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Success Strategies Saudi Entrepreneurs Used to Navigate Through Regulations in Jeddah

Farah Mehar Spencer
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Walden University

College of Management and Technology

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Farah Spencer

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Walden University
2016

Abstract

Success Strategies Saudi Entrepreneurs Used to Navigate Through Regulations in Jeddah

by

Farah Mehar Spencer

MBA, Webster University, 2004

BS, University of Wisconsin, 1988

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Business Administration

Walden University

August 2016

Abstract

Saudi Arabian entrepreneurs face major difficulties with the country's complex regulatory system. Based on Schumpeter's theory of entrepreneurship, the purpose of this phenomenological study was to reveal the lived experiences of Saudi entrepreneurs in navigating regulatory procedures in Jeddah. Data were collected through prolonged, face-to-face phenomenological interviews with 22 Saudi businesspeople who started successful businesses. The van Kaam method and member checking helped validate the transcribed data, which were subsequently coded into 4 themes. Four themes emerged from the data analysis: (a) obstacles in regulatory processes, (b) lack of information, (c) cumbersome procedures and need for alternatives to stringent protocols, and (d) persistence strategies needed to maneuver through inflexible regulations. For entrepreneurship progress among these individuals, business rules needed to be comprehensible, shorter, and less bureaucratic. These findings also suggest that, once entrepreneurship rules are transparent, Saudi Arabia may become a choice country for international businesses. These findings have implications for positive social change by informing the efforts of governmental authorities in their work towards effective regulatory processes as roadways to the economic well-being of businesses and communities, and could be a catalyst to boost foreign investments in the country.

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Section 1: Foundation of the Study

While entrepreneurship continues to expand in prosperous Saudi Arabia, Saudi Nationals have to overcome hurdles to become recognized contributors to the country's economy. This study involved collecting data from Saudi entrepreneurs who had been in business beyond 3.5 years after successfully maneuvering through the extensive bureaucratic regulations. This study included the strategies used by successful Saudi businesspeople in the city of Jeddah. A significant portion of these strategies includes maneuvering through the cumbersome registrations.

Background of the Problem

In 2011, Saudi Arabian companies had more than \$300 billion in surplus capital (Ministry of Economy and Planning, 2013). Economic growth from 2011 through 2013 increased 10% annually, and business confidence reached the 39th spot among 196 countries with more than 10,000 new start-up companies per year (Trading Economics, 2013). As a rapidly emerging country, Saudi Arabia is a fertile ground for entrepreneurs. Leaders of multinational corporations continue to set-up businesses in the country due to the availability of capital and business prospects (Zamberi Ahmad, 2012). The Saudi government officials allocated over \$400 billion to a 5-year development plan for projects in various industries (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2015). Saudi's economic growth rate in 2013 was double that of the United States of America (Genberg, Matinez, & Salemi, 2014). Both local and foreign entrepreneurs realize substantial profits for companies in Saudi Arabia (Khan, 2013). As a result, entrepreneurs, with the right tools in the current environment, are instrumental in creating employment and increasing

growth (Anopina, Fournier, & Kjekstad, 2013). These data theoretically translate into a plethora of opportunities for all entrepreneurs to excel in the country. However, Ernst and Young's Entrepreneur's Alliance rated Saudi Arabia significantly low on the scale of a favorable environment for entrepreneurs (Abu-Sharkh & Alshubaili, 2013).

Entrepreneurs are essential elements of an economy. Entrepreneurial ventures are origins for the upsurge in capital, competition, and diversity (Block, Thurik, & Zhou, 2013; Galindo & Mendez, 2014; Lee, Kim, Park, & Sanidas, 2013; Qian & Acs, 2013; Xiaoyu & Xiangming, 2015). A suitable regulatory environment is advantageous to successful entrepreneurship (Siu & Lo, 2013). In the United States, Canada, Germany, and the United Kingdom, entrepreneurs profit from regulations that are streamlined (Autio, Kenney, Mustar, Siegel, & Wright, 2014). Efficient business registration processes are catalysts for the escalation in entrepreneurial activities (Dye, 2014). However, in Saudi Arabia, cultural and business environments are extremely conservative with significant capital dissipated in "facilitating transactions" (Ahmad, 2012, p. 218). Therefore, the success of business enterprises predominately hinges on the vital knowledge of Saudi culture and its regulatory structure (AlGhamdi, Nguyen, Nguyen, & Drew, 2012).

Problem Statement

Entrepreneurs enjoy a high level of support in Saudi Arabia but face serious complications with the complex regulatory system in the country (Cassell & Blake, 2012). Saudi Arabia has one of the lowest total early-stage entrepreneurial activity rates, with only 4.7% of the adult population (18-64 years old) actively starting or owning a

business (Bosma & Levie, 2010). The general business problem is that many potential Saudi entrepreneurs lack strategies to negotiate the complex regulatory system to establish a new business. The specific business problem is that some Saudi entrepreneurs in Jeddah have limited strategies to navigate regulatory procedures successfully.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study was to explore the strategies Saudi entrepreneurs used to navigate regulatory procedures effectively. The study involved conducting in-depth interviews to understand the lived experiences of entrepreneurs in obtaining the necessary documents and resources to launch new businesses in Saudi Arabia. The geographic location was Jeddah in Saudi Arabia. Participants were Saudi entrepreneurs selected through personal contacts, verified from business registrations in the databases of the Saudi Arabian General Investment Authority (SAGIA) and Jeddah Chamber of Commerce and Industry (JCCI) and fitting the criterion of having operated successful businesses for the past 3.5 years. Revealing the experiences of successful entrepreneurs in Saudi Arabia may aid in developing an entrepreneurial culture in that country. A characteristic of an enterprising culture is a synergistic virtuous cycle in which some innovative people trail blaze and then share ideas that contribute to growth (Clevey, 2009). Such a culture is fundamental to positive social change with a paved path for potential entrepreneurs to launch ventures, create job opportunities, and advance the socioeconomic conditions of those who succeed. In emerging markets, an entrepreneurial culture is a catalyst to quelling unemployment and placing the economy on a proper footing (Nkechi, Ikechukwu, & Okechukwu, 2012).

Nature of the Study

In this study, I used a qualitative research design to probe and explore a ubiquitous phenomenon that players experience in a situation (Giorgi, 1997). The raw data from interviews is a description of participants' lived experiences and perceptions. For the study, a qualitative method applied as the data was illustrative in nature and not measurable (Elo et al., 2014; Giorgi, 1997). A quantitative methodology using statistical data was inappropriate for the study (Brannen, 2005). Similarly, the mixed method of qualitative and quantitative data (Hussein, 2015) did not fit the study intent which was to reveal strategies of Saudi entrepreneurs who successfully navigated through complicated regulations.

Two qualitative designs: ethnography and case study were not a fit for the study. The qualitative phenomenological model described by Moustakas (1994) was suitable for exploring the strategies necessary for Saudi entrepreneurs to launch businesses in Jeddah. Phenomenological research was the suitable design to demonstrate lived experiences of the selected participants within the chosen milieu (Barr, 2014; Bayne & Montague, 2011; Gioia, Corley, & Hamilton, 2013; Heydari, Hosseini, & Moonaghi, 2015; Ruffin-Adams, 2013). Ethnography is the study of language patterns, behaviors, and beliefs within a population (Dixon-Woods, Leslie, Tarrant, & Bion, 2013; Hinder & Greenlagh, 2012; Liu, Manias, & Gerdtz, 2012). Ethnography design was unsuitable because the intent of this study was not to comprehend participants' relationships in their respective environments nor to discover the impact of successes of the entrepreneurs on societal and cultural standards. The study intent was not consistent with anthropological roots of

ethnographic design, which focuses on the nature, construction, and maintenance of culture, moving beyond participants' words towards the meaning of the culture (Coughlin, 2013).

Beyond the scope of this study's intent was the single case qualitative model that investigates the unique situation of a person, function, or method within the environment (Barratt, Choi, & Li, 2011; Shadish & Sullivan, 2011; Yin, 2012). A typical single case is a reference to explore the way and reason of existing phenomena (Boucard et al., 2015; Cronin, 2014; Yin, 2012). Case study relies on multiple sources of data; interviews, direct observations, video and audio tapes, internal documents, memos, e-mails, and artifacts (Yin, 2012). For this study, only interview data was gathered because the focus of the study was on personal experiences and perceptions and the meaning those experiences held for each participant, which is not consistent with a case study approach.

Research Question

In formulating the research question(s) in a phenomenological study, it is appropriate to consider the social meaning and personal significance (Moustakas, 1994). The overarching research question for this study was as follows:

RQ: What strategies do Saudi entrepreneurs use to navigate regulatory procedures successfully?

The sub questions were:

SQ1: What experiences do Saudi entrepreneurs have regarding the regulatory procedures?

SQ2: How do Saudi entrepreneurs identify, plan, execute, monitor, and update their strategies to navigate the regulatory procedures successfully?

Interview Questions

Phenomenological long interview questions are for participants to explain their in-depth experiences of the phenomenon. The interview questions below and in Appendix A were precursors to follow-up probing questions.

1. Based on your experiences, how do you learn about the regulatory procedures to start your own business?
2. Based on your experiences, how do you identify strategies to navigate the regulatory procedures successfully?
3. Based on your experiences, how do you plan strategies to navigate the regulatory procedures successfully?
4. Based on your experiences, how do you execute strategies to navigate the regulatory procedures successfully?
5. Based on your experiences, how do you monitor strategies to navigate the regulatory procedures successfully?
6. Based on your experiences, how do you update strategies to navigate the regulatory procedures successfully?
7. What other information (if any) would you like to share regarding your experience with the regulatory system in launching your business?

Conceptual Framework

The theoretical basis of this study was Schumpeter's theory of entrepreneurship. According to Schumpeter (1939), an entrepreneur is a change agent who introduces a new product, service, methodology, or market. Entrepreneurs break norms (Schumpeter, 1939). Building on Schumpeter's theory, Hebert and Link (1989), label an entrepreneur as a decision maker who alters the status quo of products, services, or organizations. Bull and Willard (1993) enhance Schumpeter's definition of the entrepreneurs as the ones creating value by building knowledge of profits. Entrepreneurs creatively construct means for prospects that do not exist in the market (Gottlieb & Makower, 2013; Richet, 2014).

Stringent regulations have a negative effect on new venture growth and strategic entrepreneurial entries (Autio & Fu, 2013), which coincides with Schumpeter's (1939) theory that entrepreneurs sometimes need to break the norms. A principle obstacle to entrepreneurial activity could be a complex maze of regulations imposed on the entrepreneur. Understanding the experiences of successful entrepreneurs regarding Saudi Arabian regulatory processes could help others who need to navigate through similar labyrinths.

Definition of Terms

Bureaucratic barriers: Bureaucratic barriers are government-imposed regulations that hinder businesses operations (Gottlieb & Makower, 2013).

Creating value barriers: Obstructions to entrepreneurs' ventures inputs that jeopardize outputs of building wealth and paybacks for stakeholder, customers, and society (Webb, Ireland, & Ketchen, 2014).

Entrepreneur: An entrepreneur is a businessperson who creates value, product, or service, discovers and implements a new manner of conducting business, or opens new markets (Schumpeter, 1939).

Entrepreneurship: Entrepreneurship is a process of establishing businesses (Gartner, 1990).

Facilitating transactions: Facilitating transactions refers to bribery or commissions incorporated with fees for governmental services (Ahmad, 2012).

Innovation: Innovation is the establishment of a new method, service, or product with creative inputs that did not previously exist (Richet, 2014).

Saudi authorities: Saudi authorities are Saudi Arabian government lawmakers, personnel, and regulators (Eid, 2012).

Saudi entrepreneurs: A Saudi entrepreneur is a business owner who is a Saudi national (Zamberi Ahmad, 2012).

Start-up: Start-up refers to a recently launched or set into motion or operation a profit seeking venture (Blank & Dorf, 2012).

Successful businesses: Successful businesses those were started and maintained for more than 3.5 years (van der Zwan, Verheul, Thurik, 2012).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Assumptions

Assumptions refer to unverified facts that necessitate justification (Petty, Thompson, & Stew, 2012; Tufford & Newman, 2012). Assumptions are factors that are somewhat out of the researcher's control, but without them, the study risks become irrelevant (Petty et al., 2012; Tufford & Newman, 2012). An assumption in this study was that entrepreneurs' lived experiences of successes were self-created and independent from external factors of familial or economic advantages so that the course to entrepreneurship predominately resulted from participants' actions rather than via a legacy pathway. Another assumption was that participants were able to respond truthfully to interview questions because their identities and responses would remain confidential.

Limitations

Limitations allude to potential weaknesses of the study (Barbour, 2001). A limitation of this study is the inability to generalize results to a wider arena. No attempt was made to address the full spectrum of facts that led to entrepreneurial victories or whether gender was an influencing feature. Additionally, no solutions were proposed to the problem that businesspeople encountered of facilitating governmental transactions with gifts (Ahmad, 2012; Dreher & Gassebner, 2013).

Delimitations

Delimitations are restrictions or boundaries for researchers to narrow the scope of the study (McCaslin & Scott, 2003). The choice of Jeddah as the location for the study was a delimitation, like other sites in Saudi Arabia might have been more or less

advantageous to entrepreneurial activities. Entrepreneurs in Riyadh, the capital of Saudi Arabia, might present significant variations to this study's conclusions. Saudis know that business rules in Jeddah are simpler in comparison to the ones in Riyadh, but companies in Riyadh are more profitable than in Jeddah due to a better work ethic in Riyadh (Alharbi, 2014).

Significance of the Study

Entrepreneurial feat measured by business growth is imperative for economic development (Jayawarna, Rouse, & Kitching, 2013; Obschonka, Silbereisen, Cantner, & Goethner, 2015). Business regulatory services are pivotal for efficacious entrepreneurial progression as there is a strong connection between business regulations and entrepreneurial culture (Block et al., 2013; Clevey, 2009; Zahra, Wright, & Abdelgawad, 2014). There is tremendous potential for entrepreneurial growth in Saudi Arabia; however, policymakers undermine the significance of simpler regulations for Saudi entrepreneurs to succeed, especially in the start-up phase of ventures (Wales, Shirokova, Sokolova, & Stein, 2016). Methods Saudi entrepreneurs use to prosper in start-ups are revealed in this study.

Implications for Social Change

The research was timely and relevant because of rising rates of entrepreneurial activities in Saudi Arabia (Trading Economics, 2013). Decision-makers in the government enable or constrain entrepreneurship with institutional frameworks (Smallbone & Welter, 2012). With greater knowledge of the problems entrepreneurs face,

governmental authorities may alleviate the noteworthy bureaucratic barriers imposed on entrepreneurs (Khan, 2013).

