

ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION AS A PANACEA TO REDRESSING XENOPHOBIC ATTACKS IN SOUTH AFRICA: A FOCUS ON SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES

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ABSTRACT

A democratic South Africa has witnessed recurrent xenophobic attacks in recent years, especially during 2008 and 2015. Most of the attacks involved native people looting the goods of immigrant businesses, impacting negatively on South Africa's economic growth through the effects on the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). It has been established that foreign-owned SMEs provide livelihoods for the majority of people in South Africa's poor settlements. Ironically, there is a claim that xenophobic attacks are perpetrated due to frustration among the native SME owners who are unable to compete with the foreign-owned counterparts. Hence, a public rhetoric has been created to suggest that native SME owners blame foreigners for taking all the business opportunities and markets. Given this strife, this paper endorses entrepreneurship education as a possible antidote. SMEs do play a crucial role in the development of local economies; and, this paper investigates the role of entrepreneurship education as a panacea to redressing xenophobic attacks. Entrepreneurship education raise peoples' awareness of self-employment as a career opportunity, promotes the development of personal qualities that are relevant to entrepreneurship such as creativity, risk taking, and responsibility, and provides the technical and business skills that are needed in order to start and grow a business venture. Furthermore, entrepreneurship education helps to transmit and impart entrepreneurial competencies and concepts required to start and run a successful venture. The article proposes that entrepreneurship education should be introduced as part of the school curriculum from primary school to university level in order to equip learners with entrepreneurial thinking as a lifelong phenomenon.

Key words: Entrepreneurship Education, Immigrants, Native, SMEs, Xenophobia, South Africa

1. INTRODUCTION

The terms entrepreneurship and small to medium enterprises (SMEs) are used interchangeably to mean one thing in the existing literature. As indicated by Ukpere (2011), South Africa like any other developing country is faced with developmental challenges such as unemployment, poverty and income inequality.

Ramukumba (2014) states that SMEs in developing countries have become important because of their potential to improve income distribution, create new employment, reduce poverty and facilitate export growth. SMEs enhance forward and backward linkages between economically, socially and geographically different segments of the economy.

They offer opportunities for enhancing and adapting suitable foreign and indigenous technical methods and provide an outstanding breeding ground for entrepreneurial and managerial ability (Ilegbinosa & Jumbo, 2015). In South Africa the SMEs sector has been hailed by the government in its role towards fostering economic growth and development, creating a host of government initiatives to address the financing needs of SMEs; foster and increase entrepreneurship activity in the country and creating profitable opportunities for indigenous entrepreneurs (Ngeek, 2014). SMEs contribute to economic development in various

ways by creating employment for the growing rural and urban labour force, providing necessary sustainability and innovation in the economy (Kongolo, 2010). Abor & Quartey (2010: 218) note that SMEs account for an estimated of 91% of businesses in South Africa, contributing between 51% and 57% of the gross domestic product and 60% towards employment. Katua (2014) found that SMEs play a vital role in reducing poverty as they tend to employ poor and low income workers and sometimes they are the only source of employment in rural areas and poor regions. Immigrant entrepreneurs form part of SMEs in South Africa.

The foreign owned businesses contribute to the development of local economies by offering affordable goods and services mostly to marginalised rural areas. However, the potential and capacity of the SME sector was shattered in 2008 and later in 2015 due to xenophobic attacks which mushroomed in most parts of South Africa. According to Khosa & Kalitanyi (2014), the xenophobic attacks made foreign owned SME business activities to halt with majority closing their businesses completely. Most of the attacks featured a number of local people looting the goods of foreign owned SMEs.

Cooper (2009) notes that an approximate of 342 shops were looted and 213 shops were raised to the ground by the local marauding xenophobes as the violence raged

on around the country in 2008. This impacted negatively on the economic growth of the country due to the fact that SMEs contribute immensely to the economic growth. One of the causes of the xenophobic attacks was perpetrated by the local SME owners failing to compete with the foreigners. In addition, local SME owners blame foreigners for taking all the business opportunities and markets.

