

Crime Phobia's Effects on Immigrant Entrepreneurs in South Africa

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ABSTRACT The aim of this study is to investigate, depict the effects of fear of crime and assess the impact of the identified attitude, feelings and thoughts of the local entrepreneurs and communities towards the immigrant entrepreneurs in South Africa. The study used a desk review methodology. Data for the study was collected through the review of various documents. The finding from current literature reveals that there are constraints faced by immigrant entrepreneurs while operating their businesses. The reviews of literature confirmed that the crime committed against immigrant entrepreneurs includes murder, robbery, attempted murder, theft as well as assault. The findings also indicate that South Africa is very conducive to operate different businesses successfully but the police are not doing their best to assist the majority of immigrant entrepreneurs in ensuring adequate security and arrest culprits. However, some suggestions were made on how the government, the policymakers and the civil servants as well as the community support in reporting crime could improve the factors highlighted in order to get rid of the different forms of crime feared by immigrant entrepreneurs in order to operate confidently in their environment in South Africa.

INTRODUCTION

Generally speaking, the fear of crime both locally and internationally still needs to be seriously addressed. However, many efforts have been holistically made in developed countries in ensuring that the alarming rates of fear of crime are drastically reduced while not many efforts have been made in the developing countries in which South Africa is not excluded. Previously, a survey conducted by Mesko et al. (2007) reveals that, "in the United Kingdom (UK) and United States (US), crime surveys have expanded rapidly since the late 1960s. Furthermore, "fear of crime is currently one of the most researched topics in international criminology". In addition, they stressed further that, "crime surveys are conducted, not only in Western European countries and the US, but also in Central and Eastern European countries (Hatalak et al. 1998; Kury 2001) and South Africa (Mistry 2004)". Therefore, "making police officers approachable and

visible is one of the most important factors in reducing fear of crime among the public, local and immigrant entrepreneurs" (Mesko et al. 2007). An immigrant entrepreneur could also be seen as those individuals who are the real owners of the businesses or those employed by the owners to run and manage businesses on their behalf. "However, these immigrants entrepreneurs face a number of problems and endure considerable xenophobic hostility directed at them and their businesses" (Kalitanyi 2010).

"Despite the difficult local conditions in which they operate, most of the immigrant entrepreneurs express their optimism and look for possibilities to expand their business enterprise elsewhere in South Africa" (Rogerson 1999 in Kalitanyi 2010). "Surviving these conditions proves that immigrants possess the entrepreneurial quality of perseverance" (Kalitanyi 2010). Charman and Piper (2012) reveal that there have been several violent attacks against the immigrant entrepreneurs both in the cities and towns in South Africa some years ago. Bseiso (2006) and Ndenze (2006a) pointed out that there has occurred an increased in the number of immigrant entrepreneurs killed since 2006. In addition to this, the study conducted by Bseiso (2006) and Ndenze (2006b) show that about 28 Somalians were killed in the Western Cape Prov-

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ince of South Africa in 2006 due to violent attacks. They further stressed that the major reasons behind the various violent attacks and killing against the immigrant entrepreneurs in South Africa was as a result of the xenophobic attitudes and violence attacks. South Africa has been one of the African countries where issues related to fear of crime has not been thoroughly dealt with. Most of the laws in South Africa have been flexible to the extent that the offenders are often let go by most of the law court decisions instead of a long jail term for issues related to killing. Fear of crime in South Africa could therefore be considered as an intricate social occurrence with imperative penalty with personal and communal influence (Bseiso 2006; Ndenze 2006). The study hence, focused on the effects of fear of crime among immigrant entrepreneurs in South Africa.