Saudi entrepreneurs recognize the requirement of extra funds to bestow as a “gift” for facilitating services involved in obtaining business licenses (Ahmad, 2012). The gift is any object of value, promise, or undertaking to influence an official serving in a public capacity. This study may be an essential guide to Saudi entrepreneurs for launching and operating profitable businesses. The 2013 unemployment rates for Saudi Arabia and Qatar were 36% (Central Department of Statistics & Information, 2014) and 0.3% (Central Intelligence Agency, 2014), respectively. Development in both countries is at a phenomenal pace with revenues in the trillions of dollars. Leaders of Saudi Arabia are implementing strategies to reduce the high unemployment rate without exceptional success (Al-Asfour & Khan, 2014).

The findings of a 2013 survey showed that most Saudis below the age of 30 preferred owning businesses over gaining employment (Bayt, 2013). Authorities in the country forbid discussions of poverty (Alfahad, 2015) even though poverty is growing among Saudis (Krane, 2015). Entrepreneurship has an effect on the economic and social health of a country (Lumpkin, Moss, Gras, Kato, & Amezcua, 2013). The solutions and recommendations of this study might help Saudi authorities to circumvent high failure rates of Saudi start-up companies due to excessive and onerous regulations.

A Review of the Professional and Academic Literature

The strategy for the review was both a broad and focused search of various sources across multiple disciplines: scholarly journal articles, books, and electronic

media. Sources of search engines on the Walden University Library research databases were: Business Source Complete, ABI/INFORM Complete, ProQuest, SAGE Premier, JISC-DAT, and EBSCO Host. I used the following keywords for the literature review: *regulatory barriers, entrepreneurship, motivations and traits of entrepreneurs, economic benefits from entrepreneurs, Saudi economy, challenges for Saudis, and success strategies of entrepreneurs.*

The literature searches led to evaluating more than 350 sources including citations of 316 relevant references for this study. Of the 316 sources, 275 (87%) were peer reviewed articles, 41 (13%) are books, conference publications, and government websites; 31 (10%) were published before 2012, and 285 (90%) had publications dates after 2012.

The scholarly literature has a plethora of studies on entrepreneurship. Whether entrepreneurial success factors are intrinsic or extrinsic, entrepreneurs significantly contribute to the global economy. In numerous countries, entrepreneurial successes and failures are contingent upon regulations (Abu-Sharkh & Alshubaili, 2013; Arregle et al., 2013; Autio & Fu, 2013, Bennett et al., 2013; Branstetter, Lima, Taylor, & Venancio, 2013; Cassell & Blake, 2012; Gamble, Lorenz, Turnipseed, & Weaver, 2013; Geels, 2013; Munemo, 2014; Smallbone & Welter, 2012; Sutter & Beaulier, 2013; Wales et al., 2016; Zahra et al., 2014). Other contributing factors to triumphs and fiascos of new businesses include entrepreneurs' motivations and abilities to conquer challenges (Alrashidi, 2013; Genberg et al., 2014; Robinson & Grayson, 2014; Singh, 2013; Weber, Oser, Achtenhagen, Fretschner, & Trost, 2014). Entrepreneurs and governmental

authorities share common goals of improving the economic status of individuals and respective societies (Simon-Moya, Revuelto-Tobada, & Guerrero, 2014).

Regulatory Barriers

Entrepreneurship theories from Schumpeter (1939), Herbet and Link (1989), and Bull and Willard (1993) term entrepreneurs as change agents who introduce a new product, service, or organization. Entrepreneurs can only alter the status quo with the proper infrastructure of efficient regulations that are conducive to launching business ventures (Richet, 2014). To avoid delays in profitable ventures and for ongoing innovations, entrepreneurs must not deal with complex procedures (Gottlieb & Makower, 2013).

Entrepreneurs have to make companies productive rather than devise methods to maneuver through cumbersome and drawn-out governmental bureaucracies (Abu Sharkh & Alshubaili, 2013; Bruhn & McKenzie, 2014; Kularatne & Lopez-Calix, 2012). A business-conducive policy is a significant influence on competitive advantages of companies; hence, suitable interventions from authorities in forming an active policy is the foundation of business success (Lazzarini, 2013). For countries with scarce resources, an operational policy is mandatory to encourage and develop entrepreneurs towards successful ventures (Panda & Dash, 2014).

An efficient policy framework should have simplified regulatory processes for easier registrations and operations (Abu-Sharkh & Alshubaili, 2013; Bruhn & McKenzie, 2014; Kularatne & Lopez-Calix, 2012; Lazzarini, 2013; Panda & Dash, 2014). The willingness of government officials to listen and integrate entrepreneurial-friendly

policies is an enabler for business leaders to create self-reliant innovation economies (Lerner, 2013). To increase ventures, governmental policies should correspond to entrepreneurial development (John, 2013; Lazzirini, 2013). To spark increased entrepreneurship, policy makers must streamline procedures (Mohamed & Mnguu, 2014). Rates of business registrations rise when authorities simplify and amend rules (Dye, 2014). When the government officials of China and India eased some regulations of business start-ups, there was a marked increase of entrepreneurship (Gupta et al., 2014). Countries with one stop business hubs for entrepreneurs to complete all required processes expeditiously, allow entrepreneurs to focus on making their ventures succeed (Street, 2013). Simpler regulations are effective in economic governance, market stability, and business and investment growth (Kirkpatrick, 2014). Businesses are prosperous in environments with efficient regulations (Meyer, Vogel, & Mehandjiev, 2012).

There is a positive correlation between the length of time to complete the required paperwork to start businesses and a country's gross domestic product (GDP, A. S. Saleh, 2013). Countries benefit from abridged business regulations with enhancement in entrepreneurship and economy (Lukiyanova, 2015). In Lebanon, Montenegro, and Egypt, the shorter time entrepreneurs expended on regulatory processes correlated to an augmented concentration on cultivating business bottom lines (Haidar, 2013; Lekovic, Maric, Djurovic, & Berber, 2013; A. S. Saleh, 2013). Minimized business registrations with lower entry barriers encourage entrepreneurs to formalize companies, which in turn

is beneficial to a country's GDP (Khamis, 2014; Janssen, Charalabidis, & Zuiderwijk, 2013; Lekovic et al., 2013).

In informal sectors such as, agriculture, flea market vendors, and home businesses, relaxed rules are fundamental to escalate entrepreneurship (Branstetter et al., 2013; Kritic & Sanfey, 2011; Sklyarov & Sklyarov, 2013). Government authorities benefit from hassle-free policies that boost the investments, growth, and financial transparencies of informal industries (Massenot & Straub, 2015). The number of informal businesses, which have less financial transparency, rises as the cost and complexity of business registrations increase (Siqueria, Webb, & Bruton, 2014).

Regulatory reforms were catalysts to higher aggregate investments in the developing nations of Gambia, Chad, and Eritrea (Geels, 2013; Haidar, 2012; Munemo, 2012). Greater economic freedom directly corresponds to more business start-ups (Haidar, 2012; Weber & Powell, 2013). In contrast, inflated and complicated business rules of developing nations encourage economic activity in informal sectors and discourage financial transparencies (Siqueira et al., 2014). The informal industries in poorer nations benefit from greater regulatory demands because such demands hinder the larger, formal, and monopolistic companies that are their competition (Autio et al., 2013; Siqueira et al., 2014). By refining the quality of political and economic institutions of developing countries, informal entrepreneurship is minimized (Autio & Fu et al., 2013, Holmes, Miller, Hitt, & Salmador, 2013; Massenot & Straub, 2015). Imperfect market competition in Mexico, a low-income country with the prominent informal sector, negatively impacts the Mexican government's tax benefits due to the lack of proper

corporate governance and financial transparencies in informal businesses (Leal-Ordóñez, 2014).

Smaller governments with scarcer regulations have extra economic freedom and higher numbers of entrepreneurs starting companies (Holmes et al., 2013; Wiseman & Young, 2013). Some countries with populations of less than five million are wealthy because of tourism and tax-free incentives for businesses (Holmes et al., 2013; Wiseman & Young, 2013). Smaller nations sometimes benefit from more interpersonal relationships, transparencies, and administrative adaptability, which are qualities of a strong entrepreneurial culture (Elenurm, Alas, Rozell, Scroggins, & Alsua, 2014). Economies of smaller nations with inadequate natural resources are sustained with amplified entrepreneurship and foreign business investments (Elenurm et al., 2014; Holmes et al., 2013; Wiseman & Young, 2013). Saudi Arabia, the largest economy, and government in the Gulf Corporation Council (GCC), has a fertile entrepreneurial environment (Connors & Norton, 2012; Khan, Al-Saud, Alkhatlan, & Al-Derham, 2014). Similar to Canada, the United States, and Russia, Saudi Arabia's large economy should offer magnanimous opportunities for foreign and local entrepreneurs (Khan, 2013). Conversely, However, fewer business start-ups, the rise of informal sectors, and high failure rates of enterprises are attributable to a lack of economic freedom reflected in the policies of the centralized government of Saudi Arabia. Although Saudi leaders proactively participate in enhancing business opportunities and establishing one-stop shops for foreign investments, regulations for local businesses are extensively bureaucratic (Branstetter et al., 2013). Foreign entrepreneurs enjoy privileges in Saudi

Arabia denied to local enterprises such as the possibility of 100% ownerships and minimal investment capital required to start new ventures (Branstetter et al., 2013).

The Saudi authorities may gain advantages from a successful entrepreneurial model in a rapidly expanding economy with surplus capital. However, an entrepreneurial model's foundation must embrace streamlined and affordable registrations. The authorities could follow examples of similar larger economies with prosperous entrepreneurial activities such as those of Canada, India, and the United States. Easing regulations for foreign investors is beneficial, but creating simpler rules for Saudi entrepreneurs to establish and triumph in business is extra crucial for the country's GDP and total welfare of the Saudi economy and peoples.

Entrepreneurship

Among the Arab nations, United Arab Emirates, Jordan, Oman, Algeria, and Egypt are entrepreneur-friendly while other Arab nations plus Saudi Arabia, lack the appropriate entrepreneurial environments (Nunes & Balsa, 2013). Saudi authorities do encourage foreign investments by reducing requirements for start-ups (Branstetter et al., 2013). Canada is the most entrepreneurial-conducive country and is well ahead of the United States, Nordic countries, and Israel (Cumming & Chakrabarti, 2014). Despite its size, Israel has an outstanding entrepreneurial model where research and development (R&D) remains in the host country and productions in emerging markets which curtails expenses and surges profits (Kaufman, 2013). Saudi Arabia has R&D and production facilities with access to surplus capital and trainable workforce (Nunes & Balsa, 2013).

Entrepreneurship is an influence on the economies of industrial and developed nations to promote formation and growth of new firms if the regulatory conditions are favorable (Eckhardt & Shane, 2013; Santos, 2012; Shane, 2012; Sillah, 2015; Xiaoyu & Xiangming, 2015; Zahra et al., 2014). As an industrial nation, the officials of US government continuously instill entrepreneurial initiatives even for international markets (Covin & Miller, 2014). In efforts to group Malaysia among the industrial nations, the authorities of the country implemented strategies towards a knowledge-based economy to boost entrepreneurial expansion (Othman & Mahmood, 2014). Singaporean authorities reformed policies to encourage the growth of manufacturing and services sectors thereby fashioning myriad of entrepreneurial prospects (Low, 1998).

When methodologies are customized according to the native culture of entrepreneurs, there is more entrepreneurship (Briere, Tremblay, & Daou, 2014; Hvidt, 2015; Zahra et al., 2014). Authorities from decentralized and centralized institutions successfully promote companies as in the example of US solar energy industry in which state-sponsored incentives, environmental consumption norms, and standards of the family interdependence of new firm entry led to an increase of business opportunities (Siu & Lo, 2013). Furthermore, the efficacy of state-level policies of entrepreneurial growth depends on prevailing social norms for entrepreneurs' successes (Siu & Lo, 2013). Social norms have an effect on new company creation and policies of environmentally responsible economic activity. For self reliance, authorities from government and private sectors have to join forces to establish opportunities for budding entrepreneurs.

Governmental authorities enable entrepreneurial development or constraint with institutional frameworks (Smallbone & Welter, 2012). The nascent entrepreneurship in developed nations is proportional to the speed of state officials adopting entrepreneurial energy which is transformed into political mandates (Galindo & Mendez, 2014).

Authorities who understand the determinants and consequences of entrepreneurship device an entrepreneurial economic model into the policy framework to broadly boost entrepreneurship (Galindo & Mendez, 2014).

When a U-shaped relationship is formed between economic development and entrepreneurship, the results are faster growth in services industries due to low transaction costs and entry barriers (Xiaoyu & Xiangming, 2015). Beyond hydrocarbons, Saudi Arabia is a primarily a consumption country; however, Saudi officials make continuous efforts to attract foreign multinational companies to establish local industries, so Saudis reduce dependence on foreign products and have more prospects for employment. Entrepreneurs in the self-contained services sector with loosely organized networks create opportunities for new technology-based business start-ups and prospects for entrepreneurship. Saudi entrepreneurs find services sectors fruitful.

Institutional deficiencies are new prospects for small business services firms which thrive in turbulent environments and uncertain frameworks; therefore, risky situations prompt entrepreneurship (Smallbone & Welter, 2012). Entrepreneurs are affected by the intricate, tempestuous, and loose structure of institutions of emerging markets (Williams & Vorley, 2014; Zahra et al., 2014). Entrepreneurship has a positive effect on growth and economies of emerging nations (Kiss, Danis, & Cavusgil, 2012). In

industrial and entrepreneurial behavior contexts, trust is pivotal in the development of entrepreneurship (Welter, 2012).

Saudi Arabian authorities need to include entrepreneurs when forming economic policies which will align with the vision of decreasing reliance on foreign products and building local industries. Moreover, with higher Saudi entrepreneurship, there will be more opportunities for Saudis to establish industries and circumvent the rising unemployment. The future of Saudi Arabia is dependent on how well the authorities plan for Saudi citizens to take part in sustaining a bright economic future with the increase in entrepreneurship.

Motivations and Traits of Entrepreneurs

Entrepreneurship is an autonomous employment choice over steady wage earnings, so the entrepreneurs exercise more self-reliance (Croson & Minniti, 2012). Entrepreneurial traits are learnable which drive business successes (Post, 2014). Four predictors of serial entrepreneurs are self-efficacy, emotion regulation, practical intelligence, and self-leadership, as well as support from social contacts (Hechavarria, Renko, & Matthews, 2012). Entrepreneurial drive emerges early in life and continues for the later years. Thus, social elements are vital to entrepreneurship (Schoon & Duckworth, 2012).

