

Towards Enhancing Migrant Social Entrepreneurship Through Social Capital in Durban, South Africa

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This chapter interrogates the notion of social capital and its potential impact on enhancing or undermining the socio-economic efforts by migrants in Durban, South Africa. Tshishonga argues that it is through entrepreneurship that entrepreneurs transform their innovative and creative ideas into business enterprises and job creation. This chapter is concerned about migrant social entrepreneurial endeavours as a source of livelihoods within the informal economic sector. Informal businesses initiated by migrants have proven to be successful and sustainable compared to that of the locals. Despite the challenges faced by migrant entrepreneurs such as financial deficit, xenophobia, anti-foreign policies, victimisation, violence, and harassment, absence of police protection, etc., these enterprises thrive. This chapter employs a case study method where 15 African immigrant entrepreneurs were targeted to determine how social capital is used to expand and sustain their businesses.

INTRODUCTION

In the African continent, South Africa was the last country to gain independence in 1994 through democratic elections (Jeeves and Cuthbertson, 2008). After being

subjected to decades of colonial and apartheid regimes, South Africa adopted a political economy that reinforced social and economic discrimination, exclusion and marginalization, especially for people of colour. Since the arrival of Europeans on South African shores, the country went through various political and economic administrations from the Dutch, Germans and later the English but subsequently the white Afrikaners became the settler colonisers (Mashel and Qobo, 2017). The political and economic processes under apartheid culminated in a sad reality which brutally contributed not only to the dispossession of the indigenous landowners but also visibly stripping people of their livelihoods. Natural resources like diamonds, gold and others were monopolised by European settlers, for their benefit locally and for the enjoyment of their folks back in Europe. For Mashele and Qobo (2017: 2), colonialism and apartheid in South Africa was part of this European accumulation process. Mashele and Qobo (2017: 2) posit that the marginalisation of natives in South Africa could not be secured without their total economic disempowerment. This implies that the deprivation of means of livelihoods occurred through moving the African people from their fertile land or subjecting them to exploitable labour. Admittedly, South Africa, like any African country suffers from the legacy of slavery, colonialism and apartheid as well as economic, socio-economic injustices and systems (Amtaika, 2017, Maathai, 2009 and Ng'ambi, 2018). These systems left Africans with mass poverty, infectious diseases and poor health, scarcity of human capital and underdevelopment, thus rendering the continent to be uncompetitive internationally (Ng'ambi, 2018). A myriad of economic crises, the adoption of neo-liberal economic policies and its failure to uplift the poor in the developing nations (Lawrence, 2018), has failed to bring the 'political kingdom' as promised by Nkrumah as this has not resulted in economic dividends and economic emancipation (Mills and Herbst, 2012).

The attainment of political liberation in 1994 existed alongside staggering economic growth with the poor and previously disadvantaged blacks bearing the brunt of Apartheid legacies and the adoption of neo-liberal policies (Eloff, 2017). In order to revive and democratise the economy, attempts were made by the ANC-led government to redress the situation (The Presidency, 2019). Such commitment saw the enactment of macro-economic policies and programmes such as the Reconstruction Development Programme (RDP) in 1994, GEAR in 1996, Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (ASGISA) in 2006, the National Growth Path in 2010 and the National Development Plan (NDP) in 2012 to redress socio-economic injustices of the apartheid regime (Du Preez, 2013, p. 94). The rationale behind these policies was to grow the economy and further advance socio-economic development. However, with the colonial-apartheid economy being intake, South Africa is failing to realise its dream of being a developmental state, based on state intervention, especially in the planning of macro-economic policies (Rautenbach, 2017). Thus,

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