Given this strife, this article endorses entrepreneurship education as a possible antidote. An entrepreneurship education programme creates self-sustainable individuals who are able to identify opportunities where others see a challenge. Entrepreneurship education raise peoples' awareness of self-employment as a career opportunity, promotes the development of personal qualities that are relevant to entrepreneurship such as creativity, risk taking, and responsibility, and provides the technical and business skills that are needed in order to start and grow a venture.

Entrepreneurship education can be imparted through institutions of higher learning as well as via skills transfer through collaboration between native and immigrant entrepreneurs. Once equipped with the entrepreneurial skills, the native people will be able to survive in the market place and hence that brings the bad blood between these two groups (natives and immigrants).

2. XENOPHOBIA IN SOUTH AFRICA

Xenophobia is a complex global phenomenon that differs on intensity and manifestation in depending on the contexts where it is found (Masuva, 2015; Tirivangasi & Rankoana, 2015). The common definition of xenophobia is "the hatred or fear of foreigners, combining the Greek *xenos* (foreign) with *phobia* (fear)" (Crush, 2008: 15). Tirivangasi & Rankoana (2015) define Afrophobia as strong hatred or insecure feelings towards fellow African deeply rooted in the frustrations over competition for few resources.

Xenophobia includes "all forms of discriminatory attitudes towards non-nationals, whatever their source or nationality" (Landau et al., 2005: 4). According to Neocosmos (2010: 13), it is a discourse and practices which results in the social and political exclusion of its targets from the rest of the population. Xenophobia in South Africa is manifested in the prejudice, discrimination, hostility and violence directed towards foreigners (Masuva, 2015).

Xenophobia in South Africa is peculiar and, in this paper, it is equated with targeted xenophobia. It displays at least three characteristics which probably differentiate it from other forms of xenophobia in other countries or continents. It is predominantly directed at black African foreigners, hence the term "Afrophobia". This is the violence which was directed towards fel-

low African people. Harris (2002) observes that xenophobia in South Africa is not against all foreigners but however, a certain group of people. South Africa since the acquiring of a democratic rule, it experienced an inflow of migrants from all parts of the world, however, a larger number of people came from its neighbouring countries. The migrant's influx from the African continent was driven by a number of factors which include, economic crisis, political refugees and others seeking greener pastures. This group was targeted due to the fact that they fit on the lower cluster of the South African community, resulting in competition for jobs, houses, services and business opportunities.

Masuva (2015) notes the second feature of xenophobia in South Africa is the violent manifestation of xenophobia beyond xenophobic attitudes. Xenophobia manifested itself in 2008 and 2015 with violence as the most notable feature to draw the attention of the people across the globe. The violent attacks resulted in sixty-two (62) deaths in 2008 and seven (7) people died in April 2015 (Matunhu, 2011; Masuva, 2015).

The third feature and the most important part of this study is the looting of immigrant owned shops. In each xenophobic attacks which occurred the foreign owned shops were looted as the anger of people rise. This research focuses on behavioural aspects of xenopho-

bia, the looting of foreign owned shops by the local citizens which resulted in victims from either side. In most cases, the owners were left vulnerable and without the means of sustenance after their businesses were looted. Yet in some cases, it resulted in injuries from sides, the owners and the members of the community. Consequently, the foreigners lost and the process of reintegration becomes even more difficult due to their non-acceptance by the communities which they save.

3. XENOPHOBIA AND THE LOOTING OF FOREIGN SHOPS

The main incidents of xenophobia occurred in 2008 and 2015 despite the isolated incidents between 1994 and 2008 (Nyar, 2009). These were the large incidents which drew the attention of the world globally and resulted in many casualties. The most notable feature of these xenophobic attacks was the looting of goods from both shops and the houses of immigrants. Cooper (2009) notes that an approximate of 342 shops were looted and 213 shops were raised to the ground by the local marauding xenophobes as the violence rages on around the country in 2008.

