

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN
MALAYSIA: THE ROLE OF
ENTREPRENEURIAL
ORIENTATION, MARKET
ORIENTATION AND SOCIAL
NETWORKING IN AFFECTING THE
BUSINESS SUCCESS**

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Thesis submitted in fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
(Business Management)

Faculty of Business and Management

June 2019

ABSTRACT

Entrepreneurship has been acknowledged as one of the best strategies in a nation's economic development to accomplish economic growth and withstand competitiveness in the fast challenging trends of globalisation. Malaysia is one of the few economies in the Asian region that has variety of supporting mechanisms and policies extensively open for all entrepreneurs, including women. The government's move in accentuating entrepreneurship among women is reflected through various platforms that lead to prominent transformation in Malaysia's sharing economy. The development has created many ways that women can embrace and catalyze in business escalation. Since the barriers to entrepreneurship have been lowered, wealth creation and affluence are more accessible to women. However, the involvement of women and their performance in entrepreneurship are still considered as low despite the various initiatives given.

Applying the theories of Entrepreneurial Orientation, Market Orientation and Social Networking this research attempts to examine their relationship in influencing women entrepreneurs' success in Malaysia. Although much studies have been done to investigate the various effect of Entrepreneurial Orientation and Market Orientation, none has incorporated Social Networking in the study. On top of that, this research also taking into consideration the moderating effects of Financial Assistance, Government Initiatives and Individualism-Collectivism. Data were collected from women entrepreneurs in all six regions in Malaysia. Out of 930 questionnaires distributed, 401 were returned which is approximately about 43% response rate but only 372 effective questionnaires were left to analyse. A sequence of statistical analyses were applied to test the hypotheses and also to answer the research questions which include descriptive analyses, reliability analysis, factor analysis, correlation analysis and multiple analysis. Multiple hierarchical regression analysis was used to test moderating effect. The findings concluded that Entrepreneurial Orientation and Market Orientation significantly influenced women entrepreneurs' success, while networking was found not significant. In addition, the finding also specified the effect of moderators: Financial assistance significantly moderates the relationship between Social Networking and Success; Government Initiatives weakly moderates the relationship of Social Networking and Success; the relationship of Entrepreneurial Orientation and Success, and negatively moderates the relationship of Market Orientation and Success. Individualism was found as a significant moderator between Entrepreneurial Orientation and Success, and it negatively moderates Social Networking and Success. While collectivism was found to positively moderate Entrepreneurial Orientation and Success; positively moderate Social Networking and Success but negatively moderate Market Orientation and Success. The study incorporated the important variables into the framework which were formerly investigated independently. It contributes to both theoretical and practical contributions especially in disclosing to women entrepreneurs and policy makers on the role of Entrepreneurial Orientation, Market Orientation and Social Networking in influencing the success of women entrepreneurs in Malaysia and the effect of government initiatives, financial assistance and individualism-collectivism in moderating the relationship. Methodological and practical implications were discussed and several recommendations for future research were identified and proposed. This research is believed to extend more inclusive findings of the areas involved and contribute significantly to the body of knowledge.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Alhamdulillah, I have come to this stage of my PhD journey.

Completing PhD has been an exercise in sustained suffering. I was exposed to many challenges, distractions and I made many mistakes. Some were unwise, others colossal, most were unnecessary. Realising that I have come this far in this journey made me understand that one will strive to the hardest if one is forced to be in that situation. Borrowing from Joseph Campbell's notion "Opportunity to find deeper powers within us come when life seems most challenging". PhD is indeed about 'will power', a power to strive to the best of human ability. Yes, the journey of my PhD was undeniably challenging but the final result is at the same time a major achievement in my life.

I am grateful to my supervisors, Professor Dr. Fauziah Noordin and Associate Professor Dr. Abdul Kadir Othman for the guidance, encouragement and advice they have provided throughout my time as their student. I have been extremely lucky to have supervisors who cared so much about my work, and who responded to my questions and queries so promptly. To Prof. Dr. Fauziah, my main supervisor, I owe you more than I can adequately express for believing in me from day one of my PhD. I still remember your first motivational words "PhD tak susah" (PhD is not difficult). It became my mantra every time when I feel the study is difficult.

