

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**DARK DATA MANAGEMENT
AMONG MALAYSIAN
SMALL AND MEDIUM
ENTERPRISES:
A GROUNDED THEORY
ANALYSIS**

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ABSTRACT

Dark data immerse within an organizational repository either virtually or physically, yet its significant value is not fully appraised by the owner. Some of the consequences of dark data include the widespread use of duplicated and distributed content without explicit oversight, which weakens security. The sheer volume of dark data impacts the costs of searching and producing appropriate information and imposes a wasted storage cost in operating budgets. The majority of the literature highlighted dark data research from the perspective of academic research institutions and large business firms, and none was found pertaining to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). Therefore, grounded theory research was conducted to investigate the dark data phenomenon towards SMEs in Malaysia. The primary goal of the research is to investigate the dark data phenomenon in Malaysian small and medium enterprises to determine why and how dark data is managed by SMEs. The theoretical Sampling method was employed in the study, which involved 18 SMEs from all business sectors and business sizes in Malaysia. The data were collected using semi-structured interviews with Malaysian SMEs and analyzed using Straussian Grounded Theory Methodology to identify emerging theories on dark data. The research findings elucidate how Malaysian SMEs dealt with the dark data phenomenon's occurrences which outlined the proposed theory of Dark Data Management. The theory evidenced the major findings of the study, whereby the accumulation of dark data by SMEs was led by the data crisis. It also revealed that although the SMEs exposed to the dark data phenomenon however, the six stages of Dark Data Lifecycle Management (DDL M) were found to be the best way of dealing with dark data with the major intention to suppress the occurrences of dark data. The DDL M was found to be enabled by the DDL M enablers, which develop the Dark Data Management Framework. It also revealed that dark data comes in various shades, including black data and grey data, and that both are distinguished by their accessibility and usability. As a result of this study, dark data will no longer be a threat to data owners, but rather a valuable asset to be leveraged to strengthen competitive advantage and sustain the business.

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