Table 1: Xenophobic attacks around South Africa

Province	Shops/ houses looted	Shops/ houses burnt	Suspects Arrested
Western Cape	33	2	435
Mpumalanga	44	3	49
Eastern Cape	2	0	5
Gauteng	155	202	227
Free state	5	0	97
Limpopo	0	0	--
North West	16	3	298
KwaZulu Natal 87 2	87	2	121
Total	342	213	1384

Source: SAPS (2008 in Cooper, 2009)

Petersen (2016) highlighted the protest which took place in Dunoon. During protests over housing in Dunoon, foreign owned shops and containers were targeted for break-ins and looting, with “everything from clothing to food” stolen. However, from the whole scenario it could not be established whether the attacks were xenophobic or not. The Ward Councillor Lubabalo Makaleni believed the looting was not motivated by xenophobia, but was rather simple acts of crime committed by opportunistic thieves during the protests (News24, 2015; Petersen, 2016). This is an explanation given by the authoritative figure of his nature but given the history of xenophobia in South Africa wherever, there is an attack on foreigners is accompanied by the looting of goods. This is what many scholars such as Crush (2008) and Dodson (2010) have described as denialism, whereby those in authority fail

to acknowledge that its xenophobic act when the looting of goods occurs rather than categorising under crime. There is seemingly a continuation of denialism in regard to looting of goods as xenophobia, one minister was quoted saying:

“The looting, displacement and killing of foreign nationals in South Africa should not be viewed as xenophobic attacks, but opportunistic criminal acts that have the potential to undermine the unity and cohesiveness of our communities” (Crush 2015: 4).

Further, in the midst of xenophobic attack in April 2015, News24 (2015) describes an incident which happened in Limpopo whereby members of the public in Thabazimbi looted four Pakistan shops. This resulted in the arrest of 13 people who were involved. However, the police had this to say:

“As the provincial government of Limpopo we do not believe the looting and burning of the shops belonging to foreign nationals were part of xenophobic attacks” (Phuti Seloba, spokesperson of Limpopo SAPS, News24, 2015)”.

The failure to acknowledge such acts as xenophobic hinders the process of finding the underlying cause of the problem taking place within communities. Consequently, Tshishonga (2015) notes that the failure to restore stability engenders lawlessness whereby locals, including the passer-by people, get to be preoccupied with looting of stock and destroying stalls belonging to immigrants. Basing on the sequence of events narrated during the xenophobic attacks in South Africa, this study can establish that the looting of foreign owned shops cannot be separated from xenophobic acts.

4. CAUSES OF THE LOOTING OF IMMIGRANT-OWNED SHOPS

In the past decade, South Africa experienced a sharp increase in the number of African and Asian immigrants who opened small shops at the periphery of the central business district (CBD) or have engaged in various street trading activities in various cities (Tevera, 2013). The presence of foreign immigrants was met with different views from the members of the community. To some poor classes

they are welcomed because they offer relatively cheap products to low earning members of the society; it was seen as an improvisation of their life.

However, on the other hand, they have become a source of bitterness to local shop owners who feel that they are being pushed out of business and would like to see the government introduce legislation that restricts the operations of foreign traders in South Africa (Tevera, 2013). This is evidenced by the results from the study conducted by Crush (2008: 2) who states that about 74% of South Africans support deportation of anyone who is not contributing economically to South Africa (Crush, 2008). Sixty-one percent stated that foreign nationals should not be able to start a small business in this country (Crush, 2008: 2). There is a serious competition between the locals and the foreign SMEs owners.

Further, a study by Hunter & Skinner (2003) revealed that most African migrants in Durban effectively used the informal sector as the entry point to other entrepreneurial activities in the formal sector. The migrants often find themselves competing with nationals for street space and for the same clientele. This direct competition with locals partly accounts for the often tense relations between South African SME owners and African migrant traders operating in the informal sector as *spaza* shops owners

(Hunter & Skinner, 2003). Fatoki & Oni (2016) define a spaza shop as an informal business that is conducted from a shack or a room. Spaza shops are normally located in the community neighbourhood or street corners. The South African Migration Project (SAMP) findings also reveal that nationals did not want it to be easier for foreign nationals to engage in street trading or to operate small businesses in South Africa or to obtain South African citizenship.

