



Agricultural Production: A Sustainable Means for Retired Military Officers in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

One of the greatest challenges that face a typical military officer at the edge of retirement is life after retirement. Retirement is the act of retiring or the state of being retired, i.e. to withdraw oneself from active service. The main objectives of the study are Identify the challenges of retired military officers; Determine if agricultural production can solve these challenges; Analyse ways in which agricultural production can help in sustainability after retirement from the military; Access the likely constraints to be faced by retired military officers when venturing into agriculture; and Determine the strategies for promoting agricultural production among military officers. Data for this study were collected from primary and secondary sources. A total number of two hundred (200) questionnaires were administered in this research work, out of which one hundred and ninety two (192) were returned. The questionnaires were administered using purposive random sampling techniques. Descriptive statistics, correlation analysis and likert type scale were adopted in the analysis of the data collected. Results from the study revealed that agricultural production will go a long way in tackling these challenges. This study therefore recommends that officers in the Nigeria military should be trained on how to have a better sustainable means after retirement through agricultural production.

Keywords: Agricultural production; Sustainable means; and Military officers

1. Background of the study

Retirement concerns psychological and financial challenges that a military officer should prepare well ahead of time. In most developing countries and Nigeria in particular, government restrict working age of military officers according to their rank. To prevent an ageing officers and for increasing efficiency and productivity, a close observation of many retirees in the Nigerian armed forces and the problems they are facing draw the attention of the researchers. These problems seem to range from sudden loss of life anxiety about a residential home, lack of occupation, dwindling status, decreased strength and deteriorated health condition, physical disabilities and aging thereby making retirement something that is dreaded by military officers. This problem is further compounded by lack of planning and management of postretirement conditions. Obviously, many officers enter into retirement without any personal plans or pre-retirement counselling. The government on their own part have not done much to enlighten the military officers on the need for planning for retirement. [1] Retirement is an age long practice in both the private and public service. It however becomes rationale to relieve the person of some strenuous and excruciating duties that may weigh him down and consequently threaten his health. [2] Agricultural production is a great means of sustainable development after retirement from the Nigeria Military. In some part of Nigeria, 1 in 3 children is underweight; delivering food is a temporary solution to hunger. A more permanent and sustainable solution is giving people the means to produce more food for themselves. [3] However, according to [4] stated that retirement is a real transition, transition in the sense that it is the passage from one place, stage of development to another. He was also of the opinion that the transition could mean passage from the former business career of active services to another, a second stage of life development.

1.1 Statement of the Problems

Life after retirement has not really been easy for most military officers hereby creating fear in the heart of some serving officers who sees the kind of life their predecessors are leaving and they really do not know how to go about plans for retirement.

Retirement is more than withdrawal, rather, it is a major crisis especially in Nigeria because there is an absence of pre-retirement counselling given by employers to employees, which would generate changes that normally facilitate the transition from work to retirement may be perceived as resulting into loss of status especially, if the retiree is a bread winner. To some people retirement is like a bitter pill and could be viewed from different perspectives therefore, counselling for the retirees is becoming very necessary in view of the various problems they are facing. [5] The irregular payment of pension often leaves them at the mercy of their children and these children may not even have enough to take care of themselves let alone their aged parents. Already a great number are languishing in the rural and urban communities for failure to plan for their retirement and more are being disengaged yearly into this training of retirement. Nigeria Military officers that are retired has paid their dues by paying the ultimate price, this set of people should not have any reason to suffer after retirement. There is need, therefore, to find answers to the following questions:

1.2 Research Questions

- I. What are the challenges of retired military officers?
- II. Can agricultural production solve these challenges?
- III. In what way can agricultural production help in sustainability after retirement?
- IV. What are the likely constraints to be faced by retired military officers when venturing into agriculture? And
- V. What are the strategies for promoting agricultural production among military officers?

1.3 Objective of the Study

- I. Identify the challenges of retired military officers;
- II. Determine if agricultural production can solve these challenges;
- III. Analyse ways in which agricultural production can help in sustainability after retirement from the military;
- IV. Access the likely constraints to be faced by retired military officers when venturing into agriculture; and
- V. Determine the strategies for promoting agricultural production among military officers.

