

Entrepreneurial Leadership in Indigenous Enterprise Development

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Principal Topic

This paper argues that in order for Indigenous peoples to achieve economic development and social advancement the establishment of a robust business sector is critical. In the quest to establish such a sector the focus has to be the development of viable and successful small to medium size business enterprises. It further argues that entrepreneurial leadership will be the main determinant of such enterprises. The challenge for Indigenous peoples then is to identify and nurture entrepreneurial leadership in the hope that such leadership will embark on to the establishment of viable small business enterprises. Once these businesses are successful they can not only provide employment to Indigenous peoples but act as role models for other prospective Indigenous entrepreneurs.

Methodology/Key Propositions

In-depth, semi-structured interviews were conducted with a total of ten business enterprises in South Australia and in Tanzania, which collected data on the role of entrepreneurial leadership in the development and operation of these enterprises and which provided a narrative used to extrapolate the success factors, problems and challenges encountered.

In the quest to identify entrepreneurial leadership, some form of training and mentoring may be necessary. This is premised on the notion that entrepreneurship is not natural, which means people learn to be entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship. In other words, there is no such thing as 'born' entrepreneurs.

Results and Implications

The paper explores the role of entrepreneurial leadership in the development of Indigenous business enterprises in Tanzania and South Australia. The study focuses on ten Indigenous business enterprises in South Australia and in Tanzania that are small in orientation and are considered successful businesses, promoting individual and family holistic development in the process. The research explores the processes, issues and challenges Indigenous entrepreneurs face in developing business enterprises. In addition to entrepreneurial leadership, it also examines other factors that influence practice and success in Indigenous entrepreneurship and enterprise development.

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