A factor analysis of motivations and problems of entrepreneurs in Turkey had results that entrepreneur with ordinary motives had increased incomes, job security, and financial independence (Dijkhuizen, Gorgievski, van Veldhoven, & Schalk, 2015; Friedman & Aziz, 2012; Kozan, Oksoy & Ozsoy, 2012). Owners of Turkey's small and

medium enterprises (SMEs) preferred income, reputation for honesty, friendliness, optimum customer service, and social skills (Fiedman & Aziz, 2012; Kozan et al., 2012). Approximately twelve export stimuli motivated Saudi SME owners that are: (1) export intentions, (2) growth, (3) low production costs, (4) surplus capacity, (5) risk diversification, (6) promising international market opportunities, (7) overseas contacts, (8) consultants' exporting ideas, (9) inquiries from potential foreign customers, (10) no trade tariffs, (11) export incentives, and (12) domestic market saturation (Alrashidi, 2013). Saudi entrepreneurs perceive exports as less risky, so the numbers of exporters in the country continue to grow (Alrashidi, 2013).

In a comparison of entrepreneurial traits of Chinese and Americans, gender was a significant factor in the United States and China, but age was immaterial (Smallbone & Welter, 2012). Results of applying similar measurements to Saudi Arabia where two-thirds of the population are young might be divergent. With complex regulations, entrepreneurial motivations and autonomously dynamic traits for business success are suppressed (Chang & Wang, 2013; Doern & Goss, 2012; Knorr, Alvarez, & Urbano, 2013).

Teaching entrepreneurial skills is not a necessary factor in increasing entrepreneurship (Bae, Qian, Miao, & Fiet, 2014). Entrepreneurs' internal control and creativity are the basis for the entrepreneurial drive (Carland, Carland, & Stewart, 2015). With role models, there is an increase in entrepreneurship (Bosma, Hessels, Schutjens, Praag, & Verheul, 2012). Students tolerant of higher risks tend to profit more from entrepreneurial training (Fairlie & Holleran, 2012). Students in involved destructive

opportunities of organized crime, rampant bribery, repealing property rights, and unfair market competition also thrives in entrepreneurial ventures (Baumol, 1996; Urbig, Weitzel, Rosenkranz, & Witteloostuijn, 2012). Saudi students are seeking to own and operate businesses from taught entrepreneurial skills (Almobaireek & Manolova, 2012). Saudis are innately gifted with entrepreneurial traits so prefer owning businesses over gaining employment (Bayt, 2013; Sharaf, Alsadaawi, Elmadany, Al-Zahrani, & Ajbar, 2013).

For future businesses, Saudi entrepreneurs have to consider innovations in the universities (Ozin, 2013). Saudi university heads recently introduced entrepreneurial programs to modify Saudi mindsets towards a free economy with quality-focused services (Faridi, Al Kahtani, Alam, & Malki, 2014; Gamalel-Din, 2012). In efforts to increase entrepreneurship, Saudi and international researchers collaborated on testing open source software that is instrumental in lowering communication barriers between entrepreneurs and managers (Smith, Alshaikh, Kak, & Manesh, 2014). Enterprising individuals promote free economies for more confidence, optimism, creativity, and independence from traditional employment (Knorr et al., 2013; Suarez-Alvarez, Pedrosa, Garcia-Cueto, & Muniz, 2014). Entrepreneurs potentially alleviate poverty, improve jobs situations, and create independent nations if there is assistance from governments.

Saudis earn higher incomes in the public sector while expatriates earn more in private sectors; therefore, the 2013 income structure is unsustainable for a long term (Sheikh & Erbas, 2013). Public sector salaries are not enough for Saudis to cover rising housing costs and living expenses, so Saudis launch ventures to supplement incomes and

afford the cost of living (Sheikh & Erbas, 2013; Welsh, Memili, Kaciak, & Al Sadoon, 2014). Saudi authorities encourage Saudis to join the private industries, but the stabilities of public jobs with exceptional benefits are more attractive to Saudis (Al-Asfour & Khan, 2014). Consequently, a different strategy is necessary for Saudis to consider the private industries.

Entrepreneurial motivations of Saudi university students are related to four personality characters: innovativeness, risk-taking, the locus of control, energy level, and the likelihood of starting businesses (Al-Habib, 2012; Bjornali & Storen, 2012). University heads should target students exhibiting all four traits and facilitate the students to realize full potential as entrepreneur capable of creating jobs and fueling economic growth (Almobaireek & Manolova, 2012).

Saudis expressed entrepreneurial motivations and traits, so the right platform for Saudi start-ups is the developing economy of the country. Since the youth constitutes the larger segment of the Saudi population, it is easier to train this malleable group in comparison to the older group that prefers remaining with the traditions of Saudi elders. Academics and authorities should continue to foster partnerships with private industries to create opportunities and facilitate Saudi entrepreneurship programs, so the country's youth are geared towards more self-reliance, innovation, and creative prospects.

Failures of Entrepreneurs

Countless entrepreneurs continue with ventures despite failing multiple times because failures to entrepreneurs are a prelude to launching yet another project (Post, 2014). More than half businesses flop within the first six years of launch (Post, 2014). In

developing nations, entrepreneurs fail due to lack of or low technology and innovative ventures, little capital, and theoretical research (Post, 2014). Uninformed entrepreneurs with no plans experience reactive business closures because of the inability to resolve issues (Yusuf, 2012). Entrepreneurs with no vision, adequate resources, and knowledge of the market, struggle to sustain the venture for a longer term (Yang, 2012).

Personal traits of entrepreneurs can become barriers to success eventually leading to failed ventures in which overconfidence is rated high on the scale (Hogarth & Karelaia, 2012). Entrepreneurs' decisions of inaccurate or excessive market entries lead to failed ventures (Hogarth & Karelaia, 2012). After the first failed venture, entrepreneurs exhibit arrogance to launch another venture which is a deterrent to the success of subsequent ventures. Consequently, a determination is a significant achievement trait (Yamakawa, Khavul, Peng, & Deeds, 2013). Entrepreneurs prevent subsequent failures with strategic risk-taking and venture development targets (Gartner & Liao, 2012).

Since the end of Civil War, the US economy reshaped with an efficient R&D model which resulted in knowledge creation, entrepreneurship, and economic growth (Block et al., 2-13). Following the US model of R&D could help Saudi entrepreneurs become visionary rather than reactionary with no plans since the Saudi society is quite harsh about failed entrepreneurs with virtually few or no second chances (Hai, 2012; Kaufman, 2014; Rees-Caldwell & Pinnington, 2013). With such a model, Saudis could contribute to country's development with risk-taking, creativity, and self-reliance (Change & Wang, 2013; Knorr et al., 2013).

Saudis need to circumvent the stigma of failures to minimize social pressure as failure is sometimes not entrepreneur's fault, but unfavorable market conditions. Nevertheless, Saudi entrepreneurs should accept failures as lessons learned for subsequent ventures. If Saudi entrepreneurs maintain focus on social acceptance, then they will not develop innovative strategies and stagnate businesses. Saudis need to learn planning ahead to create visionary rather than reactionary outcomes. The Saudi economy is flourishing with hydrocarbons, religious tourism, and other natural resources, however, the authorities are creating a manufacturing economy.

Saudi Economy

The economy of Saudi Arabia is rapidly growing, but poverty and unemployment are constant challenges (Al-Habees & Runman, 2012). Developing an entrepreneurship synchronous to the Saudi authorities' achievements may help in overcoming unemployment and poverty (Zamperi Ahmad, 2012). Entrepreneurship in Saudi Arabia is underdeveloped even though the country has surplus capital and opportunities (Muhammed, 2014; Zamperi Ahmad, 2012).

Gender disparities are blocks to entrepreneurship (Berger & Kurketz, 2016; Goyal & Yadav, 2014; Thebaud & Sharkey, 2016). In developing nations, institutional voids from informal factors of cultural and social norms are foremost with women entrepreneurs (Goyal & Yadav, 2014). Entrepreneurship in emerging markets is only dominant among formally educated females while rampant in males even with limited education; moreover, females have to work harder to excel than their male counterparts (Berger & Kurketz, 2016; Goyal & Yadav, 2014; Thebaud & Sharkey, 2016).

Although gender discussion is out of the scope of this study, Saudi females are better at overcoming barriers to lead successful ventures (Basaffar, 2012; Porter, 2009). Saudi women entrepreneurs tackle challenges blockages in regulations, access to resources, operations, and several support services but demonstrate resilience and qualities germane to business success (Porter, 2009). The country with pervasive gender bias must have an active policy of achievement of women entrepreneurs. To date, highly educated Saudi females remain stifled by the country's masculinity (Basaffar, 2012; Porter, 2009).

Poverty, the second prevailing issue in Saudi Arabia, is widespread especially in old neighborhoods of wealthy cities particularly among women (Alfahad, 2015; Krane, 2015). Females are prone to poverty due to social stigma, lack of education, and scarce opportunities (Krane, 2015). Saudi society restricts movements of females unless accompanied by male guardians.

Entrepreneurship in Saudi Arabia is still in development phases while the country has high unemployment among Saudis (Wijaya & Budiman, 2012). The literacy rate of Saudis increased with scholarship drive, but returning graduates did not have adequate opportunities to procure jobs (Wijaya & Budiman, 2012). Employers in Saudi Arabia prefer skilled and unskilled expatriate employees over local hires which are an additional contributing factor to the high Saudi unemployment rate.

The surplus capital of the country is not sufficient to sustain or absorb the unemployed Saudis over long terms, so the Saudi officials continue to implement programs for nascent entrepreneurs as efforts to curb unemployment. Gifted with

entrepreneurial skills, Saudis mostly launch retail outlets as a natural transition. Officials need to play a pivotal in developing entrepreneurs for Saudis to venture beyond the comfort zone of the retail industry.

Challenges for Saudis

Pervasive limitations of the Arab world are the unspoken words and ultra-sensitivities of the people (Cook, 2012). Similarly, Saudi employers prefer a social corporate culture but avoid hiring Saudis to minimize gossip in Saudi circles which is more detrimental to business success (Albassam, 2015; Otterbeck, 2012; Ramady, 2013). In contrast to American, Saudis are reluctant to verbalize discomfort, so majority suffer in silence rather than confront disruptive behaviors (Baider, 2012).

The Saudi generation that inherited massive wealth from oil incomes and religious tourism contribute to the unemployment rates (Faria & Wu, 2012). Wealthy Saudis are unmotivated, live extravagantly, oblivious, and apathetic to the remainder struggling Saudis (Hyidt, 2015). These wealth inheritors own businesses managed and operated by expatriates, so the affluent segment of Saudi society is a proactive contributor of the rising unemployment of economically challenged Saudis (Welsh et al., 2014). Moreover, the ethnocentric expatriates further minimize Saudi employment (Welsh et al., 2014).

Foreign-educated Saudi students return home with high qualifications, but no job prospects because of employed expatriates (Wijaya & Budiman, 2012). Locally educated Saudis encounter difficulties performing well at jobs because the local academic education is memorization and not creative thinking (Unruh & Obeidat, 2015). Company

leaders employing recent Saudis graduates have training programs but encounter high turnover of these hires (Salem, 2014). For higher Saudi employment, academia must have creative thinking which in turn is a catalyst to entrepreneurship boost (Unruh & Obeidat, 2015). Saudis prefer government jobs because of stability, benefits, and high status of holding these jobs (Common, 2014).

Several highly qualified Saudis procure low-level jobs because Saudi employers favor expatriates in managerial roles due the absolute power of sponsorship system accompanied with lost cost of hiring foreign workers (Sadi, 2013). Preference for expatriates is due to poor quality education of local Saudi academia with the irrelevant curriculum, so it is costly for employers to implement training programs for Saudi employees (Salem, 2014; Unruh & Obeidat, 2015).

In developing nations, informal employment is widespread in comparison to formal employment since employers have a fewer obligation towards informal employees (Lukiyanova, 2015). Besides the limited job opportunities for Saudis, the majority of the Saudis are averse to and demean vocational jobs, so employers fill these vacancies with willing expatriates (Al-Ghofaili, 2013). Saudi Arabia's expatriate labor force is the fifth largest in the world, so nationalization of the job is a failure (Al-Habees & Rumman, 2012; Badria & ElAzaba, 2013). Saudi employers mistrust compatriots, most Saudis refuse labor-intensive jobs, and average Saudis are second class citizens, which are all contributing factors to the Saudi unemployment (Al-Asfour & Khan, 2014; Al-Ghofaili, 2013).

Employers of the largest enterprise sector, SMEs, fail to minimize Saudi unemployment (Yalcin, 2014). In Jeddah, foreigners outnumber Saudis so employers favor the former (Bagaeen, 2013; Brdese, Corbitt, Pittayachawan, & AlSaggaf, 2012). Saudization or nationalization of jobs is marginally successful primarily because of discrimination from Saudi employers (Al-Asfour & Khan, 2014; Albassam, 2015; Alzalabani & Nair, 2013). Foreign investor visas lack permanent residencies in the country though owners of foreign enterprises employ a substantial number of Saudis (Alanezi, 2012; Alharbi & Singh, 2013; Aulqi, 2014; Sadi, 2013).

Tribalism and nepotism are challenges qualified Saudis face (Aldraheim, Edwards, Watson, & Chan, 2012; Bechtold, 2014; Sidani & Showail, 2013). The ruling family is from the Najd tribe so in comparison the Saudis from Hejazi tribes do not easily gain prosperous opportunities (Bechtold, 2014). Tribal affiliations add to the economic demise of large communities in the country (Alzeban & Gwilliam, 2014; Sidani, 2012). A single organization may have employees from one family so the qualified Saudis from other families or lesser privileged backgrounds will not have chances (Bechtold, 2014). Such practices increase pressure on entrepreneurs to hire foreign workers.

The majority of Saudis are below 30 years old, so this vast segment does not participate in making life choices (Omoush, Saleh, Yaseen, & Atwah Alma'aitah, 2012; Taheri, 2012; Winder, 2014; Zamil, 2013). Most Saudis prefer paths of elders that do not deviate from traditional societal norms (Taheri, 2012; Winder, 2014; Zamil, 2013). The large young Saudi population complies with elders' decisions (De Jong & Moaddel, 2013). However, the younger generation readily accepts technological advancements

while the elders consider technology a deviation from a social culture of the country (Alarafi, 2013; Aldraehim, Edwards, Watson, & Chan, 2013).

Saudi authorities spend billions on state-of-the-art technologies but the masses adopting the new system is very slow (Alarafi, 2013; AlGhamdi et al., 2012; Maghrabi & Palvia, 2012). Saudis hesitate in changing behaviors such as becoming more environmentally aware because it is not easy for them to embrace adjustments to habitual patterns (Alam, Almotairi, & Gaadar, 2012). Saudi officials funded e-government services for business registrations but the system is inefficient as most Saudis do want to adopt or make efforts to learn (Aldraehim et al., 2013).