Problem Statement

Previous study conducted by Charman et al. (2012) shows that the Somali businesses in Delft have increased tremendously to eighty percent in the last 5 years to 10 years due to favorable price reduction on the products sold compared to unfair price of local entrepreneurs located in the same environment. Hence, the effect of this price rivalry has eventually resulted in a high failure rate of businesses operated by the local entrepreneurs in this environment (Charman et al. 2012). Despite the fact that immigrant entrepreneurs brings employment opportunities to South Africans in order to improve the socio-economic, growth and development, most of the immigrant entrepreneurs still have the feeling and fear of crime amongst each other. The fear of crime among immigrant entrepreneurs in South Africa is the major concern in this study. There have been some arguments among the citizens residing in South Africa on why immigrant entrepreneurs are always the targets for violence, killing and xenophobic attacks. There are few immigrant entrepreneurs operating their businesses in South Africa, yet, there is fear of crime among them. Given the scenario of fear of crime among the immigrant entrepreneurs operating in various provinces, for instance, Eastern Cape and Gauteng Provinces in South Africa, there is a need to investigate the issues and reasons behind the effects of fear of crime and then, to identify the types of crimes feared by the immi-

grant entrepreneurs. What are the effects of fear of crime on immigrant entrepreneurs?

Study Rationale

The aim of this paper is to debate, discuss, contribute and assess the effects of fear of crime among immigrant entrepreneurs in South Africa especially in the unfolding scenario of the effects of this fear of crime. This is to possibly make recommendations as to whether government intervention is necessary and if so, what should be done.

Research Objectives

The overall purpose of this study is to investigate the effects of fear of crime among the immigrant entrepreneurs and to identify the types of crimes feared by the immigrant entrepreneurs in South Africa. The study targeted immigrant entrepreneur in order to investigate the effect of fear of crime. It is anticipated that the study could provide practical solutions to immigrant entrepreneurs, local entrepreneurs, government and policy-makers, the community members in improving or safeguarding the lives and properties of the immigrant entrepreneurs in South Africa.

Research Questions

- ♦ Does the immigrant entrepreneur have fears in operating or running businesses in South Africa?
- ♦ What are the crime phobia's effects on the immigrant entrepreneurs in South Africa?
- ♦ What are the types of crimes feared by the immigrant entrepreneurs in South Africa?

METHODOLOGY

The paper has used a desk review methodology to debate, reflect, critic, and assess the effects of fear of crime among immigrant entrepreneurs in South Africa. The paper has assessed and reviewed different data sources to arrive at the prevalent situations with the hope of adding a perception to the already found situation. The paper has immensely used various journals, books, conference reports, dissertations and Internet sources, and also this researcher's intuitive experience and knowledge in Business

Administration, Business Management and Public Administration.

OBSERVATIONS AND DISCUSSION

An Overview of the Effects of Fear of Crime among Immigrant Entrepreneurs in South Africa

This section focuses on xenophobic attitudes and violence against immigrant entrepreneurs in South Africa, effects of violence on the immigrant entrepreneurs, interaction between the police and immigrant entrepreneurs, the effect of fear of crime among immigrant entrepreneurs in South Africa, inadequate security and remedy to avert insecurity, and effects of crime phobia on immigrant entrepreneurs and remedies to avert these effects.

Xenophobic Attitudes and Violence against Immigrant Entrepreneurs in South Africa

As confirmed by Charman and Piper (2012), violence against immigrant entrepreneurs is often regarded as xenophobic attitudes and violence in South Africa. Therefore, various studies also revealed that South African sellers openly show antipathy towards the Ethiopia, Somali and Bangladesh arrivals, most consumers remain apathetic to their presence and certainly prefer to patronize them basically due to decrease in prices of goods. Hence, these findings can be generalized to include the whole of South Africa and apparently, various literatures also confirmed that the majority of immigrant entrepreneurs operating small businesses in South Africa were Ethiopian, Bangladesh, Somalian, Pakistan, Nigerian and Ghanian among others. In fact, they are very productive, creative, prolific, industrious, fruitful, dynamic and progressive in their business endeavors. As observed by Charman and Piper (2012), the immigrant entrepreneurs frequently alert people about the relevance of creating arguments about violence in the wider context of crime and xenophobia attacks in South Africa.

Effects of Violence on Immigrant Entrepreneurs in South Africa

Violence against immigrant entrepreneurs is often seen as evidence of xenophobic attitudes

and violence in South Africa. However, according to Charman and Peterson (2007), it is not really the case that such violence is determined by anti-immigrant entrepreneurs' attitudes. Most of the small businesses in the Eastern Cape and Gauteng Provinces have also been a source of insecurity for the immigrant entrepreneurs. The immigrant entrepreneurs who owned businesses have suffered excessively from crimes that include robberies, looting, and prepared attacks and murders organized by contending South African traders. The findings from the report of crime as observed by Charman and Peterson (2007) revealed that crimes in the Western Cape and the degree to which immigrant entrepreneurs were victims to access both the formal justice structure and informal community justice structure have not been adequately fair or strictly addressed by the government. It is on this note that for the government to restore peace, tranquility and harmony in South Africa, an urgent effective and efficient justice system needs to be put in place.

