

Resilience: The advantage of being disadvantaged.

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## **PGR Race Equity Group Webinar**

#### <mark>'TITLE'</mark> Agenda

8<sup>th</sup> March 2023 13:00-14:30

#### MS Teams INFO

Time	Topic			
13:00	Welcome - Dr Nicola Palmer, Head of Doctoral Training			
13:15	Talk 1 – Tilahun Mekonnen, Senior Lecturer in Business Economics, Sheffield Business School			
	<ul> <li>Topic: 'Resilience: - The advantage of being disadvantaged'</li> <li>This includes my own personal reflection and part of my PhD Phenomenological research based on the lived experience of Black African Immigrant Entrepreneurs, Ethnic Entrepreneurs and Minority Small Business ownersmanagers how Black African Immigrant Entrepreneurs (BAIES) in South Yorkshire are able to turnaround despite what is generally considered to be disadvantages into advantages.</li> </ul>			
13:35	Talk 2 – Hannah Griffin-James, Advance HE  Hannah will be presenting the recent evaluation report of the ASPIRE programme, led by SHU, in partnership with Manchester Metropolitan University and Advance HE. The project provides mentoring and support to Black students to undertake postgraduate research.			
14:15	Further Q&A and Wrap Up – Dr Nicola Palmer			
14:30	CLOSE			

Organiser Jess Bamonte - jessica.bamonte@shu.ac.uk

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United Kingdom.

For Postgraduate Research Group (PGR) on Race Equity Group Webinar presentation

Hosed by Sheffield Hallam University

March 2023



SENIOR LECTURER IN INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS
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## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- Reflect on my personal experience, attributes, knowledge and sense of purpose to anchoring meaningful and effective outcomes.
- Developing deeper understanding and enhancing knowledge about the lived experience of BAIEs in South Yorkshire.
- Exploring the authentic experience of BAIEs and their distinctive set of circumstances; (immigrant background, situational, entrepreneurial attributes, qualities and motives) in their entrepreneurial purists.
- Harnessing and sharing resilience to inform and consolidate our practices which could lead us to success.

## PERSONAL REFLECTION

- There is an irony, paradox of human story and lived experience.
- I am a Black African Immigrant and A British citizen, embarked up on a life journey embracing all challenges and opportunities along the way.
- I consider myself as multilingual; speaking native language Amharic, Russian and English as second language. I started Mandarin (Chinese), but miserably failed!
- Have Six HE Qualifications (PhD, MSc, MBA, PGLTHE, Diplomas in Pedagogy and Russian Language) coupled with two NVQ3s in Advanced IT and Accounting- 'Sage Line50 and QuickBooks')
- Practiced Marshal arts Karate and Taekwondo.. Yoga.. for selfdefence.

## ....PERSONAL REFLECTION

- Set up and run own a small business for over 10 years (1997-2008) in the UK
- My start up capital was only £500 which turnover reached up to £500k within 6-7 years
- I had no loan or bank overdraft facility throughout, (over these years)
- But I had a sheer determination and conviction to prove myself and 'the world' that I am; capable, somebody, worthy, have skills, knowledge and and above all the sense of purpose that drove me to make my own mark in my life.
- At the time of setting up and running my own business, I would have been disappointed, if I won the Jack pot. 😊
- I am a senior Lecturer in International Business for over 14 years.
- I am yet to untangle the structural web and unlock the 'Da Vinci Code' of my place to navigate through the terrains of my career journey and destination.

## ...PERSONAL REFLECTION

- These days, on the face of many challenges, I found a sense of ease and contentment through exploring poetry. Writing poems evokes in me a sense of what I call living through a 'Painful joy' afforded through luxury of linguistic semantics.
- I have written over 200 poems, about life journey, politics, love, spirituality and beyond...most in Amharic, few in English and very few in Russian Languages.

## WRITTEN AND PROVERBIAL ANALOGIES ASPIRE MY IMAGINATION WITHIN THE THEMES OF RESILIENCE THAT RESONATE IN ME

- "Necessity is the mother of all invention" (Plato, n.d.)
- "What doesn't kill you, makes you stronger" (n.d.), adapted from its original by German philosopher, Friedrich Nietzsche, "That, which does not kill us, makes us stronger."
- "Suffering produces perseverance" 'ፐሲቨረንስ'
  - Romans 5:3-5; (cited by President Obama, B. July 12, 2016)
- "The cure (antidotes/immune) and medications of most of our illnesses are extracted from the illness (poison) itself in small doses" (translation is mine)
- However, I don't subscribe, glorify or indeed claim that all challenges and barriers are recipe for success.