Entrepreneurs have more job demands and ineffective work environments if they hire employees other than competencies (Djikuizen, Gorgievski, van Veldhoven, & Schalk, 2015). Substandard Saudi academia may be extinct if Saudis seek more autonomy because the centralized is averse to innovation and entrepreneurial thinking (Al-Eisa & Smith, 2013). The quality of education for Saudis is a barrier as Saudis become complacent to conventional thinking (Al-Eisa & Smith, 2013). Reforms in education are necessary because Saudis cannot perform well on jobs if they learn from unqualified teachers, overfull classes, and substandard curriculum (Altbach, 2013). Talented Saudi job seekers are rare because of the memorization-based academia (Unruh & Obeidat, 2015).

Saudi students, for the most part, are unmotivated despite the substantial funds from the government (Springsteen, 2014). The country's education is culture-centered (Hamdan, 2013). In the 21st century, leaders from universities and industries

collaboratively established innovation centers (Al-Shehri et al., 2013; Ali, 2015; Khorsheed & Al-Fawzan, 2014; N.A. Saleh, 2013). Saudi authorities initiated these collaborations to move the country away from dependence on natural resources towards knowledge-based industries so as to establish innovative rather than consumption society (Ali, 2016; Hamdan, 2013; Khorsheed & Al-Fawzan, 2014).

Saudi authorities have to enforce Saudi employers to hire compatriots as strategies to reduce Saudi unemployment. Since foreign remittances continue to increase to billions of dollars, the authorities can implement plans to train, hire, and retain Saudi employees to keep the flow of money within the country. To date, job nationalization is a failed agenda with no reduction in Saudi unemployment rates. Saudi officials need more long-term visionary strategies rather than quick fix schemes.

Success Strategies for Entrepreneurs

Successful entrepreneurship has three elements: management, marketing, and money for companies in different growth cycles; moreover, capital is surplus, business growth is contingent upon marketing and administration (Jayarama et al., 2013; Obschonka et al., 2015). For successful entrepreneurs, rates of market penetration depend on having alternative strategies before launching ventures in cases of potential weak business plans or ideas (Chwolka & Raith, 2012). Suitable business plans have quality-driven methodologies that are survival tools for start-up companies (Chwolka & Raith, 2012). Early market entrants have competitive advantages over subsequent market entrants (Zhao & Parry, 2012). Entrepreneurship is a multidimensional construct of

beliefs and goals that entrepreneurs exercise during the start-up phase of businesses (Bayon, Vaillant, & Lafuente, 2015; Gartner & Shaver, 2012).

In emerging nations, entrepreneurs' belief systems are valuable tools for successes (Kiss et al., 2012). As compensation for limited resources and efficient economic governance in developing nations, an effective industrial policy is crucial for an increase in entrepreneurial drive and competitive advantages of businesses and private sector investments (Kirkpatrick, 2014; Panda & Dash, 2014). Officials of emerging nations have to incorporate streamline business regulations to attracting investment and to enhance entrepreneurship (Street, 2013).

Investments in R&D in emerging nations are low, so entrepreneurs depend on strong political ties and education for profitable ventures (Chen, Chi, & Poppo, 2014). In Saudi Arabia, the essential element for business success, R&D is virtually non-existent (Khorsheed, 2015). Entrepreneurship is a social and an economic phenomenon, so the social conditions of entrepreneurs and the social nature affect entrepreneurial processes (Lumpkin et al., 2013).

Lussier's 15-variable model, a predicting scale, for small business owners to comprehend the resources necessary for profitable ventures was applied to 403 Chilean small businesses to highlight factors of successes and failures (E. Halabi & Lussier, 2014). A similar model may be a necessary application for small businesses in Saudi Arabia. Business incubators customized to local culture benefit entrepreneurs as demonstrated by the impact of the incubators in USA and GCC (Al-Mubaraki & Busler;

Khorsheed, Al-Fawzan, & Al-Hargan, 2014; Khorsheed, Alhargan, & Qasim, 2012; Salem, 2014).

The effects of cohesive and diverse systems on entrepreneurial outcomes of survival, profitability, innovation, and efficiency are in three categories: (1) opportunity, having strong bonds with entrepreneurs, increases the chances of becoming one; (2) technology and creation, in which homogenous entrepreneurial teams diversify and recruit employees, and (3) exchange, in which entrepreneurs balance weak and stronger relations for access to resources and customers (Ozdemir, Moran, Zhong, & Bliemel, 2014). For Saudi Arabia, all three stages are applicable, but innovation is still in early stages (Autio et al., 2014; Biornali & Storen, 2012). When entrepreneurs launch ventures with a well-known member, profits are exceptional but the relationship could become problematic if the member does not fit the long-term vision of the business (Hmielski, Carr, & Baron, 2015). Entrepreneurs with strong business ties lower advertising costs, which are rampant in the social setting of Saudi Arabia (Alzeban & Gwilliam, 2014; Dulayami & Robinson, 2015). Novice entrepreneurs can benefit from hiring a high-profile member for strategic marketing of businesses (Hmielski et al., 2015).

Measurements of successes and failures within a year of business launch are unreliable (McKenzie & Woodruff, 2014). Entrepreneurs flourish in times of economic freedom and minimal intervention from governmental officials (Sutter & Beaulier, 2013). More entrepreneurs establish companies start when there is an economic freedom which is opposite to the heavily regulated terrain of Saudi Arabia.

There is a bidirectional relationship between entrepreneurship and frameworks of the economy, institution, temporal, and social milieu (Zahra et al., 2014). Frameworks are impervious to time, condition, reasons, and players, so Saudi officials need to establish a fruitful business model. For an alternative U-shaped relationship between ability and entrepreneurship, low ability entrepreneurs choose right projects and reject low-profit firms (Poschke, 2013). Due to the substandard education, Saudis have lower creative thinking, so most entrepreneurs choose to expand profitable firms. Academic leaders have to facilitate entrepreneurial behavior and activities among students, so collaborating with government officials to mandate entrepreneurship may enhance employment opportunities, delineate poverty, increase creativity, and innovative competencies (Ilyas, Zahid, & Rafiq, 2015).

In the Lewis model, opportunity-driven entrepreneurship is an influence on the structural transformation of all segments via innovation for increasing employment and productivity (Lee et al., 2013). Saudi officials have recently proposed an innovation-focused approach for the country's economic welfare and to modify from oil to knowledge-based economy (Al-Swailem, 2014). Saudi academics established triple helix model of collaboration between domestic and international universities, industries, and governments, for moving towards a knowledge economy (Al-Ohali & Shin, 2013; Shin, Lee, & Kim, 2012).

Entrepreneurs profit from strong commercial ties. New firm leaders can form catalyzing strategies to shape opportunities and build relationships (Hallen & Eisenhardt, 2012). Entrepreneurs need to build critical networks for continued business successes;

networking is ingrained in Saudis given the collectivist social framework and opposite of Western individualistic (Alzeban & Gwilliam, 2014; Dulayami & Robinson, 2015; Winder, 2014).

SMEs are instrumental in contributing to the economy with valuable goods and services for customers as well as employment breaks for neophytes to acquire marketable skills (Azyabi & Fisher, 2014). An essential component of SMEs, surplus capital, is an added boost to country's economic welfare (Gamble et al., 2013). In Saudi Arabia, SMEs are 90% of the enterprises, in Spain 60%, and in Austria 40% (Yalcin, 2014).

Entrepreneurial activities increased with franchising among SMEs of Saudi Arabia in the absence of adequate of Saudi authorities (Alharbi, 2014).

Established in UAE, Fuala, started as a small chocolate shop and now is franchised in 16 locations across GCC within ten years (Al Hosani & Zamberi Ahmad, 2013). Fuala is a model of a successful SME for students to study. Other Saudi achievements include Lamasat Beauty Salon, Munch Bakery, *What's Up* current events magazine, Sotra fashion designer, Mobily telecommunications, Nadek food products, and Fakieh Poultry, which were all established as SMEs and now franchised across the entire GCC (Al Saud & Khan, 2013; Khan et al., 2014). Social media advertising is an exciting and popular platform for Saudi entrepreneurs (Al Saud & Khan, 2013).

Many SMEs in Saudi Arabia do not have the capacity of capturing exterior information to implement internally in the organizations (Azyabi & Fisher, 2014). Though there is a lack of adequate corporate governance in the thriving family businesses of Saudi Arabia, these organizations are significant catalysts to boost the economy

(Welsh et al., 2014). Similar to SME owners of other nations, Saudi SME owners also focus on product and service quality, plans for the business, and satisfying customers. However, Saudi SME owners feel dissatisfied with the minimal support from Saudi officials because of the heavily regulated framework of the country. As one of the richest nation in the world, Saudi Arabia has surplus capital and resources. The undertones of the business environment mandate a need for reform in regulations as a strategy to enhance and support entrepreneurship. Innately gifted with entrepreneurial traits, Saudis prefer owning businesses over traditional employment in an entrepreneurial culture that prevailed for centuries (Wijaya & Budiman, 2012). Saudi entrepreneurs desire and strive for successes of business ventures with available tools.

Transition

Entrepreneurship in Saudi Arabia is an innovative concept. Saudi officials globally explore for the best entrepreneurial models. Even though the business regulations are cumbersome, Saudi entrepreneurs continue to launch new ventures. According to the literature reviewed, many nations have had bureaucratic barriers to business successes at some points. Simpler business laws are necessary as encouragement and promotion of entrepreneurial drive as well as improvement of economies. Successful Saudi entrepreneurs revealed the manner in which they overcame regulation hurdles. Sections 2 and 3 contain project and findings, respectively. Section 2 is an assessment techniques discussion and Section 3 has meaningful conclusions drawn from analysis of data collection.

Section 2: The Project

Saudi entrepreneurship is not a recent phenomenon, but it has gained national recognition partly due to the country's unprecedented economic growth. Top global corporations have bases in Saudi Arabia to participate in the unique development of the country and to realize benefits from its mega projects. Significant amounts of capital are in circulation within the country with which the authorities planned for and equipped the nation with the latest technologies and facilities. A multitude of prospects for foreign and local entrepreneurs are present as a result of this rapid transformation. Despite such success factors, Saudi officials have only marginally simplified the business regulatory environment. Saudi entrepreneurs encounter additional legal barriers in comparison to their foreign counterparts. Few Saudi entrepreneurs have overcome the legal obstacles to launching and operating lucrative ventures.

Section 2 present a discussion on justifying the study and the methods of selecting participants, gathering information, and analyzing responses, as well as an argument supporting Jeddah as the location for the study. The phenomenon under study was how Saudi entrepreneurs have successfully navigated the intricate rules required to initiate business ventures in their country. This study is an exploration of the methods the entrepreneurs implemented, strategies they used, and the manners in which they successfully operate businesses in the heavily regulated country of Saudi Arabia.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study was to explore the strategies Saudi entrepreneurs used to navigate regulatory procedures successfully. The

study involved conducting in-depth interviews to understand the lived experiences of entrepreneurs in obtaining the necessary documents and resources to launch new businesses in Saudi Arabia. The geographic location was Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Participants were Saudi entrepreneurs selected through personal contacts, verified from business registrations in the databases of the Saudi Arabian General Investment Authority (SAGIA) and Jeddah Chamber of Commerce and Industry (JCCI) and fitting the criterion of having operated successful businesses for the past 3.5 years. Revealing the experiences of successful entrepreneurs in Saudi Arabia may aid in developing an entrepreneurial culture in that country. A characteristic of an enterprising culture is a synergistic virtuous cycle in which innovative people trail blaze and then share ideas that contribute to growth (Clevey, 2009). Such a culture is fundamental to positive social change with a paved path for potential entrepreneurs to launch ventures, create job opportunities, and improve the socioeconomic conditions of those who succeed. In emerging markets, an entrepreneurial culture is a catalyst to quelling unemployment and placing the economy on a proper footing (Nkechi et al., 2012).

Role of the Researcher

The role of the researcher in a qualitative study is to function as the primary instrument for the data collection process and to maintain strict adherence to ethical guidelines (Yilmaz, 2013). Selected participants that met the sampling criteria responded to open-ended probing questions via face-to-face interviews. The collected responses were analyzed and are presented as findings in the Section 3. The most important aspect of my role was to exercise an ethical approach and to protect identities of participants. As

a researcher, my role was to eliminate bias by bracketing and truthfully investigate the phenomenon in question. The process of bracketing requires separation of personal experiences and perceptions, moral, and beliefs from the research data (Tufford & Newman, 2012). The method for achieving bracketing in this study was a mind mapping technique developed by Simon and Goes (2013) wherein I expressed my views on the entrepreneurial process in Saudi Arabia. I also kept a research journal during the data collection and analysis process. The use of journaling was a means to eliminate personal bias so I could focus on the participants' rich description of the phenomenon and accurately obtain a construct of the participants' perspectives as recommended by Tufford and Newman (2012).

I adhered to the ethical principles and guidelines of the Walden Institution Review Board (IRB) and the Belmont Report (Adams & Miles, 2013; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1979). Ethical guidelines in the Belmont report include respect of personal and diminished autonomy following the principles of beneficence and justice, gaining informed consent, assessing risks and benefits, and selecting subjects fairly (Adams & Miles, 2013; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1979). The IRB review number associated with this study was 07-16-15-0387987. I took all possible measures to ensure I met all ethical principles.

I did not target vulnerable individuals in my research. It might have been possible that a participant could be older or going through personal issues. Thus, a vulnerable adult could have been included without my knowledge. I did take care to do no harm and treat participants with utmost respect. All participants were required to sign a consent

form before participating in the study. The interview protocol consisted of a list of the initial interview questions, an interview script, and a consent form for participants to sign, as a crucial element in the interview process (Bevan, 2014). I used an interview protocol (see Appendix B). The benefits of an interview protocol include: (a) the researcher has a guide to achieve a well-planned interview (Qu & Dumay, 2011), (b) the researcher adheres to ethical guidelines, and (c) the researcher collects relevant data. Interview questions (see Appendix A) were followed up with a detailed protocol (see Appendix B) of initiating contact to gain final approval of the respective transcription from each participant (Hunt, 2011; Jacob & Furgerson, 2012; Jonsén, Melender, & Hilli, 2013).

Participants

I selected 20 Saudi entrepreneurs who were in business for at least 3.5 years by verifying business registrations recorded in databases of SAGIA and JCCI. My personal contacts with experts on Saudi entrepreneurship facilitated my ability to build rapport with the entrepreneurs. I contacted each participant via e-mail, phone, or face-to-face to discuss the reason for the interviews and forwarded nondisclosure agreements. In Saudi Arabia, the best responses usually emerge from informal face-to-face interactions (Akbar & Mandurah, 2014). I set appointments with participants, visited their respective businesses, and created a congenial environment. Saudis tend to interact comfortably in friendly settings. Since a colleague with established relationships introduced me to potential participants, the Saudi entrepreneurs were open to participating in the study. I informed the potential participants that I would record the interviews; I ensured their confidentiality before, during, and after the study, and I obtained participant consent.