Furthermore, a report by a Special Reference Group on Migration and Community Integration in KwaZulu-Natal was appointed by Premier Senzo Mchunu to investigate the causes and consequences of the March-May 2015 violent attacks against foreign nationals in the province revealed that many South Africans operating in the tuck shop and spaza sector made allegations that businesses owned by foreign nationals thrive due to unfair advantages, and that these improprieties directly undermine the viability of locally-owned businesses (Madlala, 2016).

Madlala (2016) records some of the allegations levelled against foreigners. These include the fact that immigrants' businesses are not registered and they do not pay taxes; foreign nationals sell products at prices below those that local business owners conclude are feasible and are therefore receiving illegal support.

Moreover, foreign nationals receive unfair privileges from wholesale companies due to shared religious beliefs; Foreign nationals intentionally open spaza shops within close proximity to locally-owned businesses, thereby capturing some of the locals' markets; Foreign-owned businesses sell fake goods or non-South African products; Foreign businesses owners operate their shops for nearly 24 hours every day and even have workers sleeping there (Madlala, 2016). The foreigners displayed the entrepreneurship skills hence, the availability of such accusations from the local SMEs owners.

Madlala (2016) notes that foreign SME owners did not come into the communities seeking competition. However, they rented space from the locals who close their businesses on their own accord due to failure to run them or love for rental money. The following statement exemplifies this:

"Most cases foreigners had in fact taken over existing shops from locals who had either abandoned their businesses altogether or rented them out and earned higher incomes than they did while operating the shops" (Madlala, 2016).

The foreign owned businesses succeed because they are run with expertise and skills which enable the owners to pay rent and strive in

their businesses. This led us to a situation noted by (Adam & Moodley, 2015). The two scholars found out that the very presence of thriving Somali shops insults unsuccessful, impoverished township dwellers. They endure daily exposure as failures. Envy breeds resentment (Adam & Moodley, 2015). This is what makes the local people and the native SMEs business owners to feel like engaging in the looting of foreign owned business. Consequently, the looting of goods can only be achieved by exerting violence on foreigners and this action is called xenophobia.

5. SOCIAL CAPITAL THEORY: TOWARDS COLLABORATIVE NATIVE-IMMIGRANT ENTREPRENEURS APPROACH

This research adopts Social capital theory as the means to resolve the problem of the looting of foreign owned shops by the local people. The social capital theory was pioneered by the works of (Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1988; Coleman, 1990; Lin, 2002). Bourdieu (1986: 248) underlines that "Social capital is the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition". Similarly, one can say social capital is made up of social obligations and connections within members in a group (Lin, 2002). Coleman (1990) highlights that social capital indicates the resources, real or po-

tential, gained from relationships. In other words, it is a public good, and as public good, it depends on the willingness of the members of the community to avoid free riding. For this purpose, norms, trust, sanctions and values become important in sustaining this collective asset. According to Putnam (2000: 19), social capital refers to connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them. It can well be noticed that when both native and immigrant entrepreneurs understand the importance of social capital, they will be able to resolve collective violence more easily.

The social capital theory helped the researchers in trying to find amicable ways of ensuring co-existence between the native and the foreign SME owners. The researchers argue that, given the bases of the social capital theory, the native and immigrant SME owners can embark on the following: (1) form business partnerships; (2) create a business forum where they meet and discuss ideas; (3) use media platforms like WhatsApp groups where interaction is promoted; and, (4) creation of workshops on entrepreneurship. Putnam (2002: 18) concurs with the above information when he states that "the networks that constitute social capital also serve as conduits for the flow of helpful information that facilitates achieving our goals. The goals of these SME owners will be to engage in fair business, make

profit and maintain viable business in a safe environment. Collaboration between the two groups removes suspicion and strife between them and promotes unity. Adam & Moodley (2015) note that "Somali tenants mostly start from scratch with loans from relatives and also engage in collective entrepreneurship". Yet this can pinpoint to the use of social capital by the foreign business entrepreneurs, there is a need to extend the networking beyond family and include native entrepreneurs. The social capital theory can solve the problem of looting by implementing on a bigger scale than a family as unit. It promotes dependency among groups which are otherwise antagonistic.