## UNDERLYING LITERATURES (THEORIES AND FRAMEWORKS)

## **Survival of Necessity theory:**

> Chrysostome, E. and Arcand, S. (2009)

## Heuristic Model on Immigrants' Entrepreneurial Strategies

➤ Oliveira, (2006)

#### Disadvantage theory of Entrepreneurship:

**Boyd**, R. (2000)

## Resilience theory and challenge model of resiliency:

- ➤ Zimmerman & Fergus (2005)
- > Rutter (1987)

#### **Antifragile theory**

➤ <u>Taleb & House (2012)</u>

## **Social Capital theory:**

Co ethnic Social capital theory Co ethnic network capital Co ethnic labour capital

- ➤ Bonacih et al. (1997), Nopper (2010)
- > Fafchamps & Minten (1999)
- ➤ Leana & Van Buren (1999)
- > Anderson & Jack (2002)
- ➤ (Burt, 1997)

### **Trends of Immigrant specialisation**

(Kerr, W. and Mandorff, M., 2015)

## FINDING SUMMARY

- Most BAIEs have experienced tremendous personal, family, social problems, structural and systemic challenges (disadvantages).
- Most /all participants in this research have turned round/overcome these challenges into successes.
- From temporary factory workers to owning a business earning an income of £100k £multimillion pounds as gross income.
- Business is not only a means of profit generating, but it is an extension of themselves, provide them a sense of purpose, identity, self actualisation and means of upward social mobility.
- They have embraced that the mindset that 'Failure is not an option' on the face of many disadvantages.
- This research through the 'eco system framework' has identified the following factors attributing to BAIEs entrepreneurial successes in South Yorkshire:
- Immigrant, personal and natural background (Internal ecosystem) \* \* \* \*
- Co-ethnic immigrant community (Co ethnic ecosystem) ★★★
- Co-ethnic business cluster (niche) ecosystem ★★★
- Social capital contributes significantly to sustainable development and is critical for BAIEs entrepreneurs.
- The number of stars signify their important attributes.

#### Public Sector Institutional .factors: \*

- Provision of support
- Relationship with agencies
- Policy matters
- •Legal compliance & measures
- Recognition

#### Private Sector Inst.factors: ★

- Network & relationship
- Access to finance
- Supply chain
- Access to membership
- Location
- Competition

#### Societal factors: \*\*

- Perception
- Endowment
- Consumer attitude
- Trust
- Relationship
- Empathy
- Support
- Loyalty
- Negative societal attitude: (hate, bigotry, resentment, jealousy, vandalism and harassment)

## Figure 1: Eco systems of Immigrant Entrepreneurs (TM)

## **BAIEs**

#### Entrepreneur's (internal factors):

#### \*\*\*

- Heritages (socio-cultural predispositions)
- Linguistic (multilingual)
- •Knowledge, experience, skills
- Qualification
- Background (circumstantial and natural)
- Resources: cash, capital, labour
- Relationship and Network ties
- Propensity (opportunity recognition)
- Motive (drive), independent, autonomy
- •Values, commitment, determination, aspiration and purpose
- •Self-actualisation, self-expression, sense of pride and higher fulfilment, achievement, status in the society, (upward social mobility), business as an extension of oneself. Self reliance, resourcefulness
- Defy being victimized
- •Emotional Intelligence
- Passion

## DAILS

## Ethnic minority dominated business cluster (niche market)

#### factor: ★★★

- •SME
- •Niche (sector, industry), authenticity/speciality
- Location (urban, inner cities)
- •Growth potential (incremental)
- •Labour intensive
- Capital (resource) intensive
- Knowledge intensive
- •Legal, technical & requirement
- Profitability
- Risk and predictability
- Coopetition

#### Employment Environment factors: 🛨

- Competition
- Upward social mobility
- Push and pull factor
- Equality of Opportunity
- Discrimination
- Job security
- Pay scale