Each interview lasted 1.5 – 2 hours and included probing and exploratory questions regarding the manner in which the participants finessed regulations for business success.

The sample selection was criteria-based on entrepreneurs with successful businesses over at least 3.5 years from launch who were introduced by colleagues with strong ties to entrepreneurs. The geographical location of Jeddah suited the study, as foreigners outnumber Saudis. For the most part, foreigner businesspersons flourish in Jeddah more so than native Saudis; therefore, Jeddah is an especially challenging location in which native Saudi entrepreneurial ventures may survive.

Research Method and Design

A qualitative phenomenological study was appropriate to understand how Saudi entrepreneurs overcame bureaucratic barriers to building profitable ventures. With tenacity, determination, and persistency, some Saudi entrepreneurs successfully navigate through the business registration processes. The phenomenon of successful strategies implemented by Jeddah-based Saudi entrepreneurs fit the phenomenological methodology (Moustakas, 1994). Given that Saudi Arabia entrepreneurship lags behind in comparison to other wealthy nations, the focus of this phenomenological study was strategies of successful Saudi entrepreneurs. An appropriate tool for the study was the application of the qualitative phenomenological design because the study involved exploring the manner in which Saudi entrepreneurs in Jeddah overcame regulations (Ament et al., 2014). A qualitative research design involves investigating common denominators between participants within a shared location (Giorgi, 1997). Colleagues who are successful entrepreneurs helped in the selection of potential participants willing

to participate in this study; I verified the research criteria by business registration dates recorded in databases of SAGIA and JCCI. The entrepreneurs enrolled in the study underwent a series of interviews from which I was able to derive motifs and conclusions. The aim was to reveal the experiences of Saudi entrepreneurs regarding their navigation of bureaucracies leading to the creation of successful businesses. The findings could assist other Saudi's with similar goals.

Research Method

This qualitative research method involves complex human interactions, subjectivity, and various conceptual principles, which are used to understand phenomena in humanistic fields of study such as sociology, anthropology, businesses, and psychology (Masue, Swai, & Anasel, 2013). The qualitative method is appropriate for a complex research problem with unknown variables (Sinkovics & Alfoldi, 2012). The sources of qualitative data consist of interviews, surveys, observations, and archival documents rather than using standardized instruments and experimental processes common in quantitative studies (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Smith, 2014). Qualitative methods are appropriate to reveal the experiences and perceptions of participants' experiences related to the focal point of interest (Moustakas, 1994; Polkinghorne, 1989).

After reviewing the differences between quantitative and qualitative research methods, the qualitative method was most appropriate for the study. The characteristic of quantitative research is a postpositive worldview of identifying, measuring, and testing relationships between variables (McCall, 2014). The focus of quantitative studies is of predefined variables, trend analysis, and relations as the basis for the discovery of

knowledge (Brannen, 2005). Quantitative questions are tests for the research hypotheses to determine the association between variables and to explore group comparisons, by the use of numeric data and accurate measurement (Yilmaz, 2013). The quantitative method is not appropriate for studies that involve detailed and rich discussions of the phenomenon (Smith, 2014). The qualitative method is suitable as a means to address the how and what inquiries of research questions (Bowen, 2008; Elo et al., 2014).

A mixed method design is a more comprehensive method of qualitative and quantitative phases of a study (Wagner et al., 2012). Due to time constraints, I did not choose the mixed method. A mixed methods study is a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches to understand a research problem by using numbers and texts; it is considered two studies in one (Zohrabi, 2013).

Research Design

I used a phenomenological design to reveal the experiences and perceptions (Moustakas, 1994) that Saudi entrepreneurs in Jeddah underwent to launch and operate successful businesses beyond 3.5 years. The single location of Jeddah fit the phenomenological criteria, as did the experiences and perceptions of successful Saudi entrepreneurs. Jeddah-based Saudi entrepreneurs did maneuver through the same business regulations that most entrepreneurs consider complex. The phenomenological method involves concerns that others might have considered standard and may overlook or not uncover (El-Shanawany, 2014; Moustakas, 1994). The method was appropriate to delve deeper into the factors that Saudi entrepreneurs in Jeddah encounter and to notice features that act as potential barriers to business successes (Giorgi, 2010).

For this study, I did not pursue other design choices of ethnography and grounded theory. Ethnography is an appropriate design to examine an entire culture (Gustafsson, Kristensson, Holst, Willman, & Bohman, 2013). The ethnographic design, with anthropological roots, focuses on the nature, construction, and maintenance of culture (Coughlin, 2013). The process extends beyond participants' words to understanding the shared system of the meaning of culture (Coughlin, 2013). The ethnographic process involves multiple data collection methods to understand the behavior and experiences that form a culture (Coughlin, 2013). Based on Coughlin's (2013) definition, the ethnographic approach was not suitable for this study since the focus of this study was only on the lived experience regarding entrepreneurship in Saudi Arabia. Grounded theory design is studying actions or social processes of people's interactions in situations, and that data defines the emerging theory (Gillsjö & Berglund, 2014; Sedlmair et al., 2012). A single case qualitative design was unsuitable for understanding the regulatory process of business creation in Saudi Arabia, which was the focus of this study. The intent was to investigate the unique situation of people functioning within a particular environment (Barratt et al., 2011; Shadish & Sullivan, 2011, Yin, 2012). A single typical case serves as a reference to explore the way and reason of existing phenomena (Boucard et al., 2015; Cronin, 2014; Yin, 2012). Case studies rely on multiple sources of data; including interviews, direct observation, video and audio tapes, internal documents, memos, e-mails, and artifacts (Yin, 2012). However, given the focus of this study on personal perceptions and the meaning that experiences held for each participant, which

constituted the interview data I collected so, a case study would not have been appropriate.

Data saturation is a point when new information or themes do not emerge from data gathering (Bowen, 2008; Francis et al., 2010; Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006). If responses from targeted participants did not generate any additional information but only recurring issues, then I considered that data saturation point and stopped any further investigation (Francis et al., 2010; Guest et al., 2006). However, when newly revealed, I continued interviewing additional participants to the point of data saturation.

Population and Sampling

The population for this study was Saudi entrepreneurs residing in Jeddah who were able to navigate laws to start and operate businesses. The databases of SAGIA and JCCI has a collection of entrepreneurs from which I drew the names that my friend recommended as the purposive non-random sample (Addington et al., 2014) entrepreneurs who fit the criteria of being a Saudi national from Jeddah or who established a business in Jeddah. A selection of at least 20 participants corresponds to Sandelowski's (1995) phenomenological design. Additionally, participants' responses were likely to focus on business procedures in Jeddah.

Non-probability sampling methods were appropriate for this study to make certain that participants met the criteria required (McCreesh et al., 2012; Seddon & Scheepers, 2012; Trotter, 2012). Probability sampling is more appropriate in quantitative analysis to assess a proposed hypothesis for generating generalized outcomes of a *what* query rather than the qualitative methodology's realistic queries of *why* and *how* (Marshall, 1996,

p.522; McCreesh et al., 2012; Trotter, 2012). Purposive sampling is one of the non-probability methods used when participants have experiences, knowledge, and expertise to provide an understanding of the phenomenon (Trotter, 2012). Purposive sampling was appropriate for this proposed study because I aligned participants with the overarching research question (Armstrong et al., 2013). The participants had experiences, knowledge, and expertise to provide an understanding of Saudis who started or operated successful businesses in Jeddah. I followed the snowballing sampling of choosing additional participants by asking participants if participants knew of others that met the sampling criteria. Determining the correct number and experience benchmark criteria are significant factors in narrowing the general pool to the purposive sampling for interview data (Block & Erskine, 2012).

I used phenomenological long interview and added follow-up questions as necessary. A sample size of 22 sufficed to reach data saturation of responses. Data saturation is a point when new information or theme does not emerge (Bowen, 2008; Francis et al., 2010; Guest et al., 2006). After 20 participants' responses from the selected sample had done not generate any additional information, I concluded the interview process after two more interviews and stopped any further investigation (Francis et al., 2010; Guest et al., 2006). The sample was purposive (Addington et al., 2014) that fit the criteria of Saudis who started businesses in Jeddah and were operating successfully beyond 3.5 years (Bosma & Levie, 2010).

Ethical Research

Participants' confidentiality and protecting identities are of the utmost importance (Berry & Bass, 2012, Damianakis & Woodford, 2012, Minnis et al., 2013). Participants received informed consent form and procedure via e-mail, followed with calls to ensure receipt before the meeting. In accordance with Walden's Institutional Review Board standards, participants agreed on recordings via tape and in writing. To align with ethical research, interviews, transcripts, and the study did not include individual or business names or business activities. Importantly, participants had full right to refuse to participate, share or withdraw from the study at any time. I picked up the consent forms before starting the interview and provided the participant with a copy of the signed form. For confidentiality sake, I ensured the participant data are in a safe and secure place for five years. The Walden IRB approval number 07-16-15-0387987 expires July 15, 2016. I assigned each participant an alphanumeric code to protect the identities.

Data Collection Instruments

In qualitative research, the researcher is the primary data collection instrument (Chan, Fung, & Chien, 2013; Pezalla, Pettigrew, & Miller-Day, 2012; Tufford & Newman, 2012). Data collection methods for this research included lengthy, in-depth interviews and respondent validation. With permission; I recorded face-to-face interviews. A phenomenological long interview with series of pre-determined open-ended questions prompted not led participants in the discussion and explanation of their experiences through the narrative process. I followed up the initial questions with more probing questions to reveal lived experiences and perceptions (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).

The data verification tools were transcription review and member checking (Clausen, 2012). General questions for the interview are in Appendix A, and the detailed interview protocol in Appendix B supported the phenomenological long interview design. This process provided the opportunity to explore particular themes or responses that surfaced during the interview process (Moustakas, 1994).

In short, the interview protocol (Appendix B) started with my contacting the participant for an appropriate meeting time and e-mailing the consent form. At the meeting with the participant, I introduced myself, expressed gratitude for their participation, briefly explained the study, reviewed the consent form, got verbal consent to record, and wrote notes. I informed each participant comfortably offer opinions and responses to the probing questions as the interview was confidential with identity protected. I started with a set of open-ended questions, asked probing follow-up questions to create an elaborate discussion so that I could clearly understand the participants' response and not interject my own personal bias' (Coleman, 2015). I wrote points in a notebook and recorded the conversation with a voice-recorder (Clausen, 2012). Unlike a structured interview, the phenomenological interview process is not limited to the pre-arranged list of questions. Instead, this process allows participants to discuss and raise issues not raised during the development of the research questions (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).

Data Collection Technique

A collection of data are interviews of some exploratory inquiries to illuminate various facets of the entrepreneurs' experiences (Cooper, Fleisher, & Cotton, 2012).

Participants communicated in English. I transcribed by reproducing spoken words into written forms (Clausen, 2012). Each interview, about 1.5 to 2 hours in length, was conducted in private rooms in each participants' respective business location. To ensure privacy, the identities of the participants will remain confidential adhering to Walden's Institutional Review Board standards.

I called each entrepreneur, introduced the study, indicated the reason for calling, and ended calls with confirmed appointments. I coded each person from P1 (participant 1) to P22 (participant 22) in the order that I met each one. I carefully designed the interview questions to avoid personal information and to comply with cultural sensitivities. The interview questions are in Appendix A, and the interview protocol is in Appendix B.

The first step in the data collection process was conducting a pilot study to practice my phenomenological interviewing techniques and address any methodological concerns. To confirm acceptability of the interview questions, I selected the first two participants for the pilot study. The pilot study participants responded to the interview questions, reviewed the transcriptions from audio recordings, approved and signed off. Participants in the comfort of their offices ardently responded to the questions. Once the participants received the transcriptions, they enthusiastically read the transcripts and suggested minor changes. The member checking process helped determine whether the findings were reasonable and whether the themes uncovered appeared accurate and credible (Darawsheh, 2014). The process was maintained with the Walden's IRB ethics and standards.

A pilot study did not reveal problems and blockages of participant selection, the culturally sensitive approach worked, issues of phenomenological investigation and customizing questions were feasible (Kim, 2011). The pilot study was helpful in assessing data collection techniques of the main study with the same steps of the interview protocol. Participants signed the consent forms with a free will to withdraw at any time. From the pilot study, I concluded the appropriate wording of the questions and incorporated sufficient details. For confidentiality reasons, treatment of results from the pilot study results coincided with the responses from the remainder participants. The participants received a copy of the interview transcript for review and confirmation of accuracy (Koelsch, 2013). After transcript verification, I followed up with member checking, which entailed sharing the data analysis, to ensure trustworthiness in the study and validating my interpretation of their experiences (Houghton, Casey, Shaw, & Murphy, 2013; Koelsch 2013). Based on the pilot study results, I did not have to alter subsequent data processes.

Data Organization Technique

I assigned each interviewee an alphanumeric code, and interviews remained in chronological order (Hayes, Henne, Meldahl, & Sontag, 2013; Junehag, Asplund, & Svedlund, 2014; Pool, Poell, & Ten Cate, 2013). After each interview, I crossed out the name from the list. In some instances, I called the entrepreneurs for additional information or clarification. The follow-up discussions had labels according to the first meeting date, subsequent date, and entrepreneurs' code. After the interviews, I replayed the recording at least three times to extract common motifs as recommended by Elo et al.

(2014). I used Excel to categorize the motifs. The spreadsheet was password protected for further security and had precise terms extracted from interviews. I divided the terms into categories such as regulations, economic impact, fund availability, entrepreneurial mindset, and resources available for entrepreneurship (De Prijcker, Manigart, Collewaert, & Vanacker, 2014; Meyer & Xia, 2012; Porter & Kramer, 2011; Wright & Stigliani, 2013). All data regarding the study is maintained on a thumb drive, and not on my computer, in a locked container for five years. After five years, I will delete the data from the USB memory stick permanently.

Data Analysis

The use of Atlas.ti 7 computer software was an aid in data organization and analyses. I entered data in Atlas.ti 7 created coding functions; assigned quotation status to the codes, in vivo coded and assigned codes to data segments. Details of these codes, segments, and results follow with a discussion of findings. I uploaded the recorded qualitative interviews in the software and assigned codes to terminologies.

The recorded responses to seven questions, transcribed on Microsoft Word, were then imported to Atlas.ti 7 software, which sorted data according to the assigned codes continuously to completion of the 22 transcriptions. I applied codes in relational networks. Each relation was a reproduction of the lived experiences, observations, insights, opinions, and explanations of participants.

