Score in Entrepreneurial intention

Grand Mean = 19.54		Unadjusted +		Adjusted for Independent Covariates	
Variable + Category	N	Dev'n	Eta	Dev'n	Beta
TRT Group					
1 Treatment I	34	1.52		1.46	
2 Treatment II	32	6.46		6.56	
3 Control	36	-7.18		-7.22	
			.93		.94
Entre Self Efficacy					
1 Low	57	-.93		-1.07	
2 High	45	1.17		1.36	
			.17		.20
Year in Jail					
1 Low	51	.46		.23	
2 High	51	-.46		-.23	
			.08		.04
Multiple R Squared					.909
Multiple R					.954

Table 1 reveals there is a significant main effect of treatments on the entrepreneurial intention of prison inmates ( $F_{(2,101)} = 510.104$ ,  $P < .05$ ). Therefore, the hypothesis which states that there is no significant main effect of treatments on the entrepreneurial intention of prison inmates is rejected. This implies that the two treatments were effective in fostering entrepreneurial intention. In order to provide some indications of the performance of each group, a Multiple Classification Analysis (MCA) was computed. The results are presented in Table 2. The MCA as shown in Table 2, indicates the magnitude of entrepreneurial intention of all the groups. Participants exposed to Entrepreneurial Training (ET) had the highest mean score (26.1 ( $19.54 + 6.56$ )), followed by those exposed to TO-LO-PO-SO-GO Technique (TT) (21 ( $19.54 + 1.46$ ))

and then the control group (12.32 ( $19.54 - 7.22$ )). This implies that ET is more effective than TT in fostering entrepreneurial intention.

### Summary of findings

There is a significant main effect of treatments on the entrepreneurial intention of prison inmates ( $F_{(2,101)} = 510.104$ ,  $P < .05$ ).

There is a significant main effect of entrepreneurial self efficacy of prison inmates' entrepreneurial intention ( $F_{(2,101)} = 48.384$ ;  $P < .05$ ).

There is a significant interaction effect of treatment and entrepreneurial self-efficacy on the entrepreneurial intention of prison inmates ( $F_{(2,101)} = 6.848$ ;  $P < .05$ ).

## Discussion of Findings

### Hypothesis one

Hypothesis one reveals there is a significant main effect of treatments on the entrepreneurial intention of prison inmates. There is a significant difference among the groups (ET, TT and Control) in the post-test scores on entrepreneurial intention ( $F_{(2,102)} = 510.104$ ,  $P < .05$ ). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. The MCA further indicated that the group treated with ET had better performance than those treated with TT. The above finding corroborates prior studies (Peterman & Kennedy, 2003; Wilson et al., 2007; Athayde, 2009) with regards to the efficacy of entrepreneurial training. These empirical evidences support entrepreneurial training as an intervention tool, which impacts adult attitudes toward entrepreneurship. In these impact studies, researchers most often draw on the psychological literature to argue that the intention to start up a business is the proxy that best reflects the odds a person will start a business or not. Thus, the various streams of literature relate the effects of entrepreneurship training as a precursor and sustenance of the intention of venture creation development of individuals.

The uniqueness of the ET model is on the basis that it focuses on eliciting positive attitudes of the surroundings of the individual concerning entrepreneurship, which most likely could increase one's desire to engage in entrepreneurial activities. These areas of focus include, but not limited to, increasing business knowledge, negotiation, leadership and creative thinking, exposure to technological innovation and new product development. Further, promoting psychological attributes associated with positive views of entrepreneurs such as self confidence, active experimentation/participation and self esteem could also be a stimulating factor in the Model ET. Researchers indicate that using learning style preferences that include active experimentation, balanced with concrete experience and abstract conceptualization can enhance the entrepreneurial propensity (Charney & Libecap, 2000). Specifically, individuals who experience a positive view on entrepreneurship among their immediate contacts are more likely to have the greater intention to become entrepreneurs. Through this positive view on entrepreneurship the participants may have self-regulated their behavior, converging on measures that improve entrepreneurial intentions.

TT is also effective in fostering entrepreneurial intentions. Being a creativity technique, it is less surprising that TT reported significant effects on entrepreneurial intention. This is because there is a long tradition of describing entrepreneurship and innovative business behavior as an act of creativity (Amabile, 1996; Ward, 2004) and the two are often used synonymously. The connection can be found in the idea that a critical part of entrepreneurship is the newness and novelty (Davidsson, 2002) that can affect the market process. Entrepreneurs must come up with ideas for new goods or services that can be brought to a market, and having identified, such, they must figure out how to effectively carry out this process.

The possible explanation for the current finding revolves around the fundamentals of the TT. The module unfolds thinking in the stepwise format along the terms of the interrelationship among entrepreneurial behavior,

environmental and personal factors. It also provides the practical framework for convenient switching and interactive learning used to develop both constructivism and cooperative learning (Steward, 1998). The treatment focused on facilitating understanding by unscrambling thinking and eliminating complexity, so that a thinker is able to use one thinking mode at a time instead of trying to do everything at once. The method also encompasses map-making style. This makes thinking a two stage process, i.e. to make the map, and to choose a route on the map. Considering how important thinking is for problem solving, making decisions, making plans, responding to situations and generally coping with entrepreneurial nuances, the mechanism of functioning of the TT model may be responsible for the current finding.