The implementation of the proposition of social capital theory results in trust being established between the native and foreign business entrepreneurs. The authors of this paper are of the opinion that instead of competing for markets and being involved in xenophobic attacks, native entrepreneurs can benefit much by collaborating with immigrant entrepreneurs. More importantly is the skills transfer and fusion among these two groups. It goes without depth not to mention the synergy that can come with this collaboration. The easy flow of information makes issues like prices, retail outlets and management of these businesses to be shared easily among the owners. This will also help to repel the mistrust and allegations labelled against the

two groups. The social capital theory works extremely well in the process of ensuring sustainable SMEs growth in South Africa given the history of looting, mistrust and the existence of the "other" (outsider). In its implementation, the sharing of information, ideas, wholesale suppliers, markets will go a long way in ensuring success of SMEs in South Africa.

Entrepreneurship education as a societal institution presents a better platform to implement the propositions of the social capital theory in South Africa. In a bid to explain and understand the role of entrepreneurship education as an antidote to xenophobic attacks in South Africa, it is important to define entrepreneurship as well as immigrant entrepreneurship.

6. IMMIGRANT ENTREPRENEURSHIP: WHAT IS ENTREPRENEURSHIP?

According to Ahmad & Seymour (2008), there is no universally agreed upon definition for the term entrepreneurship. Rwigema & Venter (2004: 6) defined entrepreneurship as "the process of conceptualising, organising, launching and through innovation, nurturing a business opportunity into a potentially high growth venture in a complex and unstable environment". Schumpeter (1934) as cited in Ahmad & Seymour (2008: 7), defined entrepreneurs as innovators who implement entrepreneurial change within markets. This definition forms the crucial aspect of

modern entrepreneurship which is driven by innovation. It is the ability to innovate that separates successful entrepreneurs from the one struggling.

Entrepreneurship has received recognition worldwide as an engine for economic growth and development (Cooney, 2012; Naudé, 2013). As reported by Kritikos (2014), entrepreneurs can invigorate the economy by creating jobs and new technologies while at the same time increasing productivity. The activities of entrepreneurs (SMEs) can therefore transform economies through the multiplier effect where one transaction can lead to an expansion in incomes. Furthermore, entrepreneurship as a career is responsible for creating most of the jobs in South Africa. According to Abor & Quartey (2010: 218), SMEs contribute approximately 60% towards employment in South Africa. Sata (2013) notes that an entrepreneurship career offers momentous opportunities for individuals to realise financial independence as well as benefit the economy by contributing to job creation, innovation and economic growth.

To better understand the context of this study, it is important to distinguish between local and immigrant entrepreneurship. This distinction is crucial as it lays a foundation to understand whether a set of entrepreneurial start-up factors affect these two groups the same way Radipere & Dhliwayo, (2014). According to Volery (2007), an immigrant entrepreneur can be

defined as a person who starts a business in the host country. As indicated by Fatoki (2014: 722), "immigrant entrepreneurship contributes to employment creation, poverty alleviation and economic growth in their host countries". Most immigrants are highly entrepreneurial. In most cases, their business is located in marginalised areas such as rural areas hence their presence in these areas brings development in terms of infrastructure.

Infrastructural development is attained in the sense that immigrant entrepreneurs rebuild or renovate the old grocery shops in these rural areas. In addition, the road network is re-developed since it is frequently used when they purchase stock. Garg & Phayane (2014) concur by indicating that immigrant entrepreneurs occupy abandoned buildings in most townships hence making the owners to obtain value again from these assets. According to Turkina & Thai (2013), immigrant entrepreneurship through their innovativeness and job creation capabilities contribute immensely towards the socioeconomic development of the host countries. Furthermore, immigrant owned businesses are known for quite affordable prices as well as convenience as they open in the early hours and close late at night. These among others give immigrant entrepreneurs an upper hand in the market over their native counterparts.

7. ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION AS A PANACEA TO XENOPHOBIC ATTACKS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Entrepreneurship education if well-articulated can help the natives to understand the field openly at a tender age. This can go a long way in helping them to sustain competition from immigrant entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurship education equips people with skills which can improve their entrepreneurship alertness. Fatoki (2014) emphasises that entrepreneurial alertness enables entrepreneurs to easily identify opportunities which does not seem obvious. This is exactly what the native entrepreneurs need in order to be competitive. Entrepreneurship education raise peoples' awareness of self-employment as a career opportunity, promotes creativity and innovativeness which are crucial elements to new venture creation (European Commission, 2008).