Conceptual Clarification

2.1 Sustainable Development

Sustainable development is the ability to preserve the existing resources of the state for the collective use of the citizens while conscious efforts are made to conserve the resources for the use of future generations.[6]

Sustainable Development According to [7] refers to the term as the type of economic growth pattern where the use of resources meets the needs of the human population while conserving the environment at the same time. Sustainable development means resources are used in such a way that both current and future human needs can be met. [8] Observed that sustainable development, is a situation where basic operating structures and processes that would ensure the continuous development of a nation have been established and are working efficiently

2.2 Sustainable Agriculture

Sustainable agriculture integrates three main goals--environmental health, economic profitability, and social and economic equity. A variety of philosophies, policies and practices have contributed to these goals. People in many different capacities, from farmers to consumers, have shared this vision and contributed to it. Sustainability rests on the principle that we must meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Therefore, stewardship of both natural and human resources is of prime importance. For farmers, the transition to sustainable agriculture normally requires a series of small, realistic steps. Family economics and personal goals influence how fast or how far participants can go in the transition. It is important to realize that each small decision can make a difference and contribute to advancing the entire system further on the "sustainable agriculture continuum."The key to moving forward is the will to take the next step". [9]

2.3 Retirement

Retirement is an inevitable stage of ageing where the individual gradually disengages from the main stream of active work, social work and is eventually replaced with younger ones. Retirement can also be defined as separation from job with concern for the future. [10], [11] regarded retirement as the withdrawing of individual from gainful employment in the later part of his or her life in order to enjoy a period of leisure till death.

Retirement is the act of retiring or the state of being retired, that is to withdraw oneself from business public life or and to remove from active service. Thus, the process of retirement involves the transition of people's experience, when they move from a job role performed for pay to the role of retired person, the role of a counsellor is not complete until an individual is able to realize himself and the realities of the world around him and also maximize his potentials in order to cope with life demands. [12]

2.4 Forms of Retirement:

In Nigeria three major forms of retirement are identified in the literature they are voluntary retirement, compulsory retirement and mandatory retirement [13] Voluntary or self retirement occurs when the individual decides to quit active service for personal reason(s) irrespective of age, experience, length of service or retirement policies. This type of retirement depends more on the employee than the employer. Compulsory or forced retirement is a situation in which the individual is forced or compelled to retire against the individual's expectation and when he is ill-prepared for it. It is usually viewed negatively in that it is unplanned.

[14] identified reasons for compulsory retirement to include inefficiency, old age, ill-health, indiscipline. This retirement is in the interest of the organisation. Mandatory or statutory retirement is the normal (or expected form) in the sense that the person involved has reached the statutory age of retirement as specified in the condition of service of the establishment.

3. Methodology

3.1 Method of Data Collection

Data for this study were collected from primary and secondary sources. A total number of two hundred (200) questionnaires were administered in this research work, out of which one hundred and ninety two (192) were returned. The questionnaires were administered using purposive random sampling techniques by selecting five military organisations which include: National Defence College, Defence Headquarters, Army Headquarters, Navy Headquarters and Air force Headquarters all in Abuja, FCT Nigeria.

3.2 Analytical Techniques

Descriptive Statistics

Likert type scale

3.3 Results and Discussion

Table1: Distribution of Socioeconomic Characteristics of the Respondents

Socioeconomic Characteristics of the Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
40 - 50	149	77.6
51 - 55	43	22.4
Sex		
Male	162	84.34
Female	30	15.63
Arm of the force		
Army	78	40.63
Navy	58	30.21
Air force	56	29.17
Religion		
Christianity	102	52.13
Islam	90	46.88
Officer		
Serving	152	79.17
Retired	40	20.83
Interest in Agriculture		
Yes	187	97.4
No	5	2.6

The study indicates that 97.4% of the respondents are interested in Agriculture but are limited by some constraints which will be further analysed in the study.

Challenges of retired military officers

The study identifies the major challenges been faced by retired military officers are as shown in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Major challenges been faced by retired military officers

Challenges of retired military officers	Frequency	Percentage
Psychological adjustment to civil military relationship	12	30
Health deterioration issues	36	90
Planning and management	37	92.5
Inadequate finances	39	97.5

3.4 Ways in which agricultural production can solve these challenges

Income generation: A lot of income can be generated through farming which will solve the problem of inadequate finances.

Development of Civil military relation: Civil military relationship grows more when you interact with other people during farming processes rather than trying to look for serving or retired military officers to associate with and also join some farming association or groups, Good Health and Diet: The health of retired military officers tend to depreciate majorly due to their diet and adjustment to new environment, farming will go a very long way in boosting the health conditions of military officers through proper nutrition and living in a healthy environment.