After the data transcription, analysis began by searching for emerging and recurring themes I categorized the recorded interviews or raw data under codes using participant names, the date, and the location of the interviews. Themes were listed and

assessed in Excel representing seven stages of a framework method regarding similarities and differences in data as well as resulting patterns and relationships of common themes (Gale, Heath, Cameron, Rashid, & Redwood, 2013). The management and analysis of data were via Atlas.ti 7 analysis software. I divided data into smaller pieces for comprehension as recommended by Lacasa, Martinez-Borda, and Mendez (2013) for use in Atlas.ti 7 analysis software.

Themes were coded and cross-coded to observe the results as suggested by Sweeney, Greenwood, Williams, Wykes, and Rose (2013). All participants had experienced similar phenomena due to location, gender, nationality, and business rules. The *epoché* processes are used to block biases and assumptions to explain the phenomenon regarding its internal system of meaning (Moustakas, 1994). Epoché involves the steps of tracing experiences relevant to investigating the phenomenon, interpreted from participants' interpretations, identified, and recurring themes without bias (Denzin & Lincoln, 1989). Through bracketing, I set aside my assumptions and beliefs to examine how the phenomenon fit in the participant's world. Before the interviews, I used a mind mapping technique developed by Simon and Goes (2013) to acknowledge personal experiences and knowledge of that phenomenon and interpreted the participant's meaning as an informed reader. The use of member checking as per Koelsch (2013) is an added test for the accuracy of the data collection instrument.

I organized the interviews under descriptive headings and codes such as lack of information and lack of directions. Before using Atlas.ti 7 software, I manually quantified the frequency of codes from most to least occurrences. I interpreted the terminologies that

appeared most frequently as the most crucial for successful business launches and operations., In order of frequency, the results were: economic impact, funding access, entrepreneurial mindset, and resources available for entrepreneurship.

In the framework method for categorizing similarities and variations in the data, deciphering relationships follow deductions as recommended by Gale et al. (2013). The framework method has seven stages of analysis: transcription, familiarization with the interview, coding, developing, applying, charting data, and interpreting (Gale et al., 2013). With the seven stages of the framework method, the content of the interviews hold precedence, then awareness, coding, label comparisons, CAQDAS (Computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software) analysis in Stage 5, charting, and interpreting in Stage 7. With Atlas.ti 7, researchers fragment primary documents to view results of the analysis (Lacasa et al., 2013). Qualitative data involves diligent coding of several perceptions to analyze and construe data, notice variations that help in constructing a multidisciplinary agreement (Sweeney et al., 2013). Upon completion of the study, I shared the results with the participants via e-mail with gratitude of participating.

I used Moustakas' (1994) modified van Kaam method to reduce or eliminate redundancies allowing for extraction of phrases about the phenomenon. The Modified van Kaam method employed by Moustakas has the following eight steps:

Step 1: Horizontalization: Assemble initial expressions germane to the experience.

Step 2: Reduction and elimination: Categorize the connected components by testing for the necessity to understand the experience and the ability to conceptualize into a characterization.

Step 3: Clustering and thematizing: Group the constant elements of experience invariant constituents themes.

Step 4: Final identification of the invariant: Identify fully expressed themes constituents and themes by the application in the participant's transcript or compatible or validation with the experience, otherwise delete.

Step 5: Create individual textural description: Encapsulate each participant's experience using verbatim examples from the transcription.

Step 6: Created individual structural description: Develop a vivid explanation of the underlying factors of the experience, and the connection to themes, feelings, and thoughts.

Step 7: Create textural-structural descriptions: This entails developing a description of the core meaning of the experience incorporating the constant elements and themes.

Step 8: Composited description of the meanings and essences: Combine the identified belief of the participants to determine common meanings.

For the study, the selection of a qualitative method was justified because the data were not measurable, but rather illustrative in nature (Giorgi, 1997). Quantitative data are objective, accurate and analytical in approach with numbers and statistics (Brannen, 2005; Yilmaz, 2013). The mixed method incorporated qualitative and quantitative data

(Hussein, 2015) that did fit the study to reveal strategies of Saudi entrepreneurs who successfully navigated through complicated regulations. The qualitative phenomenological model described by Moustakas (1994) was suitable for exploring the features necessary for Saudi entrepreneurs to launching businesses in Jeddah. The appropriate design was phenomenology to illustrate lived experiences of the selected participants within the chosen milieu (Barr, 2014; Heydari et al., 2015; Ruffin-Adams, 2013).

Reliability and Validity

Reliability

Data reliability is a critical factor of research quality in a quantitative study (Cope, 2014). Dependability is a similar concept of reliability in qualitative research (Elo et al., 2014; Powell, Overton, & Simpson, 2014). I took steps to ensure dependability by including a rich, thick description of the research process and member checking as recommended by Marques and McCall (2005).

I exercised caution in not leading the conversation to suit my biases. The phenomenological analysis is a complex cyclical investigation that involves repetitive inquiries, in-depth assessments, and delving deeper into the responses, as well uncovering social, political, and cultural environments leading to interpretations (Miner-Romanoff, 2012). Because interviews were a phenomenological long interview, I had the benefit of verifying the transcribed interviews with the participants in follow-up meetings and asked them to sign off on the accuracy of the transcription. Member checking is the process to enhance the accuracy of the data collection instrument (Koelsch 2013). The transcript

review of this study incorporated the feature to allow participants to verify the result of the data analysis by reading the transcript of the personal interviews (Clausen, 2012; Koelsch, 2013).

Validity

In quantitative studies, internal and external validity are required (Cope, 2014). Creditability, conformability, and transferability are equivalent components of validity in qualitative research (Elo et al., 2014). At times, validity was challenging because the sample selection might not have represented the population as a whole. The data collection and data analysis methodologies are instrumental in interpretative phenomenological assessments and evaluations (Vicary, Young, & Hicks, 2016).

Credibility is an accurate description or interpretation of the participants' experiences, similar to inter-rater reliability in a quantitative study (Zarshenas et al., 2014). To assure credibility, I had a word-for-word transcription and asked participants to review transcripts for accuracy (Koelsch, 2013). I assured credibility and conformability through accurate transcription and member checking. For accuracy, I requested participants to review their transcripts. I shared my analysis with the participants (Lapidus-Graham, 2012). Thus, participants reviewed transcripts and data interpretation for possible errors in transcription, data interpretation, and any code inconsistencies (Cho & Trent, 2006).

Transferability is the ability or degree to which the results apply or transfer beyond the bounds study bounds (Elo et al., 2014). The means to achieve transferability, or apply the result of the study to different settings, included my creating a rich

description of the research process, research design and method, data collection, and data analysis (Elo et al., 2014). The person who wishes to *transfer* the results to a different context is responsible for making the judgment of whether the transfer is applicable (Simon & Goes, 2013).

I interviewed in subtle investigative mode because I did not wish to make any participant feel uncomfortable. Most Saudis know each other, so the possibility of information leaking to additional participants was high, which might have caused validity issues. To circumvent this issue, I scheduled the interviews adjacently in efforts so participants did not have time to discuss the interviews with other participants they might know. Confidentiality agreements were between the participant and myself as the researcher, but not among participants, so the possibility of data leaks was high. I minimized my personal biases, after a few interviews, to avoid leading the interviewees toward my expected responses, I kept the focus and adhered to the interview protocol (see Appendix B). It is highly unlikely for a Saudi person to admit to any criminal activity, as it is not part of the Saudi culture to divulge personal actions deemed against society's norms. Before starting the interview, I informed each participant that I was obligated to notify authorities immediately if unethical or criminal activities were uncovered from interview responses and or research procedures.

Transition and Summary

In Section 2, I justified selecting a qualitative phenomenological study research methodology and design. Section 2 has a description of the purpose, role of the researcher, participants, and data collection activities. Furthermore, the discussion in

Section 2 is of the phenomenological design, data analysis methods, reliability, and validity of the study. Section 3 is an overview and study findings, along with a discussion regarding the application of the findings to professional practice, implications for change, recommendations for action, and for future research.

Section 3: Application to Professional Practice and Implications for Change

Introduction

This section contains the presentation of the findings from an analysis of data obtained from open-ended, phenomenological long interviews with Saudi entrepreneurs who successfully navigated the regulatory process of business registrations in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Section 3 includes a gestalt of the study, presentation of the findings, application to professional practice, implications for social change, and recommendations for action. The section concludes with recommendations for additional research, an echo of my experience, a summary, and the study conclusions. The purpose of this transcendental phenomenological study was to explore the strategies Saudi entrepreneurs use successfully to navigate regulatory procedures in the geographic location of Jeddah. The study involved in-depth, phenomenological long interviews in revealing the lived experiences of procuring relevant documents and resources to launch new businesses. Participants were Saudi entrepreneurs who have operated successful businesses over the past 3.5 years, verified from databases of SAGIA and JCCI. According to the study findings, entrepreneurs are disenchanted with the regulatory environment. The participants agreed that the laws benefit the Saudi authorities as the registration processes are unclear, interminable, and vague with insurmountable bureaucracies.

Presentation of the Findings

The main research question for this study was: What strategies do Saudi entrepreneurs use to navigate regulatory procedures successfully? The use of a phenomenological design explored lived experiences of Jeddah-based Saudi

entrepreneurs who have been in business for over 3.5 years. Phenomenological long interviews were the source of data. Key elements of the study and a summary of the findings follow. The participants agreed that the laws benefit the authorities because of lack of information and cumbersome procedures so, there is a need for alternatives to the stringent regulations.

Participant Demographics

The 22 study participants were Jeddah-based Saudi entrepreneurs who have been in business for more than 3.5 years and who had successfully navigated through the regulatory processes. I had a 100% positive response rate with the candidates I contacted. They represented several industries, age groups, and socioeconomic strata. A participant pool needs to be sufficiently diverse for a holistic perspective (Rankin & Brown, 2015; Vaismoradi, Jones, Turunen, & Snelgrove, 2016; Zhanikeev, 2015). All targeted candidates were willing participants, and I did not experience any rejections or hesitations even during the interviews. Since the entrepreneurs registered with JCCI and SAGIA, I was able to verify their suitability for the study. The 22 participants are well-known Saudi nationals with businesses registered for more than 3.5 years in Jeddah. I called each participant to set up a meeting date in a secluded room at the place of business. The first 8 participants (36%) provided contacts of other business owners. With the snowballing effect of additional leads, I interviewed 22 candidates to complete the study because I had reached data saturation. Twelve participants (55%) had extremely busy schedules; however, they were able to accommodate the interviews without any disinclination. None of the participants rescheduled or canceled interviews, so I did not

experience any obstructions in information assemblage. A summary of participant demographics categorized by age, socioeconomic status or social class, business sector, and years in business is included in Table 1. For confidentiality, each participant was allocated an alphanumeric code P plus a number from 1 to 22 in the sequence of the meetings. Company information, business sector, and owners' names were omitted to assure the privacy of the participants and remain in compliance with the Walden IRB ethical standards and guidelines. For clarity, I separated the pilot study participants in the table.

Table 1.

Participant Demographics

Code	Business sector	Social class	Age	Years in Business
P1 (Pilot study)	Graphic Design	Upper	31	4
P2 (Pilot Study)	Food catering	Upper	28	5
P3	Business incubator	Upper	43	7
P4	Engineering consultant	Middle	68	15
P5	Architect	Lower	39	17
P6	Holding company	A-list	53	35
P7	Real estate development	A-list	46	8
P8	Upscale restaurant	Upper	45	6
P9	Fine jewelry	A-list	31	4
P10	Air conditioner installations	Lower	48	15
P11	Microloans	Middle	37	6
P12	Retail outlet	Upper	67	27
P13	Travel and tourism	Middle	74	38
P14	Construction	Upper	36	14
P15	Human resources	A-list	58	30
P16	Management consultant	Upper		50
P17	Legal	Upper	44	5
P18	Jewelry	A-list	55	28
P19	Car retail	A-list	55	33
P20	Civil engineers	Upper	57	39
P21	Tutoring Academy	Lower	49	15
P22	Financial consultant	Upper	40	10

Socioeconomic grouping (or social class) match the total net-worth as defined by the JCCI segmentation where A-list entries have a net-worth of over 1 billion Saudi riyals (\$267 million U.S. dollars), those in the upper range have 100 million Saudi riyals (\$2.7 million U.S. dollars) to 1 billion, in the middle range from 1 million Saudi riyals (\$270,000 U.S. dollars) to 100 million, and those in lower have below 1 million Saudi riyals. The exchange rate of USD to Saudi riyals is \$1 to 3.75 Saudi riyals (AlAli, AlAli, & AlKhalifa, 2016). The social divisions were: six A-list (27%), ten Upper (45%), three Middle and Lower (14%). Years in business ranged from four to 50 with eight below ten years (36%), six below 20 years (27%), two below 30 years (9%), five below 40 years (23%), and two below 50 years (5%). Combined ages of all participants were 1,082 years, with breakdowns of six below 40 (27%), seven below 50 (32%), two each below 60 and 70 years old (5% each). I selected the first two participants, P1, and P2, for a pilot study to test the viability of the interview questions (see Appendix A). Overall, the participants represented an assortment of business sectors accentuating common shared experiences. The extensive age range and multiple business sectors epitomized a holistic perspective (Rankin & Brown, 2015; Vaismoradi et al., 2016; Zhanikeev, 2015).

Overview and Thematic Development

Table 2 is a code summary of subthemes derived from data analysis. The main subtheme was fundamental dissatisfactions in the regulatory environment. The second subtheme was that laws benefitted the authorities, not the entrepreneurs, reflecting caginess in the system. The third subtheme was that unclear and abstruse registrations constituted cumbersome measures. The fourth subtheme was that ill-informed employees

at the business registrations demonstrated personnel incompetences. The fifth subtheme was that drawn-out and elusive registrations were persistent blockages in the Saudi entrepreneurial ethos. The sixth subtheme of pitiful information of names registrations was a disheartening component. The seventh subtheme was that complicated business registrations identified the regulatory process as the chief hindrance to business success. Throughout the data analysis process, business owners, it was evident that business owners believed that regulatory processes did not embolden entrepreneurship. The seven subthemes collectively formed three fundamental themes: (a) lack of information, (b) cumbersome procedures, and (c) alternatives to stringent regulations. The fourth theme was the resulting strategies that entrepreneurs used to overcome the bureaucratic system.

Table 2.