Interaction between the Police and Immigrant Entrepreneurs in South Africa

It is evident from most of the literature that the majority of immigrant entrepreneurs had lost confidence on the role of police as the majority of them lack justice system procedures in their country and court verdicts on the violence and xenophobic attacks. Due to the fact that the majority of immigrant entrepreneurs lack community security, this also increases the immigrant entrepreneurs' exposure to abuse, crime and extortion by individuals and community leaders as revealed by Charman et al. (2012). The immigrant entrepreneurs were therefore forced to rely almost completely on the authorized institutes of justice, and the immigrant entrepreneurs are hindered by lack of trust and faith in the police and courts that are aggravated by language barriers.

Charman et al. (2012) revealed that the police and prosecutor statements usually focus specifically on the immigrant entrepreneurs. Regarding the lengthy justice process and immigrant entrepreneurs' victims of crime, it is often seen that the prosecutors and police also faced difficulties in communicating and keeping them engaged during justice delay.

Hence, according to Charman and Piper (2012), the study reveals that various forms of

violence, following the categories used by the South African Police Service (SAPS), are:

- ♦ Murder
- ♦ Attempted murder
- ♦ Robbery
- ♦ Theft
- ♦ Assault

Effects of Crime Phobia on Immigrant Entrepreneurs in the Socio-economic Development of South Africa

It is often observed that in South Africa, most of the laws in the constitution are too flexible and as a result of this flexibility, the rate of crime keeps rising every day. The effect of fear of crime on the daily lives of immigrant entrepreneurs is the main concern in this study (Van Dijk et al. 2007b). The previous studies also revealed that there are some attitudes of citizens that sum up together as specified by their insinuations for the aim and execution of more efficient policies. Therefore, from the study conducted by Van Dijk et al. (2007a), it is evidence that the effect of fear of crime were within the study conducted in Greek as is the most recent European victimization study in which Greece also partakes.

Similarly and distinctly, the majority of immigrant entrepreneurs all over the world, in which South Africa is not excluded, usually aimed at ensuring effective transferring of adequate skills and knowledge needed to flourish in businesses to the local entrepreneurs and they are usually encouraged to learn how they could be successful in their business endeavors. At this juncture, it is evident that the thoughts of immigrant entrepreneurs towards the local entrepreneurs towards making progress are good, love and caring thoughts towards mankind that is, the local entrepreneurs, business associates or partners and community members as well as the country as a whole are those who should care for each other. The immigrant entrepreneurs should not be seen by the South African citizens, as an obstacle, enemy or an antagonist to the economy to such an extent of causes killing the innocent souls and engaging in xenophobic attacks. It should be noted or made known to the citizens that all these immigrant entrepreneurs came to South Africa to contribute to resolving the awkward employment situation in the economy, to reduce the rate of poverty, to be self-reliant, and to reduce the rate at which the

graduates and undergraduates are seeking government jobs. It is therefore, suggested that the South African citizens, community members, youths and adults should embrace and welcome the immigrant entrepreneurs into their environment so as to learn and acquire more skills on how to make new things that they could not create or produce before, such as ethnic goods for the local people in their communities.

Inadequate Security and Remedy to Avert Insecurity

Observably, the majority of immigrant entrepreneurs believed that with constant and regular xenophobic attacks and killings of the innocent immigrant entrepreneurs in South Africa, their lives, properties and huge investments are not secure therefore, to avert this ugly situation in this country, the government has to involve itself. The government in an effort to ensure that lives, properties and investment of the immigrant entrepreneurs are adequately secured in this country, there should be licensed 24 hours of armed security and adequate police vans, police stations with equipped and enough qualified police officers at regular intervals at the stations and in case of any emergency, they should be available to rescue the immigrant entrepreneurs and arrest the culprit as soon as possible.