3.5 Ways in which agricultural production help in sustainability after retirement

The analysis of the study shows some agricultural production areas which the military officers have showed up some interest which is as shown in table 3 and Figure 1

Table 3: Distribution of Ways in which agricultural production help in sustainability after retirement

Agricultural production	Frequency	Percentage
Crop Production	32	16.67
Fish farming	31	16.15
Poultry farming	83	43.23
Cattle rearing	26	13.54
Pig farming	12	6.25
Snail farming	5	2.6
Horticulture	3	1.56

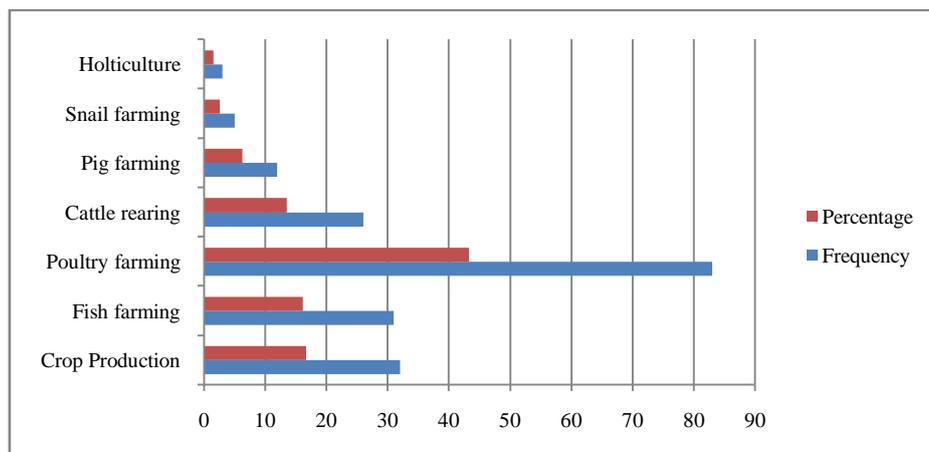


Figure 1: Distribution of Ways in which agricultural production help in sustainability after retirement

3.6 Likely constraints to be faced by retired military officers when venturing into agriculture

The study further reveals what some of the fears military officers have that is not making them see agriculture as the best option after retirement. These constraints are as shown in Table 4 and Figure 2below:

Table 4: Distribution of the Likely constraints to be faced by retired military officers when venturing into agriculture

Constraints	Frequency	Percentage
Access to good arable Land and Labour	156	81.25
Access to improved seed varieties, fertilizers, herbicides and farming implement	134	69.79
Access to credit or lack of funds	122	63.54
Access to veterinary doctors	90	46.88
Access to Market, Storage and processing facilities	88	45.83
Lack of technological knowhow in handling farming equipment	82	42.71
Pest and diseases infestation	67	34.90