#### Co-Ethnic factors: \*\*\*

- Network, relationship and trust
- •Shared experience, background & values
- Niche market
- Expectation,
- •Resource; (labour and finance)
- Loyalty
- •Support; mentorship, resource

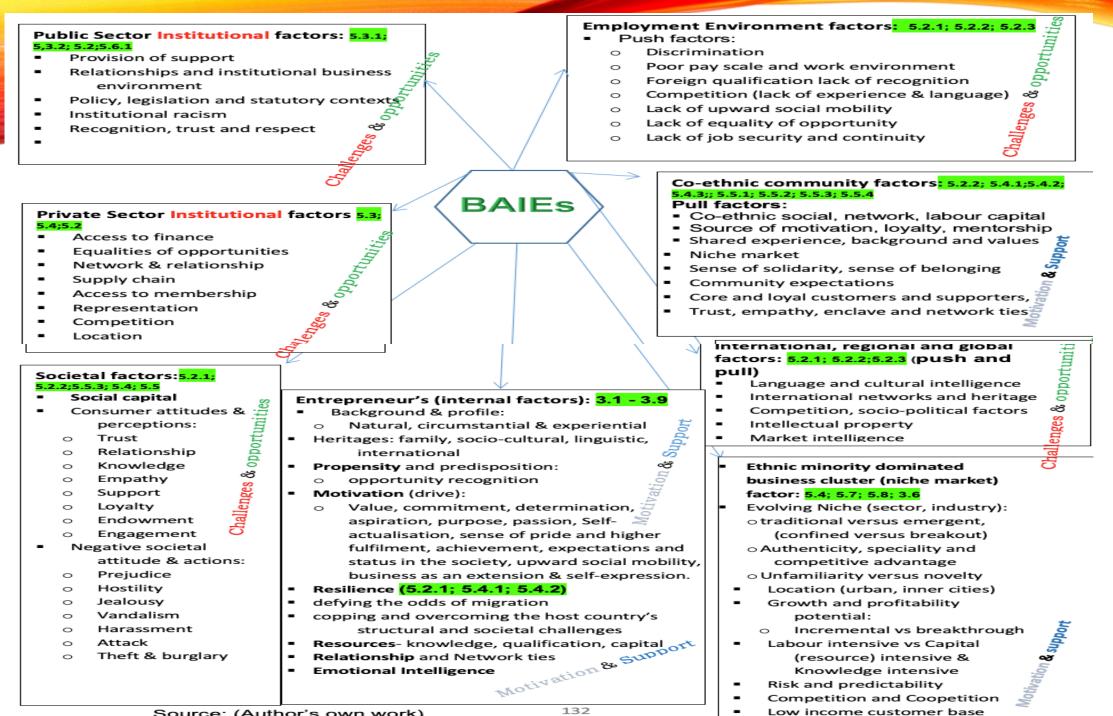
#### International, regional and global

#### factors: ★★

- Competition
- Security
- Intellectual property
- Recognition
- •Language and cultural intelligence
- Market intelligence

Ecology: (eco systems) of Immigrant Entrepreneurs by Tilahun Mekonnen (2016)

Key for the Eco system framework: - the star representation is adopted by the author for the purpose of this thesis to indicate, its attributes of the ecosystem (factor) towards BAIEs entrepreneurial activities. The more (higher) the number of stars, the higher entrepreneurial attributing factors and vice versa.



## RESILIENCE A PERSONIFIED ATTRIBUTE BORN OUT OF 'THE ADVANTAGES OF BEING ADVANTAGED'

- Problem solving, survival skills and creativity.
- Resourcefulness, self-determination and self-reliance.
- Virtue of hard-working ethics (cultural mind-set or cultural predisposition).
- Adaptability and flexibility.
- Risk taking.
- Emotional intelligence.
- Self-awareness and opportunity recognition.
- Strong motives and drivers to success.
- Multilingual.