The result for hypothesis two shows that there is a significant main effect of entrepreneurial self-efficacy on the entrepreneurial intention of prison inmates. Evidence abounds to indicate that self efficacy bears positive impact on intentions to become an entrepreneur (Chen et al. 1998). Self efficacy is also an important predictor for determining the strength of entrepreneurial intentions and putting them in real term actions. As such, prior successful enactment of a task can change one's expectations and help further to reinforce one's self-efficacy. Self-efficacy has a number of practical and theoretical implications for entrepreneurial success because initiating a new venture requires unique skills and mindsets which differ from managerial behaviors. As it has been employed in the entrepreneurial literature, entrepreneurial self efficacy has generally focused on one's belief in their ability to take entrepreneurial actions based on their assessment of the managerial, functional (e.g., marketing, financial, accounting), and technical skills that they possess.

A robust body of research in the field of entrepreneurship explicitly investigated the relationship between entrepreneurial self-efficacy and entrepreneurial preferences. Clear patterns emerge: Individuals with higher entrepreneurial self-efficacy have higher entrepreneurial intentions (Chen et al., 1998; DeNoble et al., 1999; Krueger, Reilly, & Carsrud, 2000). Respondents with high entrepreneurial self-efficacy also have higher degrees of belief that they possess a viable idea for a new business. In short, those with high entrepreneurial self-efficacy are more likely to believe they also have an actionable idea. The current finding is thus explainable and appropriate because ultimate actions are selected by people based on their judgments or perceptions of personal self-efficacy. In this case prison inmate selective actions as a result of the treatment exposures may have been based on their judgments or perceptions of personal levels of entrepreneurial self-efficacy, hence the current finding.

Importantly, self efficacy increases over time and through involving in experiential learning activities. Zhao, Seibert, and Hills (2005) also stressed the mediating role of entrepreneurial self-efficacy on the relationship between entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial intention. Exposures enhance individuals' entrepreneurial efficacy through providing them attitudes, knowledge and skills to cope with the complexities embedded in entrepreneurial tasks such as opportunity seeking, resource assembling, and leading the business to success (Wilson, Kickul & Marlino, 2007). In fact, purposeful exposure enhances entrepreneurial efficacy of individual through providing an experience of mastery, role models, social persuasion and support by involving them in hands-on learning activities, business plan development, and running simulated or real small business (Fiet, 2000).

## Implications of the study

This study has several implications which include, among others the fact that the study has proved that Entrepreneurial training and TO LO PO SO GO technique are effective interventions in fostering the development of entrepreneurial intention of prison inmates. The finding is an addition to scientific researches in remedial and reformatory psychology whereby all citizens, including the incarcerated individuals are catered for because they are coming back to the society. The findings therefore have implications for prison inmates and prison officers alike, providing the knowledge on the understanding of entrepreneurial intention, its habitual formation and significant corollaries. The study has exposed prison inmates to psychological, positive and cognitive skills which could help them foster entrepreneurial intentions, thinking and focusing behavior which will aid them to believe in themselves and adjust positively to their challenges during and after incarceration.

Since the two therapeutic techniques applied were effective, the skills learnt would help prison inmates to reassess and recognize their ways of life; have a broad outlook to life with improved entrepreneurial intention. The study would, thus, serve as a vehicle to channel information geared towards improving the knowledge of prison inmates and prison officers alike on the development of a strong entrepreneurial intention and its associated habits, pattern of occurrence and significance for positive living, transformation and reformation. The study provides reasonable information that can be applied in the reformation and rehabilitation of prison inmates so that they equally have prospective future, eschew being among the army of unemployed when released from prison and contribute positively to the growth and development of the society.

The study further acknowledges the importance of entrepreneurs having self-efficacy for entering the entrepreneurial process, particularly when entrepreneurship as a vocational choice is not highly esteemed in the prison. Consistent with literature, the study found a positive association between entrepreneurial self-efficacy and entrepreneurial intention. Self efficacy seems to improve success in entering the entrepreneurial process. It implies that emphasizing the development of entrepreneurial self efficacy may be a potential factor in fostering entrepreneurial intention. The study has revealed the complex nature of prison inmates, their fear, frustration and state of helplessness and the need for to make available functional reformatory counselling services as a means to coming to the aid of this set of prison inmates on time before their situation gets worst.

## Conclusion

ET and TT were effective in fostering entrepreneurial intentions of prison inmates. Further, ET revealed stronger and better effectiveness than TT. Also, entrepreneurial self efficacy proved effective in the experimentation and interaction. Entrepreneurial intentions had been seen as the driving force for the achievement of economic development and job creation, contributing at the same time to personal development and effectively dealing with numerous pathogenic social phenomena. Understanding the antecedents of entrepreneurial intentions increases our understanding of intended entrepreneurial behavior. Therefore, it would seem logical that entrepreneurial intentions could provide valuable insights into effective rehabilitation and reformation of prison inmates.

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