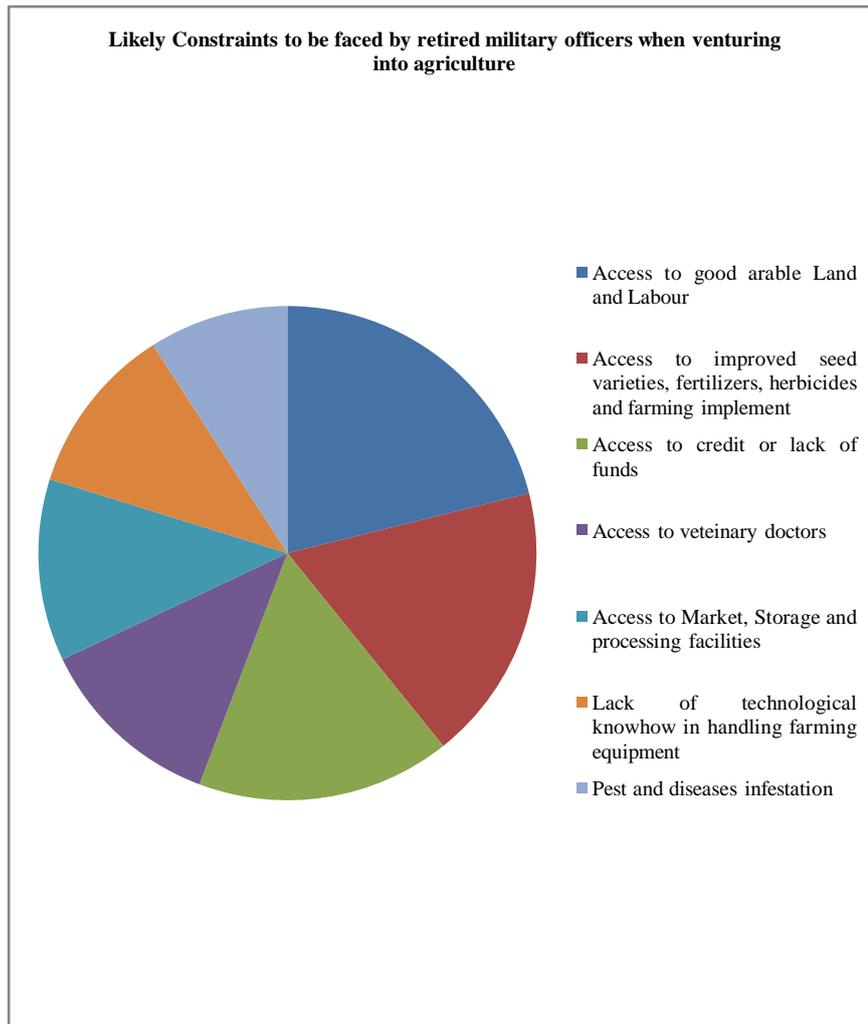


Figure 2: Likely constraints to be faced by retired military officers when venturing into agriculture

3.7 Strategies for promoting agricultural production among retired military officers

The respondents have suggested some strategies that can help in promoting agricultural production among retired military officers which is as shown in Table 4 below and Figure 4:

Strategies	Frequency	Percentage
Adequate training on how to venture into agriculture should be given to military officers when approaching the edge of retirement	178	92.7
Improved seed varieties for better yield should be given to officers who have showed interest in agriculture whenever needed	162	84.38
Training should also be given on the use of herbicides, pesticides and fertilizers	154	80.21
Creating the awareness of the public to stock route for better cattle rearing and to avoid conflict with herders	56	29.2
Farming land should be allocated to the officers who show interest in agriculture after retirement	152	79.2
There should be collaboration between agricultural and defence sector	145	75.52
Contacts of veterinary doctors should be made available	46	24

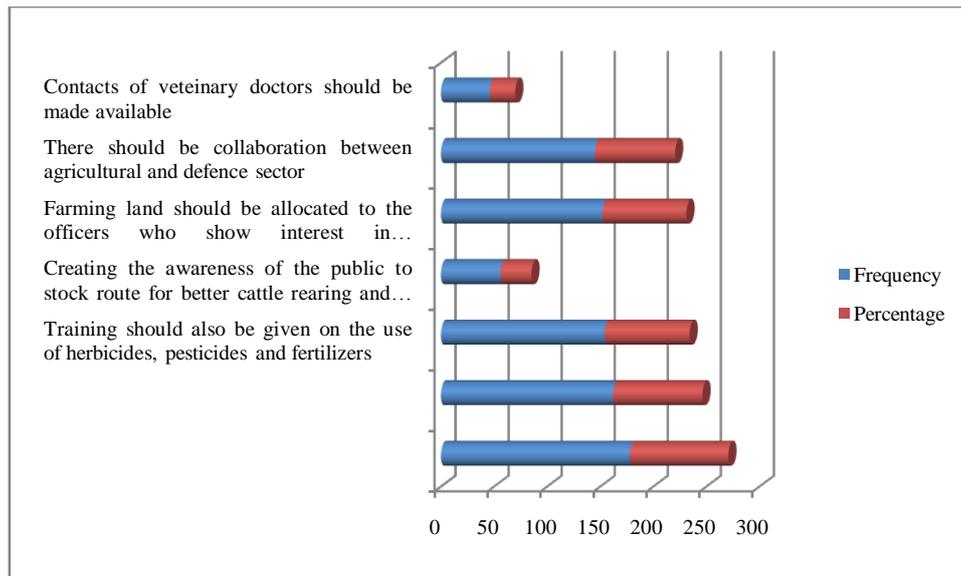


Figure 3: Strategies for promoting agricultural production among retired military officers

4. Conclusion

The study reveals that majority of officers in the Nigeria military both serving and retired are interested in agriculture but do not know how to go about it, although the study further identify some strategies that retired officers can adopt when venturing into agriculture as a better sustainable means.

The valuable military training and experience one receives during their time of service often makes finding a job after the retirement considerably easier, it is hereby left for the officer to choose which way to go. While some desire to go back to the village waiting for their monthly little token. It is important to plan ahead for how you will like to spend your retirement, and prepare yourself mentally and financially or whichever row you choose to follow.

Retirement is a good thing and should not be seen as a punishment or a means of eating relaxing and waiting for death to come, there is life after retirement infact a better life which you might have never been exposed to all this while if you can utilise the opportunity of retirement well.

5. Recommendations

Government should keep encouraging the military officers on venturing into agriculture as a sustainable means after requirement

Government should allocate farming land to all willing officers after retirement

Government should provide retired military officers who want to venture into agricultural productions with: improved seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides and farming implements

Serving officers should also build themselves in preparation for retirement by attending agricultural based conferences, seminars and training.

Better awareness should be created on stock route and grazing reserve to avoid conflict

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