



UNIVERSITI
TEKNOLOGI
MARA

Fakulti
Pengurusan
dan Perniagaan

FBM INSIGHTS

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA CAWANGAN KEDAH

Volume 1

2020

e-ISSN 2716-599X

UiTM *di hatiku*

eISSN 2716-599X



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WOMEN ENTREPRENEUR: THE DYNAMIC OF MOTIVATION FACTORS

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An entrepreneur is an individual who sets up and runs a business by taking chances of both opportunities and risks. In other words, an entrepreneur is a person who plans, organises, and operates a business venture along with risks to make profits. Therefore, entrepreneurship is a process that recognises opportunities of a business, which takes in all the risks and the rewards. Hence, entrepreneurs are the catalyst of economic growth and development of the nation.

The Malaysian government has been very concerned about developing and promoting entrepreneurial activities. In fact, the government of Malaysia also plays a very important role in developing and promoting women entrepreneurship activities as a means for life growth and to sustain community development. This is aligned with the government's continuous effort to cultivate enterprising culture among Malaysian women. However, it was found that the number of women entrepreneurs in Malaysia is still lower than men entrepreneurs (Abdul Mutalib, Arshad, Ismail, & Ahmad, 2015). Despite this issue, this paper intends to discuss women entrepreneurs' motivation in running their own companies to have more job flexibility and autonomy.

In general, motivation is a drive to improve oneself for a better life. A business will neither start up nor succeed without motivation (Roberston, Collins, Medeira, & Slater, 2003). In a previous study conducted by Salleh and Osman (2007) on women entrepreneurship in Malaysia, they identified several different types of motives, which ranged from the more to less economically-inclined. Among the reasons provided by some of the respondents who had resigned from formal jobs include the fact that managing family is becoming more demanding and challenging. Hence, these women decided to become entrepreneurs instead as that gives them more space and opportunities to manage their own families. The desire for greater life flexibility, seeking challenges, fulfilling a long-felt desire, or escaping from the organisational glass ceiling are also other motivational factors that lead women to start-up their own businesses (Lee & Rogoff, 1997). In addition, Islamic teachings also have played a significant role in influencing women to take up entrepreneurship. Referring to previous research, Yusof (2010) states that religious as one of the

motivating factors for micro-entrepreneurship amongst Malay women. As the Islamic history has recorded, Siti Khadijah, the Prophet's wife is a famous businesswoman herself. With her wealth, she has helped the Prophet in his Islamic mission. Islam is a way of life and thus, it encompasses businesses. By observing personal religious duties and business activities, one can aim for success in this world affairs and hereafter. Success in Islam is one of the motivating factors for Muslim lifestyle and business.

From a past research finding by Raman, Anantharaman, and Jayasingam (2008), women entrepreneurs, aged between 20 and 40, were involved in manufacturing, trading, and service sectors. Women entrepreneurs were found to be more matured in terms of age and majority were well-educated, i.e., degree holders. Therefore, the educated generation has higher intention in becoming entrepreneurs. They rated that work core is a motivating factor for women to become entrepreneurs. The urge to explore inner talents and the desire to do something creative play an important part in influencing women's decision. The obtained job satisfaction and keenness in utilising business knowledge further strengthen the decision made. Similarly, Hisrich and O'Brien (1981) found that the desire to make full use of one's talent or skill is one of the reasons for women engaging in entrepreneurship. Besides that, economic core, individual core, and entrepreneurial core are regarded as important while social factors appear to be the least important factor among others.

Furthermore, women are greatly influenced by the push and pull factors to start a new venture. Apart from flexibility, opportunities, empowerment, and increment in education, there are actually some other possible factors that motivate these women entrepreneurs. For example, support from family members, family background, and current status in the society. Therefore, it could be good to further this discussion into an analysis of investigation to see the motivational factors that inspire these women entrepreneurs most. What are their main motivational factors? Is it because of the flexibility, the opportunities, or the unsatisfied social needs that urge them to venture into a business? The contribution to this discussion will provide a unique understanding of the government in developing a motivational spirit among women to achieve a path of the ladder in becoming successful entrepreneurs.

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