Crime and HIV/AIDS in the Western Cape: business support organizations and business owners' perceptions

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**Abstract**
Economic growth will be severely curtailed if crime and HIV/AIDS is not effectively dealt with. Despite the fact that the business support organizations and the SMME owners are dissatisfied with the crime situation, the government reports that it is showing a decreasing trend. The research shows that 92% of the respondents are of the opinion that crime negatively affects small and medium enterprises and these owners are spending between $21 and $87 per annum on crime prevention. It was surprising when 52% of the owners mentioned that they have no measures in place to combat crime, whilst 17% have a double inventory and cash control system in place. A further 14% reported that they do a thorough background check before appointing new employees. Sixty percent of respondents believed that unemployment and low self-esteem (15%) are consequences of crime and it was therefore not surprising when 30% indicated that job creation should receive a priority; another 30% believed improved police visibility and 23% was of the opinion that youth programmes and a further 17% suggested that the prosecution system should be more effective. Hundred percent (100%) of the business owners indicated that they do not have a HIV/AIDS policy. Eighty eight percent of the respondents were of the opinion that HIV/AIDS have a negative impact on the small and medium enterprises. Fifty four percent of the respondents believed that HIV/AIDS reduces the workforce and forty six percent opinioned that it decreases the purchasing power of the affected employees. Fifty four percent of the respondents were of the opinion that awareness programmes; 23% thought treatment programmes and it was surprising when 20% of the respondents reported that they do not know what can be done to reduce the HIV/AIDS situation.

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society or national economy is immune to the effects of HIV and AIDS, which has been established to be an all-pervasive, crosscutting dimension of socio respondents were African and their home language in the Western and Eastern Cape. would be Xhosa. English was therefore largely a third language. While no Africans in. the sample had English as the home language, 1.5% spoke predominantly Afrikaans and 89.7% Xhosa. Similarly, while only 3.7% of Coloreds spoke mostly Xhosa at. “The idea that HIV and AIDS is a punishment from God I think runs through all religions, and that you’re being punished for leading a promiscuous life or immoral life or whatever, so that is also a dominant theme in the Muslim community.” (KI—Community Muslim AIDS support group). Positive attitudes and perceptions towards PLWHA were also reported in the second South African national sero-prevalence study in 2005 [34]. 3.1.3. Risky Behaviour. (KI—Community AIDS support organisation). The role of alcohol and drugs in risk-taking behaviours also became evident in KI interviews and group discussions: “When you’re dealing with white urban moffies [35], one of the things that you need to look at is recreational drug use for instance.”