According to Drucker (1985, cited in Cooney, 2012), entrepreneurship is a discipline which is something that can be learnt. Entrepreneurship education helps to change the mind-set of people so that they act and think entrepreneurial. The authors believe that it is the mind-set of the native people which need to be changed if the issue of xenophobia is to be addressed. This move can reduce jealous among native people which are one of the key factors which orchestrated xenophobic attacks given that they can now be equipped with

skills to run successful entrepreneurial ventures like their counterparts. Cooney (2012) assert that an effective and efficient entrepreneurship education programme should aim at imparting entrepreneurship skills, technical skills and management skills. Entrepreneurship education empowers native people to be employers instead of job seekers (Matunhu, 2011).

Kelley, Bosma & Amorós (2010) believe that for entrepreneurship education programme to have long-term benefits, it should also aim to equip communities rather focusing on entrepreneurs only. The general public can be educated through the medias such as televisions, radio and community outreach programmes. Studies such as Van der Merwe & de Swardt (2008) as well as Agbenyegah (2013), among others, indicate that in South Africa most SMEs are run by people with matric or equivalence. As indicated by Kutzhanova, Lyons & Lichtenstein (2009), entrepreneurial skill development process occurs over a period of time. This raises a serious need to consider introducing entrepreneurship education at the early life stages. Hence, Matunhu (2011) propose that entrepreneurship education should be introduced as part of the school curriculum right from primary school to university level to equip learners with entrepreneurial thinking at an early age. This goes a long way in transforming the nation as people can start to think and act entrepreneurial in their

jobs and in every income generating activity they are involved in regardless of not advancing to tertiary institutions. This not only reduces unemployment but can also alleviate poverty in these communities. Given the above evidence in support for entrepreneurship education as a possible antidote to xenophobic attacks in South Africa, it is hypothesised that there is a significant positive relationship between entrepreneurship education and an end to xenophobic attacks in South Africa.

7. CONCLUSION

This paper was aimed at investigating the role of entrepreneurship education as a panacea to xenophobic attacks in South Africa. The paper has argued that xenophobia includes all forms of discriminatory attitudes towards non-nationals, whatever their source or nationality. Then, the paper highlighted the point that xenophobia in South Africa is manifested in the prejudice, discrimination, hostility and violence directed towards foreigners. From the extant literature it was deduced that xenophobic attacks were perpetrated out of frustration of native SME owners who have been unable to compete with the foreign counterparts. Ordinarily, native SME owners blamed foreigners for taking business opportunities and markets, leading to destruction of immigrant-owned business property and the looting of their stock. These atrocities negatively impacted on the contribu-

tion of the SME sector in South Africa since immigrant entrepreneurs form part of the SME group. It is documented that foreign-owned SMEs' operations were halted for some time while some closed completely. This paper argued that entrepreneurship education could be a possible antidote to redressing xenophobic attacks in South Africa. To help understand how information and skills can be fused among native and immigrant entrepreneurs, the Social Capital Theory was used as a basis to explain this collaboration.

On that note it was suggested that native and immigrant SMEs owners could embark on the following: (1) form business partnerships; (2) create a business forum where they meet and discuss ideas; (3) use media platforms like WhatsApp groups where interaction is promoted; and, (4) creation of workshops on entrepreneurship. By this, the authors believe that it helps to repel the mistrust and allegations labelled against the two groups and hence promote unity. This collaboration can only be facilitated through education. It was discovered that entrepreneurship education equips people with skills which can improve their entrepreneurship alertness which is a crucial ingredient towards opportunity identification. Furthermore, it was deduced from extant literature that entrepreneurship education raised peoples' awareness of self-employment as a career opportunity, promotes creativity and

innovativeness which are crucial elements to new venture creation. The paper concludes by proposing that entrepreneurship education should be introduced as part of the school curriculum right from primary school to university level to equip learners with entrepreneurial thinking at an early age. This is based on the fact that the entrepreneurial skill development process occurs over a period of time.

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