# ...RESILIENCE BORN OUT OF 'THE ADVANTAGES OF BEING ADVANTAGED'

- The mastery of Networking.
- Crave for education and knowledge (BAIs are among highly educated and trained professionals in western countries).
- Secured access to cheaper resources, support and sense of solidarity.
- Support and mentorship from established businesses.
- Loyal customer base.
- Co-ethnic support and sense of solidarity.
- Special (favourable/ treatment/ (tokenism?)
- Access to specialist tailored support provision by public agencies, associations and professional bodies.
- Access to soft loans and grants.

# Q&A

?

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## **APPENDIX**

Shared Experience (Ecosystems)	Disadvantages (challenges/barriers)	Influence on personalities (personifications)	Influence on entrepreneurial attributes	Associated theory (policy practices)	
Immigrant, personal and natural background) (Internal ecosystem)	<ul> <li>Experience of Trauma of war &amp; conflict, political persecution experience,</li> <li>Humiliation</li> <li>Sense of lose</li> <li>Difficult journey</li> <li>Discrimination</li> <li>(Abuse)</li> <li>Hardship</li> <li>Qualifications and experience not recognised or devalued</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Appreciation</li> <li>scarifies</li> <li>Self reliance</li> <li>Resourcefulness</li> <li>Urgency to sense of normality (self respect)</li> <li>Determination, resolve</li> <li>Defy sense of victim</li> <li>Survival instinct</li> <li>Quest (motive) for self actualisation, conviction</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Problem solver</li> <li>Risk taker (tolerance)</li> <li>Decision maker</li> <li>Passionate</li> <li>Dutiful</li> <li>Conviction</li> <li>Virtue of hard work</li> <li>Motivation to succeed</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Survival of Necessity theory</li> <li>(Chrysostome, E. and Arcand, S. (2009)</li> <li>Oliveira, (2006).</li> <li>Resilience theory and challenge model of resiliency</li> <li>Zimmerman &amp; Fergus (2005)</li> <li>Rutter (1987)</li> <li>Antifragile theory</li> <li>Taleb &amp; House (2012)</li> </ul>	
Co-ethnic immigrant community (Co ethnic ecosystem)	<ul> <li>Lack of integration</li> <li>Limited disposable income (resource)</li> <li>Social expectations</li> <li>Lack of network (knowledge)</li> <li>High unemployment</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Sense of solidarity</li> <li>Frugal (frugality)</li> <li>Loyal</li> <li>Passionate</li> <li>'surplus labour'</li> <li>Mutuality</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Enclaves</li> <li>Loyalty</li> <li>Independent</li> <li>Self reliance</li> <li>Resourcefulness</li> <li>Strong/weak network ties in business, geography and social</li> <li>Seeking safety in numbers</li> </ul>	Social Capital theory Co ethnic Social capital theory Co ethnic network capital Co ethnic labour capital Bonacih et al. (1997), Nopper (2010) Disadvantage theory of entrepreneurship (Boyd, R. 2000)	
Co-ethnic business cluster (niche) ecosystem	<ul> <li>Intense competition</li> <li>Incremental growth</li> <li>Labour intensive industry</li> <li>Limited resource</li> <li>Lack of suitable business</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Coopetition</li> <li>Predictability (limited risk)</li> <li>Speciality/authenticity</li> <li>Employer /provider</li> <li>Resourcefulness</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Shared risk, benefit and resource (Safety net)</li> <li>stepping stone</li> <li>tight-knit networks</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Trends of Immigrant</li> <li>specialisation (Kerr, W. and Mandorff, M., 2015)</li> <li>Win – win strategy,</li> <li>social insulation</li> <li>Co-ethnic Social Capital theory</li> </ul>	