Top 3 Most Frequent Themes

Subthemes	N	Theme
Disappointments in the regulatory environment	16	1
Laws benefit the authorities, not the entrepreneurs	22	2
Registration process is unclear, abstruse and cumbrous	16	2
Employees in business registrations are ill-informed with relentless rerouting to other employees	16	3
Drawn-out and elusive registration process is a protuberant blockage in the Saudi entrepreneurial ethos	16	3
Pitiful information is essentially unmanageable for entrepreneurs to choose a suitable business name	22	1
Business registrations are the roadblock to business success	22	3

Word count, an essential element of data analysis, was necessary to realize the emerging themes. The repetitive words from different interview questions were grouped together for commonalities. Words from responses to the seven questions gave rise to three secondary themes. The grouping of words into the final three themes supported the

thematic development as illustrated in Table 3. I tabulated the frequencies of occurrences of each opinion, word, and themes in percentages in Table 3. The three most important themes with corresponding word and percent frequencies exemplified the main concerns of the entrepreneurs. Theme four is the description of strategies used by entrepreneurs as developed from recurring words in Table 4. All participants' recorded responses, words, word groups, and occurrence rates are in Table 3.

Table 3.

Top 25 Most Frequent Words used Clustered in the Context of a Specific Theme

Theme	Words	Context	n	%
1. Lack of Information	Unclear	Unclear procedures	16	73
	Unknown	Don't know where to start	20	91
	Asked, many	Asked other people	15	68
	Unsure	Unsure of the place	17	77
	Incompetent	Personnel ill-informed	22	100
	Incomprehensible	Incomprehensible	21	95
	Waste	Much time wasted	19	86
	Ask, several	Have to ask many	16	63
2. Cumbersome procedures	Stringent,	Inflexible name selections	21	95
	Rigorous			
	Complicated	Regulations complex	22	100
	Difficult, complex	Simple nonexistent	17	77
	Documents	Too many documents	22	100
	Inefficient	E-government inefficient	15	68
	Obsolete, old	Obsolete methods	14	64
	Painful, awful	Pain-staking paths	22	100
	Uncaring	Uncaring attitudes	20	91
	Ill informed	Personnel inattentive	15	68
3. Alternatives to stringent regulations	Biases	Laws favor few	16	63
	Bureaucratic	Very bureaucratic	22	100
	Several, many	Too many regulations	22	100
	Inflexible, rigid	Inflexible laws	21	95
	Rigid	Rigid system	22	100
	UAE, Bahrain	Free zones	20	91
	Avoid Saudi	Easier regulations elsewhere	22	100

Tabulation of each participant's responses, words, concepts, and themes, are listed in Table 4. Themes generated from participants' responses to the interview questions are segregated into three broad categories. The letter R represents the theme from replies to the interview questions. The total column represents participants who responded to the theme in the interviews.

Table 4.

Summary of Topics Discussed by Participants

Participant	Poor	Laws for authority	Unclear vague	Staff unaware	Long process	Derisory inapt	Barrier
1	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
2	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
3	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
4	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
5	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
6		R			R	R	R
7		R			R	R	R
8	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
9		R			R	R	R
10	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
11	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
12	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
13	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
14	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
15		R			R	R	R
16	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
17	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
18		R			R	R	R
19		R			R	R	R
20	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
21	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
22	R	R	R	R	R	R	R
Total	16	22	16	16	22	22	22
Theme	1	1	2	2	3	3	3

The first item in Table 4 represented the feebleness of regulations as per 16 participants. The six participants who did not comment on regulations were from the A-list socioeconomic range as these participants hired facilitators or “Mwakeb” to carry out the process. As such the same six participants did not comment on many elements of the process that others found inconvenient. The consensus across participants was that regulations do not favor entrepreneurs, regulatory personnel are uncaring, complex laws favor authorities, and all of these factors cause bottlenecks for entrepreneurs. Moreover, the extreme bureaucracies, rigid rules, and obsolete methodologies become arduous for business owners.

A further investigation of codes in Tables 2, 3, and 4 reveal the unfavorable regulations. Codes in all three tables emphasize the complicated regulatory environment as a hindrance to the success of businesses. Participants believed that regulations must be shorter and easier to complete. Based on findings summarized in Table 2, 3, and 4, three major themes emerged that responded to the research question of the study. The three themes relate to the processes and methodologies of the regulatory environment.

Theme 4 includes resulting strategic ingenuities that entrepreneurs exercised to steer through the bureaucratic barriers. All participants agreed that regulations do not encourage entrepreneurship in a country with surplus capital and opportunities. Additionally, the business owners continued to express interest and intentions of registering in neighboring countries with free zones that offer easier regulations for setting up and operating companies.

Theme 1: Lack of Information

One overarching emergent theme was the lack of information for regulatory steps in business registrations. As the dominant theme, scarcity of information superseded in the development of code (Table 2) and theme (Table 3) with word groups (Table 4). Lack of information, unclear, and asked others are recurring words. A summary analysis of Theme 1 is in Table 5.

Table 5.

Theme 1 Analysis: Summary

Code frequency	Word frequency	Participant frequency
46(Unclear ways)	84(Unclear)	16(Unclear procedures)
30(Don't know)	96(Unknown)	15(Asked other people)
50(Ask several)	88(Asked, many)	20(Don't know where to start)
55(Unsure)	98(Unsure)	17(Unsure of the place)
40(Incompetent)	77(Incompetent)	22 (Personnel oblivious)
29(perplexing)	93(perplexing)	21(Perplexing)
48(Waste time)	79(Waste)	19(A lot of time wasted)

Entrepreneurs were disenchanted by the drawn-out, complicated, and incomprehensible business procedures. Government officials could ease these procedures to encourage entrepreneurship. All participants unanimously agreed that business registrations in the country are difficult. One requisite pointed by P1, P2, P4, P5, P20, P21, and P22 was that regulations for business registrations presented a significant hurdle in entrepreneurship development. Simplified regulations improve entrepreneurship (Abu-Sharkh & Alshubaili, 2013; Bruhn & McKenzie, 2014; Kularatne & Lopez-Calix, 2012; Lazzarini, 2013; Panda & Dash, 2014). This requisite mandates comprehensible streamlined business registrations to encourage entrepreneurs' focus on businesses instead

of through policies. Government officials have to realize that the high cost of complicated procedures is not beneficial in the short or long terms (Haidar & Hoshi, 2015).

Establishing easier policies for business registrations and operations would benefit the entrepreneurs substantially noted P2, P5, and P11. Another requisite is clearly marked registration offices to prevent excessive wasting of time as pointed out by P1, P9, P18, P20, P21, and P22. Participants stated that they had to discuss needs exhaustingly with personnel present in each office that it felt like rehearsed dialogues.

Theme 2: Cumbersome Procedures

The second overarching emergent theme was the cumbersome procedures of business registrations. As the second theme, complex and incomprehensible methodologies dominated in the development of this code (Table 2) and theme (Table 3) using word groups (Table 4). Cumbersome procedures include stringent, rigorous, complicated, difficult, complex, and many documents, like repeated words. A summary of Theme 2 analysis is in Table 6.

Table 6.

Theme 2 Analysis: Summary

Code frequency	Word frequency	Participant frequency
52(Cumbersome)	92(Stringent)	21(Stringent name selection)
45(Complicated)	76((Rigorous)	22(Regulations complicated)
88(Difficult)	90(Complicated)	17(Simple nonexistent)
99(Many documents)	78(Difficult)	22(Too many documents)
56(Complex)	70(Complex)	22(Complicated)
89(Disappointing)	76(Inefficient)	15(E-government inefficient)
96(Obsolete, old)	90(Obsolete)	14(Obsolete methods)
72(Painful, awful)	96(Old, Awful)	22(Painstaking paths)
68(Uncaring, apathetic)	72(Painful)	20(Uncaring attitudes)

Entrepreneurs completed the registrations needed guidance from experienced business owners advised P2, P3, P17, and P20. Stringent regulations can negatively affect new venture growth (Arregle et al., 2013) and strategic entrepreneurial entries (Autio & Fu, 2013). The open practice of entrepreneurship with virtually non-existent legal and or regulatory barriers promotes entrepreneurship without developing innate entrepreneurial abilities as per Theory of Free Market Environmentalism (De Soto, 2010). Government interference eradicates lucrative prospects as well as inclinations towards innovations (Kirzner, 1997).

Despite some reluctance from P10 to discuss the subject, the statements from P10 coincided with P11, P12, P13, P14, P17, P21, and P22 that entrepreneurs experience disappointments with lengthy, obsolete, complicated and painful procedures. Individually, P6 believed the procedures were cumbersome, P8 labeled them sad, P17 preferred to forget the tiring processes, P4, P12, P14, P17, and P19 believed they were lengthy, and P20 labeled them as unfriendly to entrepreneurs. According to P1, P4, P7, and P14 learning is by asking established business owners to share their experiences about the regulatory procedures. While P2 suggested that it was good to have inside information, so P2's sibling working for JCCI was instrumental with the registrations. Information to register is limited and tougher with legislators noted P3. Name registration is via electronic system then by an inaccessible person that takes, 24 hours for approval or disapproval expressed P1, and since an individual is the final decision maker for name registration, it is hard to dispute the decisions stated P4.

All participants contended they had no proposed strategies but to avoid the regulatory procedures as much as possible. P11 added that it is more of avoidance rather than the execution of strategies while P5 is delaying registration of the company logo with hesitations and avoiding navigating through regulatory procedures. P1 suggested asking business owners' experiences. All participants agreed on the limitations of registrations given the constant mention of streamlining processes. Despite the state-of-the-art e-government services advertised everywhere, business registrations remain substandard as a component in the development of code (Table 2) and theme (Table 3) using word groups (Table 4). Disappointing registrations include "inefficient", "obsolete", "old", "painful", "awful", "uncaring", and "apathetic" as repetitive words.

Walking in early to register with the Ministry of Trade (MOT) then to JCCI is similar to 'walking through a maze' noted P1 where each door leads to something, nothing or referred to another door which took about two days of opening different doors hoping for correct information. Furthermore, P2 substantiated the need to 'open many different doors' to arrive hopefully at the proper procedure as according to P4, 'each door leads to some office personnel with limited information.' P2 added how cumbersome it was to break through barriers in the absence of an information body and especially that there was no strategy to navigate through regulations. P1 and P3 termed registrations as tough, not easy to understand, and an iterative process.

Regulations are favorable at the government level, explained P3, and are set to coincide with government's strategies of increasing GDP rather than benefiting entrepreneurs. Moreover, P3 continued that government has no quotas on visas, no

processes on partnerships with foreign small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and only, large conglomerates can easily set up businesses in the country. P4 and P10 supported P3's statements that SMEs are exclusively for Saudi-to-Saudi partnership, and Saudi entrepreneurs cannot collaborate with a foreign SME and earn all the benefits of Human Resources Development Fund. Furthermore, P3 complained that foreign entities must pay taxes while Saudi corporations are exempt. The consensus among participants was that current regulations in Saudi Arabia promote international entrepreneurship. Saudi entrepreneurs desire easier rules and regulations to focus on businesses. Most entrepreneurs verbalized preference for neighboring free trade zones to Saudi Arabia.

Theme 3: Alternatives to Stringent Regulations

The third overarching emergent theme was the alternatives to stringent regulations of business registrations. Bureaucracy and rules favoring authorities encompass development of code (Table 2) and theme (Table 3) using word groups (Table 4). Stringent regulations include bureaucratic, several, much, inflexible, and rigid systems as frequent words. A summary of theme 3 analysis is in Table 7.

Table 7.

Theme 3 Analysis: Summary

Code frequency	Word frequency	Participant frequency
76(Stringent regulations)	92(Stringent)	22(Very bureaucratic)
65(Bureaucratic)	65(Bureaucratic)	22(Many regulations)
93(Several, many)	90(Several, many)	21(Inflexible laws)
99(Inflexible, rigid)	78(Inflexible)	22(Rigid system)
67(UAE, Bahrain)	99(Rigid)	19(Easy out of Saudi)

In comparison to Saudi Arabia, UAE has easier business regulations mentioned P1 and P2 with the desire to move to the business friendly country. Establishment of economic free zones has spurred trade without added tariffs and expenses and easier regulations to encourage business growth. Theory of productive, unproductive, and destructive entrepreneurship is an excellent explanation of how prospects for economic and political wellbeing coincide with conducive regulatory frameworks (Baumol, 1996). The theory posits that productive contributions are innovative ideas benefiting society, and unproductive activities are illegal activities and corruption, hindering society. Baumol (1996) further contends that governmental authorities are often more concerned with profits than innovation while the opposite should hold more precedence.

Entrepreneurship thrives in free economic zones (Chou & Ding, 2015). Saudi Arabian authorities established the King Abdullah Economic City (KAEC) to promote businesses especially entrepreneurship (Moser, Swain, & Alkhabbaz, 2015). However, KAEC, to date, lacks complete infrastructure and operates under the regulations of the whole country (Moser et al., 2015). With minimal regulations, economic zones fair well for entrepreneurs (Chou & Ding, 2015). UAE has had successful free economic zones for entrepreneurs in neighboring countries especially Saudi Arabia (Chadee, Roxas, & Rogmans, 2015; Yalcin, 2014).

Participants experienced the complications of Saudi policies that deviate significantly from the more feasible business rules of the neighboring countries (Naguib & Jamali, 2015; Young, 2015). P1 claimed that the next time he would register in a free zone such as UAE where regulations are flexible and efficient, then conduct business in

Saudi Arabia. P3 and P16 continued that neighboring GCC countries such as UAE and Bahrain are more conducive to entrepreneurship, and it is better to choose UAE registration than Saudi. P22 swears he will never register in Saudi again. Most of the time, entrepreneurs hire someone to do the registrations. For P7, father's secretary registered the company. P9 paid *mwakeb* (facilitator) to carry out the registration process. Unsure P15 did not personally visit any governmental offices. P18 stays away from government offices. P19 had a legal team to complete the procedures because it is better equipped to handle country's legal processes. Therefore, P19 as an entrepreneur broke the mold of bureaucracies by hiring experts thus fitting in Schumpeter's theory of entrepreneurship.

Theme 4: Persistence Strategies Needed to Maneuver Through Regulations

The fourth emergent theme is the persistence strategies of maneuvering through regulations of business registrations. Participants' experiences with the bureaucratic and strict procedures are in themes 1 (Table 5), 2 (Table 6), and 3 (Table 7). Theme 4 is a participants' approaches to overcome the burdens of the heavily regulated system. A summary of theme 4 analysis is in Table 8.

Table 8.