CONCLUSION

This study has made several efforts to explain in detail the literature review and provides essential information in determining the research problems. The finding also shows that the majority of immigrant entrepreneurs operating small businesses in South Africa were Ethiopian, Bangladesh, Somalian, Pakistan, Nigerian and Ghanaian among others.

Therefore, this study further made an immense effort to contribute to the area of the effects of fear of crime among immigrant entrepreneurs in South Africa and has shown findings and recommendations. The literature review presented various forms of crimes feared by immigrant entrepreneurs to include murder, attempted murder, robbery, theft and assault among others.

The main findings of this study showed that injustice, police brutality, nepotism, insecurity, flexible laws, perceived police nepotism, police's nonchalant attitudes towards the immigrant en-

trepreneurs, police rudeness and disrespect for humanity as well as some unfair court decisions against the immigrant entrepreneurs in South Africa have been clearly identified and recommendations or suggestions to correct these effects of fear of crime among immigrant entrepreneurs have also been discussed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To abolish the fear of crime, and encourage and ensure stability of immigrant entrepreneurs in order to reduce the rate of fear in South Africa, the following recommendations below have been noted.

Local Entrepreneurs

All the immigrant entrepreneurs should be highly embraced by the local entrepreneurs in order to remove the worries and fear of been violently attacked by the citizens. They should see them as their brothers' keepers, neighbors, and business partners that have come to their country to support their socio-economic growth and development. They should not see, look and think that the immigrant entrepreneurs are job takers or resource tappers, but they should be admired, respected, honored and be willing to gain more knowledge, skills and tapped what they see in them to withstand business threats, challenges and calamities facing them. They should cultivate the habits of learning new skills, acquiring more knowledge most especially in an innovative manner from the immigrant entrepreneurs instead of engaging in violent, series of xenophobic attacks and killings of the innocent immigrant entrepreneurs. The local entrepreneurs should not see the immigrant entrepreneurs as threats, job or resource takers but they should see them as business partners that have come to South Africa to help the country become more competitive in businesses.

Government

The government of South Africa has a crucial role to play in order to take the fear and worries away from the immigrant entrepreneurs operating in South Africa. The government of South Africa should endeavor to educate her citizens to emulate and embrace the new positive business ideas brought to South Africa by immigrant entrepreneurs from their countries of

origin to assist in developing the nation in order to reduce the rate of poverty and unemployment in the economy. The government should also create awareness for her citizens by informing them about the purpose for why many immigrant entrepreneurs' have decided to come to South Africa to operate or establish businesses. The government should be able to inform its citizens about the positive socio-economic contributions of the immigrant entrepreneurs operating and residing in their territory. It should inform its citizens that there should be no harm, xenophobic, killing or any forms of attack against the immigrant entrepreneurs in South Africa. It should let them also know that the effects of harming, killing and xenophobia attacks against the immigrant entrepreneurs could lead to the nation's economic degeneration and disintegration.

Community Members

In addition to the government's great support and security, all the community members should see the immigrant entrepreneurs as their neighbors and brothers' keepers, they should also be ready at any time to take responsibility to assist and protect them. They should be the first set of people to call the attention of or report any forms of attacks made by the criminals against the immigrant entrepreneurs to the police. By so doing, the immigrant entrepreneurs' fears and worries would be removed and then be concentrated fully on their businesses.

Exhibit Unity, Love and Respect between the Local and Immigrant Entrepreneurs in an Environment

Despite the fact that the local entrepreneurs are born and not made in South Africa, so also the immigrant entrepreneurs are as well born and not made in their countries. Therefore, there is no dissimilarity in the nature of life most especially, the way and manner in which the citizens interact with each other within the environment. This is to illustrate that to be united with each other is better than to be divided from each other.

LIMITATIONS AND AREA FOR FURTHER STUDY

This study is limited to the qualitative research with desktop research approaches, which include the review of different documents or

published materials such as books, journals and Internet searches by the researcher and does not include the quantitative research design. This study investigates the effects of fear of crime among immigrant entrepreneurs in South Africa. Future researchers may repeat this study by using the quantitative research design with the aim of administering questionnaires to the respondents at a particular location for the study.

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