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circumstantial, experiential	success.				
attributes, qualities and skills					
Problem solving, survival skills and	Born out of one's life necessity (first generation) of adapting and survival into the new				
creativity,	environment or inherited (second generations). (Hall,1995)				
	Life skill and experience (surviving with limited income and means) and resilience				
Resourcefulness, self-determination	(strong desire, drive and motivation) to succeed, personal fulfilment (self-				
and self-reliance	actualisation) or expectations and influence by a community or family for status or				
	pride. (O'Connor and Symour, 1990)				
	Survival of Necessity Immigrant Entrepreneurs (Chrysostome, E. and Arcand, S.				
	(2009)				
Virtue of hard working ethics	Derived from religious, moral and spiritual dimensions which encourage risk taking				
(cultural mind-set or cultural	(with limited options, nothing to lose) whilst providing means, comforts and ration				
predisposition)	to cope and bounce back from challenges and failures.				
	Tolerance to uncertainty and ambiguity				
Adaptability and flexibility	( <u>Knight</u> , 1967) and ( <u>Drucker</u> ,1970), <u>McClelland</u> (1961)				
Risk taking	(Oliveira, 2006) Understanding Immigrant entrepreneurial Strategies.				
Emotional intelligence	Alertness to spotting opportunities and natural intuitions, instincts and cognitions born				
Self-awareness and opportunity	out of survival				
recognition	O'Connor and Seymour (1990), Bhave (1994), Kizner (1979), Shane (2003)				
Strong Motives and drivers (pull and	Enterprise as self-expression of worthiness, inner quest to prove to oneself, and to				
push factors)	others.				
	Basu and Goswami (1999)				
	Burns and Dewhurst (1989), Omar, et al. (2006)				

Practical relevance and theoretical assumptions to Entrepreneurial

Advantages of natural,

Advantages of natural,	Practical relevance and theoretical assumptions to		
circumstantial, experiential	Entrepreneurial success.		
attributes, qualities and skills			
Multilingual ability (communication)	Likely to speak more than one language		
Most Black African countries are	Linguistic and cultural ties enhance business communications.		
British-orientated through colonization			
and are members of the	(Oliveira, 2006) Understanding Immigrant entrepreneurial Strategies		
Commonwealth.			
Networking advantages	Likely to have international personal and family networks, heritages, experience which can be the source of practical and social resources. (Bonacich and Modell (1980); Nopper, 2010), Co-ethnic social capital theory,		
Black African immigrants are among	Mainly likely to operate in niche (specialist) market/sector specialising in		
the most highly educated and trained	traditional products, services and communication channels to their own ethnic		
professionals in western countries.	community.		
Education, specialist knowledge, skill,	Able to combine and explore niche and mainstream markets.		
experience, product and service	(Oliveira, 2006), Understanding immigrant entrepreneurial strategies.		
Access to cheaper resources, support	Family, friends, co-ethnic groups and community likely to be willing to provide		
and sense of solidarity	access to cheap resources (capital and finance - finance through informal		
Support and mentorship from	credit arrangements), offer trust, emotional and material support.		
established businesses	(Bonacich and Modell (1980), (Nopper, 2010) Co-ethnic social capital theory		

Loyal customer base

# Advantages of natural, circumstantial, experiential attributes, qualities and skills

## Practical relevance and theoretical assumptions to Entrepreneurial success.

Access to cheaper resources, support and sense of solidarity
Support and mentorship from established businesses
Loyal customer base

Family, friends, co-ethnic groups and community likely to be willing to provide access to cheap resources (capital and finance - finance through informal credit arrangements), offer trust, emotional and material support. (Bonacich and Modell (1980), (Nopper, 2010) Co-ethnic social capital theory

#### Special (favourable) treatment

Access to specialist support (tailored) agencies, associations and professional bodies

Access to soft loans and grant

Discounts and special considerations from public and private organisations, charities, agencies and individuals. Such as; positive discrimination (tokenism) <a href="BBC">BBC</a> (2008) <a href="New equality bill">New equality bill</a> Provision of support locally, regionally and nationally

Various funds are available to support disadvantaged groups which are not likely to raise finance from mainstream financial institutions (Small business initiatives, Local Enterprise agency, 2010) (Ethnic Minority Business Forum, 2000), (Ethnic minority Task Force, 2013)

# PRIMARY RESEARCH KEY FINDINGS

## **METHODOLOGY: - PHENOMENOLOGY**

- Methodology: phenomenology; interpretive (qualitative), as previous researches are mainly, quantitative.
- The approach allows the participants to voice their lived experience through their words.
- Method: Semi structured interview about their lived entrepreneurial experience for the duration of 1hr and 2.5hrs (1.hr average)
- Expressive, Exploratory, and explanatory continuum
- Ethical matters in line with SHU guidelines
- Types of industries: (traditional & emergent)
- Date (2016/18)
- Place all interviews has taken place by the choice of participants
- Focus 'the advantage of being disadvantaged'

# KEY SECONDARY FINDINGS ON SELF-EMPLOYMENT AND EMPLOYMENT CENSUS (2011)

- South Yorkshire (self-employment), 1680:
  - Barnsley (72), Doncaster (204), Rotherham (126) and Sheffield (1,278).
    - **(4.3%)**,
- (12.1%),

(7.5%)

(76.1%)

- England (Unemployment)
- Unemployment data for black population is between 12% and 13%, compared to Asian 7%, mixed 10% and white 4%.