Theme 4 Analysis: Summary

Code frequency	Word frequency	Participant frequency
89(Persistent)	90(Did not give up)	22(Completed)
70(Resistant)	56(Tough)	22(Stubborn)
99(Continued)	90(End was necessary)	21(Accepted pain)
90(Trained)	89(Experienced)	22(Experts)

All participants mutually agreed that regulations were cumbersome and strategies were necessary to complete the processes. Even P6, P7, P9, P15, P18, and P19 with experts finishing the legal requirements, voiced their objections to the system. P1, P3, P5, P11, P12, P17, P21, and P22 said they had extensive conversations with the personnel whenever they felt that the staff wanted to redirect to others. P2, P4, P10, P20, and P21 said that they never went to the government offices without gifts of chocolates or dates for the staff. P1 and P2 said while they were disheartened the first time, during the subsequent visits, they developed friendly demeanors with the staff to complete the procedures. As mentioned in theme 2 each public servant wanted explanations and participants exhaustingly repeated their needs. However, participants continued in the quest to find the right office with determination and tenacity. All participants suggested to not to give up or get discouraged but become *extremely stubborn* politely, so the staff did not force them out. They added that hiring experts is expensive but may be necessary. Furthermore, entrepreneurs shared that since they stayed focus on their goals and continued with smiles covering their frustrations and diligently completed the required procedures. The tenacity entrepreneurs exhibit supports the theory that entrepreneurs are tough, pragmatic people (Collins & Moore, 1970) driven by the need for achievement, but contradicts the notion that entrepreneurs are seldom willing to submit to authority (Schumpeter, 1939).

The charismatic leadership theory (Conger, 1989) is an application of soft skills that lead to victory. Charming leaders and entrepreneurs are more influential and successful than their counterparts (Conger, 1989). The consensus among the

entrepreneurs is that smiling, congeniality, and tenacity were fundamental strategies which helped in steering the brutal regulatory processes. Saudis are polite so emulating the same behavior with the Saudi government staff is paramount to success which is in accord with the conceptual framework regarding entrepreneurs creatively seek necessary means to establish their business (Gottlieb & Makower, 2013; Richet, 2014).

Entrepreneurs have many of the same character traits as successful leaders (Hébert & Link, 1989).

Applications to Professional Practice

Entrepreneurship continues to grow in Saudi Arabia with prominent roles of the government and private sector to enhance for job creation and poverty alleviation. The country is rapidly developing. Therefore, commercial opportunities are plentiful. Despite the declining oil prices, Saudi Arabia thrives economically from non-oil sectors such as religious tourism and other industries. Multinational companies continue to set up operations in the country for tremendous growth potential thereby boosting entrepreneurial opportunities. Foreign direct investments with majority shareholding are now on the rise while reducing Saudi investment to 25% (Albassam, 2015). However, Saudi authorities need to improve regulations for entrepreneurs to live up to the potential.

Entrepreneurs can act as powerful agents for economic diversification, developing local content, and fostering innovation. However, to date, the authorities have been relatively unsuccessful in streamlining business registrations. Realizing the full potential benefits presented by entrepreneurs requires substantial effort to help the Kingdom's entrepreneurial ecosystem reach maturity across structural and cultural dimensions.

Several entrepreneurship centers are set up across the Kingdom. However, the consensus is that quality is sub-standard due to the stringent regulations (Haidar & Hoshi, 2015).

The findings of the study revealed seven subthemes regarding perceptions of the process consolidated into three themes and fourth theme on strategies applied by entrepreneurs, all correlated with business registrations for Jeddah-based Saudi entrepreneurs. Government authorities could consider the themes as templates to improve the regulation processes for business registrants. Lack of information and cumbersome registrations were dominant themes, of which disappointments, unsure of registration venues, and stringent criteria were repeated several times as illustrated in Table 3. In summary, all participants agreed that the regulations for business registrations in Jeddah were unclear, unfathomable, complicated, and vague.

The overarching research question for this study was as follows:

RQ: What strategies do Saudi entrepreneurs use to navigate regulatory procedures successfully?

The sub questions were as follows:

SQ1: What experiences do Saudi entrepreneurs have regarding the regulatory procedures?

SQ2: How do Saudi entrepreneurs identify, plan, execute, monitor, and update their strategies to navigate the regulatory procedures successfully?

All participants conceded on the lack of information and directions in the registering process. Every business owner interviewed sought assistance from friends and family members to know the regulations of business registrations. All participants got

redirected to Ministry of Trade from the Jeddah Chamber of Commerce. In JCCI, they did not find clearly labeled doors or directory of personnel responsible for registrations. They had to go through *several doors* and talk to multiple personnel before finally reaching the registration department. The affluent participants hired a local expeditor “Mwakeb” to carry out the cumbersome process. These wealthy participants were completely uninformed and did not consider it necessary to comprehend the registration process.

Regardless if participants actively went through the process or paid someone to register, there was total agreement that business registration processes benefit the Saudi authorities (SA) rather than the firm owners. The vast benefits available to business owners from various governmental organizations were unknown to all. For example, a *salary matching fund* for Saudi employees, zero-interest loans for select sectors, and tax breaks for Saudi business owners (Rahman, 2014). Since the regulations were so difficult to maneuver, the participants believed that procuring the mentioned benefits will involve additional red tape. Thus, most participants preferred to continue business as usual without involving in governmental incentives.

Name registration is extremely stringent as Saudi authorities are strict about certain names or meanings of names that may translate into a prohibited version in Arabic, such as clubs. Furthermore, business names were rejected even if only a portion of the name matched another business anywhere within the Kingdom. Participants conceded that the Saudi business registration system is rigid, as it must fit within the

confines set by the Saudi authorities. Most participants preferred efficient registrations of UAE and Bahrain (Chadee et al., 2015; Yalcin, 2014).

The consensus among participants was to ask colleagues, friends, and relatives how to proceed with registrations. P16 mentioned that the Ministry of Trade (MOT) and the JCCI had features of online licensing on the MOT website facilitating registration, fee payments, and license printing. However, entrepreneurs still have to visit the government offices numerous times to carry out certain procedures that change without prior notice and have to encounter employees who in turn are unaware because nothing is official. Sometimes government employees stop providing services until directives from the top become clear. Sudden changes and departments moved may be circulated in social media. The real implementation of changes only happens after official approval from a higher level, which takes longer for an average period of 2 weeks to a month.

Implications for Social Change

The research was timely and relevant because of the high growth rate of entrepreneurial activities in Saudi Arabia (Trading Economics, 2013). The Saudi Arabian authorities boast having a successful entrepreneurial model. However, there are significant bureaucratic barriers imposed on entrepreneurs, and the government officials could play a fundamental role in overcoming these bottlenecks (Khan, 2013). Governments are instrumental in entrepreneurial development enabling entrepreneurship or constraining institutional frameworks (Smallbone & Welter, 2012). A general issue Saudi entrepreneurs encountered to obtain a business license; it was necessary to 'increase' registration fees with extra funds to bestow as a 'gift' for facilitating services

(Ahmad, 2012). The gift might be a token gift, such as a box of candy, or in some cases an object of value, or a promise to a person serving in the public capacity.

This study may be a pivotal guide for Saudi entrepreneurs to launch and operate businesses successfully. The Saudi Arabia's unemployment rate in 2013 was 36% (Central Department of Statistics & Information, 2014) while neighboring Qatar's was 0.3% (Central Intelligence Agency, 2014). Both countries are developing at a phenomenal pace with revenues in the trillions of dollars; nevertheless, the unemployment rate in Saudi Arabia is substantially larger than in Qatar. Saudi Arabian leaders need to implement strategies to reduce this widespread gap (Al-Asfour & Khan, 2014).

Findings from a 2013 survey revealed that most Saudis below the age of 30 preferred owning businesses rather than gaining employment with another company (Bayt, 2013). Furthermore, Saudi authorities forbade discussions of poverty (Alfahad, 2015). Entrepreneurship affects the economic and social health of a country (Lumpkin, 2013). This study may have potential solutions and recommendations that might help Saudi Arabian authorities to circumvent high failure rates of Saudi entrepreneurs' start-up companies and by doing so, improve the social and economic conditions of the people of Saudi Arabia.

Recommendations for Action

Recommendations for the progress of entrepreneurship in Saudi Arabia, foremost include modifications of business set up rules. Regulations for business registrations must change to allow expansion of entrepreneurship on a massive scale throughout the

Kingdom and not only to select individuals or groups. With solid advancement plans and visions to align the country with the developed world, it is advisable for Saudi authorities to exercise free market models (Habib, 2015; Kaufmann & Malul, 2015; Walker, 2015; Wiger, Chapman, Baxter, & DeJaeghere, 2015). Developed nations have made strides in eradicating poverty and creating opportunities in free economies (Habib, 2015). Saudi authorities can emulate already successful models of entrepreneurship of Canada, USA, Germany, and Singapore as examples.

Saudi authorities need to revisit the regulations perhaps in partnership with entrepreneurs who are the end users. Maybe a survey of concerns and recommendations from entrepreneurs could become the basis for the change. While successful models across the globe can be reference points, Saudi entrepreneurs have to participate to modify the system. The one-sided approach that is, exclusively Saudi authorities' suggestions may lead to the same consequences. Results of the collective responses from entrepreneurs, government employees, and Saudi authorities need further discussions to improve the business climate. It may take some time to come to a consensus. Nevertheless, progress is possible to tackle issues and present solutions that customize with the Saudi culture and customs.

Recommendations for Further Research

The focus of this study was entrepreneurs in Jeddah. Other researchers might consider conducting the same or similar studies with entrepreneurs in other Saudi communities. Future studies could include the analysis of the new Vision 2030, which is a national transformation plan for the country. The goal of the 2030 vision is to minimize

Saudi's dependence on oil, make the country an investment powerhouse of that connects the three continents together (Amer, 2016). The goal for streamlining regulations is to conduct business similar to other developed nations known for favorable entrepreneurial environments. If the vision is actualized, then Saudi business regulations may be restructured as an encouragement for more entrepreneurship since authorities are moving the economy away from hydrocarbons.

Reflections

Before the study, I had some understanding of the challenges facing Saudi entrepreneurs, but I was not aware of the extent of the barriers that needed attention. I let the participants talk without interruptions and refrained from any gestures, so my personal biases were not hindrances. I discovered that participants were comfortable discussing in the safe zone of their commercial locations. In the Saudi society, gossiping is rampant, so Saudi businesspersons take extreme measures to keep their lives confidential. I was glad that I received candid responses. At times, I felt like a therapist listening to people who were anxious to divulge information. I believe the unobtrusive nature of the interview process, along with the long phenomenological interview format, were the correct decisions to complete this study.

Conclusion

In summary, Saudi authorities need to consider entrepreneurs before setting up regulations. To promote entrepreneurship; business rules must be easier, comprehensible, shorter, and less bureaucratic. While Saudi Arabia is a monarchy, the new vision 2030 is on the track to rapidly move the country towards progress. Under the current system,

tenacity, persistence, and building relationships with government employees is necessary to maneuver through the cumbersome regulatory process. Liquidity and opportunities are abundant in Saudi Arabia. The country could become the foremost choice for international businesses once the regulatory process for new enterprises and businesses become more transparent and less complex.

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Appendix A: Interview Questions

1. Based on your experiences, how do you learn about the regulatory procedures to start your own business?
2. Based on your experiences, how do you identify strategies to navigate the regulatory procedures successfully?
3. Based on your experiences, how do you plan strategies to navigate the regulatory procedures successfully?
4. Based on your experiences, how do you execute strategies to navigate the regulatory procedures successfully?
5. Based on your experiences, how do you monitor strategies to navigate the regulatory procedures successfully?
6. Based on your experiences, how do you update strategies to navigate the regulatory procedures successfully?
7. What other information (if any) would you like to share regarding your experience with the regulatory system in launching your business?

Appendix B: Interview Protocol

Organization:

Participant (Title):

Interviewer:

Date of interview:

Time of interview:

Department/ Unit:

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Participants will receive the informed consent to respond to the questionnaires and participate uncompensated. According to the cultural norm of the country, face-to-face interactions take precedence. Upon execution of the informed consent, the interview will be conducted in the participants' chosen premises free of charge as an unpaid and uncompensated volunteer in this study. The procedures below will be followed for interviews:

- 1) Call each participant, discuss the study briefly, get agreement to record, and set schedules with venues for the interview.
- 2) Upon arrival at the venue, first few minutes will be spent socializing to create a warm and friendly atmosphere for the participants which is in sync with the local culture.
- 3) Once the participant is ready to proceed to the study questionnaires then move on to procedure 4.
- 4) **Start the recording**

- 5) Inquire if the participant read the consent, agreed to participate in the study with the assurance of complete confidentiality.
- 6) Start the interview: *“Salam Alaikum, This is Farah, and I am a Doctoral student at Walden University. Thank you for agreeing to meet and participate in this study. The consent form iterates that this interview is confidential, you have agreed to participate, offer your opinions, share your experiences, and do not that I record our conversation by pen and audio. If at any point you feel uncomfortable, we will stop. I will conduct a phenomenological long interview of approximately 1.5 to 2 hours.*
- 7) After asking the questions, I will allow the participant to continue the conversation without interruptions or leading comments.
- 8) In the event, the participant changes his mind about being recorded then: *“Thank you (Mr. Participant’s name), I understand and respect your decision. With your permission, I would like to write your responses to grasp your viewpoints fully on the Saudi entrepreneurship in Jeddah. Perhaps, the interview time will be extended beyond the agreed 35 minute to ascertain precise recording of your responses. Would you like to proceed with the interview?”*
- 9) Reassure confidentiality of the responses: *“(Mr. Participant’s name) all your responses are confidential and the published doctoral study will alleviate any and all identifying information to protect your identity.”*
- 10) Verify the participant understands the informed consent that includes; a) the Walden Institutional Review Board (IRB) number for this study, b) an e-mail

address for the Chair of my Doctoral Study Committee, and c) an e-mail contact for the IRB if you have additional questions beyond this interview about the nature and purpose of this study.”

- 11) *“Do you still feel the willingness to participate?”*
- 12) Explain the study’s purpose and interview procedure: *“The purpose of this study is to explore strategies Saudi entrepreneurs use to navigate regulatory procedures successfully for starting and maintaining new businesses in Jeddah.”*
- 13) *“The format of the interview is open-ended questions. Please feel free to add advisory comments that you consider suitable.”*
- 14) Statement of consent and decision to pullout from the interview: *“(Participant’s name) this is a voluntary interview so you can refuse to respond to any question that seems inappropriate to you. Moreover, you are free to annul your consent, your interview responses, references and recorded information if at any time, you consider the interview destructive. Your refusal is without any and all consequences and will not tarnish your professional image.”*
- 15) Start the interview questions.
- 16) At the end of the questions, *“Thank you (Mr. Participant’s name) again for kindly accommodating my request and participating in the study.”*

I informed the participant that he will receive a copy of the transcribed interpretation of the audio recording (Mr. Name). I will send you a copy of the transcribed notes from the recording so you can review for precision and correctness,

sign the document, and return it using (fara.spencer@waldenu.edu). Thank you for your valuable time and respected knowledge.