My sincere appreciation goes to Prof. Dr. Johan Wiklund from Syracuse University for sharing his instrument and PhD dissertation with me. The same appreciation goes to Dr. Hiram Ting, the Chairman of Sarawak Research Society. Your feedback and thoughtful advice helped me reviewed my data analysis process. My good friend, Dr. Jeffrey Jee from Swinburne University, I am forever grateful for your guidance and constant support.

Completing this work would have been difficult without the support provided by the people from the other side of my PhD world. Special thanks to YB Dato Sri Hajjah Fatimah Abdullah, the Minister for Welfare, Community Well Being, Women, Family and Childhood Development Sarawak, Hajjah Juita Drap, our Chairperson of DEWANITA Dewan Usahawan Bumiputera Sarawak for the continuous supports. My "Boots Geng" Mr. Zawawi Abd. Rahman, Madam Saadiah Taibi, Ben Nazary, Come Shahdon and of course Arzmy Hargreaves, the persons who always push me beyond my limit. When there are times I lost my excitement, you reassure me that I can do it because I am capable. We are a small circle indeed but you guys have played a large role in prolonging my 'agonies' with your encouragement and support.

Alhamdulillah, the prayers I received from my family members especially my abah, my brothers, emboks, nephews and nieces keep me going. My wonderful children, Daniel Amer and Farah Batrisyia, this PhD is dedicated to both of you and let this be a motivational force for you to get what you aimed for in life.

As the highest level of education, PhD is something big. I am a hero of my own life because I gave myself something big. Thank you all of you. Thank you abah Tuan Hj. Wan Shukran Tuanku Hj. Salim and arwah emak Hajjah Siti Ali.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
CONFIRMATION BY PANEL OF EXAMINERS	ii
AUTHOR'S DECLARATION	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
LIST OF TABLES	xii
LIST OF FIGURES	xiv
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xvi
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	
1.1 Introduction	19
1.2 Background of the Research	19
1.2.1 Women Entrepreneurs in Malaysia	22
1.3 Problem Statement	36
1.3.1 Low Level of Women Participation in Entrepreneurship	37
1.3.2 Unproductive Performance of Women Entrepreneurs	37
1.3.3 Poor Quantitative Performance	38
1.3.4 The Absence of Model Pertaining to Women Entrepreneurs	39
1.4 Objectives	40
1.5 Research Questions	40
1.6 Scope of the Study	41
1.7 Significance of the Study	42
1.7.1 To the Body of Knowledge	42
1.7.2 To Women Entrepreneurs	43
1.7.1 To the Nation	43
1.8 Assumptions	43
1.9 Definition of Key Terms	44
1.10 Chapter Summary	46

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1	Introduction	48
2.2	Business Success	48
2.3	The Theory and Reviews of Entrepreneurial Orientation	51
2.4	The Theory and Reviews of Market Orientation	53
2.5	The Theory and Reviews of Social Networking	57
2.6	The Theory and Reviews of Individualism-Collectivism	59
2.7	The Theory and Reviews of Financial Assistance	62
2.8	The Theory and Reviews of Government Initiatives	63
2.9	Relationship of Independent Variables and Dependent Variable	67
2.9.1	Relationship of Entrepreneurial Orientation and Women Entrepreneurs' Success	67
2.9.2	Relationship of Market Orientation and Women Entrepreneurs' Success	69
2.9.3	Relationship of Social Networking and Women Entrepreneurs' Success	73
2.10	Relationship of Moderators and Dependent Variable	75
2.10.1	Individualism-Collectivism as a Moderating Factor to Women Entrepreneurs' Success	78
2.10.2	Financial Assistance as a Moderating Factor to Women Entrepreneurs' Success	77
2.10.3	Government Assistance as a Moderating Factor to Women Entrepreneurs' Success	83
2.11	Conceptual Framework	85
2.12	Hypotheses	86
2.12.1	Entrepreneurial Orientation and Women Entrepreneurs' Success	86
2.12.2	Market Orientation and Women Entrepreneurs' Success	88
2.12.3	Social Networking and Women Entrepreneurs' Success	89
2.12.4	The Moderating Effect of Individualism-Collectivism	90
2.12.5	The Moderating Effect of Financial Assistance	92
2.12.6	The Moderating Effect of Government Initiatives	94
2.13	Chapter Summary	96