## BMEs/BAIs Demography (Census 2011)

- England and Walsh-Total BME = 7,866,517 (14%)
- Yorkshire and Humberside Total BME=591,777 (11%)
- South Yorkshire Total BME 125, 978 (9.4%)
- Black African/British/Caribbean = 25, 752 (5.7%)
  - Black African (2-3%) approximately.

## WHY BAIES AND SOUTH YORKSHIRE?

### **BAIES** in South Yorkshire are:

- Relatively new communities (not well stablished) following on from the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 (Home Office 2013)
- Transient community
- Rapidly growing demography, (50% above the national average) Census (2010)
- Limited research
- Convenience and practicality(access, knowledge and engagement)
- Allows more focus and deeper insight due to geographical proximity, specific political economical, demographical and social contexts.
- Enables the researcher to engage locally and provide recommendations in order to improve/enhance the managerial practices by sharing knowledge good practices and experience through workshop, symposiums and forums to benefit potential entrepreneurs.

Firms	Sector / industry	Education /qualification	Reason for migration	Reason for setting up own business?	Source of start-up capital	Employees	Key customers
	Electronic shop	College, IT self- taught	war and security	Survival, personal ambition Job security, co-ethnic support Job fulfilment, autonomy Push factor	Own, family and friends	Co-ethnic	Co-ethnic & other ethnics
KT 02	Restaurant	<b>college</b> , Electrician by trade	Political prosecution	Job security, <b>personal ambition</b> Better income Job satisfaction	Own and friends	Co-ethnic	Co-ethnic
	Property Investment	PhD	Political prosecution	Job security Better pension Better income Personal ambition Knowledge & experience	own	Co-ethnic & other minorities	not ethnic specific
	Beauty salon	University drop out (final year) + self-taught	To join family member	Personal ambition Family support Flexibility	Family and bank loan	Co ethnic	Co-ethnic & other ethnic minorities
	Home Improvement	University (final year) drop out, College (UK)	war and security	Personal ambition Job security Transfer of knowledge and experience	Own	Co-ethnic & other minorities (temporary)	Co-ethnic & other ethnic minorities
BG 06	Restaurant	Masters (catering & hospitality)	Political prosecution	Job security Better income Push and pull Education led	Own and family	Co-ethnic	Co-ethnic
AN 07	Barber	high school	Political prosecution	<b>Personal ambition</b> , Push and pull Job security Friends support	Own and friends	Co-ethnic plus other ethnics	Co-ethnic & other ethnics
	Taxi service	high school	Political prosecution	Job security Push and pull Better income Flexibility	Own, friends and rotating credit facility	n/a	Not ethnic specific

## SUCCESS STORY ON THE FACE OF MANY ADVERSARIES

- (NA 01) He has successfully expanded and diversified his business by opening another shop with Italian partner with promising further growth.
- **(KT 02):** the restaurant is run by a business associate and professional manager MSc in hospitality and catering. The business has gone through professional refurbishment and already attracting more mainstream customers.
- (AR 03) has earned wealth of £2 million through successful property Business Empire which is more than sufficient for his pension and supports his family. It is a recognisable achievement on part time business venture which he set out to do in order to complement his late pension plan.
- (SR 04) She has built a successful business empire with an estimate wealth of over £1 million and enjoying the quality of her life.
- **(MJ 05)** Has managed to survive for 18 months without jobseeker allowance and able to complete his professional course and already approached by a number of companies providing him attractive business contractual offers.
- (BG 06) within a relatively short space of time, year after graduation, he is able to join a restaurant partnership business whilst most of his class mates ae still applying for jobs.
- (AN 07) diversifying barber shop into cafe service whilst working on (perusing) his long term international business.
- (NS 08) Is able to purchase more cars and brought his brother to join the self employment business