An Exploration of Entrepreneurship Potential among Rural Youth in Namibia: The Arandis Village

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy at Lincoln University by Wilfred Isak April

Lincoln University 2009
Declaration

“I Wilfred Isak April hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that to the best of my knowledge and belief, it does not contain previously published or written by another person nor material which has been accepted for the award of a PhD degree at Lincoln University in New Zealand, or any other higher institute of learning, except where due acknowledgement has been made in the text.

Signature:…………………….. Date: 27/11/2009"
Abstract

of a thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of PhD

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by

Wilfred Isak April

Background: Entrepreneurship potential amongst rural Nama youth should be considered a courageous idea to enhance the motivation and development of the community. At independence in 1990, Namibia developed its own economic and youth policies which were drafted in alignment with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which address concerns about the role rural young people, can play in their own communities.

Theoretical Background: This paper explores the role of indigenous entrepreneurship as it pertains to development amongst rural youth in Namibia. It considers the cultural context within which entrepreneurship takes place. To identify and understand the cultural context, the study draws upon the theoretical frameworks of Geert Hofstede, specifically his continuum of individualism/collectivism. The need to continually incorporate new aspects whilst consciously maintaining the traditional, reflects a key African concept, that of “Ubuntu” (umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu).
**Methodology:** An empirical investigation of rural youth in Arandis village was conducted. To explore the significance of entrepreneurship, culture and the notion of Ubuntu in Africa, a comprehensive study of stakeholder views at both a community and national level was also carried out. These investigations were guided by questionnaires, in-depth interviews (supported by story-telling), playback national radio interviews, a panel discussion and a review of Namibian policy documents. Analysis of data also explored practical initiatives and possible forms of enterprise which could contribute to the creation of opportunity for youth in Arandis and in Namibia.

**Findings:** The major findings of this thesis are that: entrepreneurship in Namibia is defined by participants and stakeholders as the efforts made by an individual in accumulating the necessary resources to benefit the community; rural young people in Arandis are potential entrepreneurs (illustrated, by the strong passion they showed to be role models in their community and their strong sense of cultural identity).

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurship, Indigenous Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurial Potential, Culture, Rural Youth, Namibia and Nama.
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This research brings forth new ideas surrounding the creation of new knowledge through dialogue and the role of culture in entrepreneurial activities of indigenous people. This process of learning through dialogue was made active in the writing of this thesis. This has been a cumulative effort, reflecting the encouragement, thinking, and achievements of many associates, entrepreneurs, indigenous communities, teachers, learners and friends.

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Acronyms

CEOs - Chief Executive Officers
EEU - European Economic Union
FAO - Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
GDP - Gross Domestic Product
GEM - Global Entrepreneurship Monitor
HIV/AIDS - Human Immunodeficiency Virus / Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
IBM - International Business Machines
ILO - International Labor Organisation
IMF - International Monetary Fund
KFSS - Kolin Foundation Secondary School
MDGs - Millennium Development Goals
NAFTA - North American Free Trade Agreement
NBC - Namibian Broadcasting Corporation
NDP3 - Namibian Development Plan 3
NANGOF - Namibian Non-governmental Organisation Fund
NAM - Namibia
NGOs - Non-governmental organisations
OAU - Organisation of African Unity
SADC - South African Development Community
UN - United Nations
UNICEF - United Nations Children’s Fund
UNDP - United Nations Development Programme
UNIDO - United Nations Industrial Development Organisation
USA - United States of America
WB - World Bank
WHO - World Health Organisation
WTO - World Trade Organisation