



UNIVERSITI  
TEKNOLOGI  
MARA

Fakulti  
Pengurusan  
dan Perniagaan

# SOCIO ENVIRONMENT COMPENDIUM

VOLUME 3(1), 2020

eISSN: 2636-9656

# 2020

**-SOCENTIUM-**  
*keeping you informed*

FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND  
MANAGEMENT  
UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

# **DR. SITI SARA IBRAHIM**

ANUGERAH KEDOKTORAN CEMERLANG  
TUANKU CANSELOR (AKCTC),  
UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA



**EDITOR: NUR 'ASYIQIN RAMDHAN**



**Dr. Siti Sara Ibrahim of UiTM FBM has been selected as the award recipient of the 2020 Doctoral Excellence Award of Chancellor for her successful PhD in Business Administration from Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Malaysia. Getting this award is an admirable achievement for the Faculty since it has long been held by other faculties. Originally from Kuala Lumpur and growing up as the seventh of eight siblings, Dr. Sara had her undergraduate education in Diploma in Investment Analysis and Bachelor (Hons) of International Business at UiTM before pursuing her Master in Business Administration at UKM. Today, she is a senior lecturer at Universiti Teknologi MARA, Negeri Sembilan.**

**With a focus on the Waqf Project Collaboration PhD area, she has been awarded Graduate on Time (GoT) by the university. She began her vocation at Financial Institution in 2007 prior to joining UiTM in 2011. Besides an enriching career as a lecturer, she is also involved in many research projects with private, government, and international institutions. With deep interest in research, innovation, and community programmes, she is active in joining conferences, invention & innovation competitions, as well as being a volunteer at a few Non-Profit Organisations (NGOs) in Malaysia.**

### **What is the biggest factor that has helped you to be successful?**

My support system which is my husband, kids, family, in-laws, supervisor, friends, Faculty, Institut Pengajian Siswazah (IPSiS) and UiTM. I consider all these as my support system. Therefore, in order for me to achieve whatever goals I have set up in life, I will always make sure my support system is ready and understand well how they can support me along the journey.

I need husband, kids, and family so I can always lean on their shoulder in times of need. They will always be ready to help me to take care of the kids and house chores as well as give motivation for me to keep fighting and finish the journey successfully.

The people in your support network will be there for you when you need to talk after a long day, or when you're feeling overwhelmed with work, school, or your other obligations.

I need supervisors to keep motivating me and give guidance towards the correct path for me to finish this journey successfully. I need friends to help me stay engaged in my PhD and motivate me to succeed. If am overwhelmed or struggling, friends in my support network will be willing to help me and offer their guidance, insight, and strategies for success. I need the Faculty, IPSiS, and the top management of my workplace to always support me and make the PhD process easier and fast.

### **What are your tips to complete your PhD journey?**

Other than making *du'a* to God, strategise ahead for your PhD journey. This is what I always practised during my three year journey. Strategising can be seen in many perspectives. Firstly is the relationship with your supervisors and your networking. Fully utilise their expertise, experience, and networking to build your success.

Secondly, manage your time effectively and efficiently. Be smart. You don't need to devote 100% of your time to your research or thesis. Instead, you should prioritise which should be first, where, and when. I would always have my three year, one year, 6 month, 1 month, 1 week or even daily "to do list" and paste it anywhere, like at your workstation or at home, to ensure everything on the list is being completed according to the time plan. If I manage to complete it, I will definitely reward myself with bonding time with the family.

Another thing, you should learn and practise. Learn skills that can expedite your PhD process. We have many software, apps, as well as gadgets that can help us in reading and writing. This will save your time and lessen the burden. For example, you don't need to exactly read everything, line by line, when you are reading a journal. Instead, you need to know the tips on how to read a journal effective and efficiently.

### **How does a journey experience improve the prospects of success in your future career?**

My PhD journey has made me realise how important lifelong education is. We should never stop learning until the end. Even after finishing my PhD, I still attend courses, read books, and get advice from experts. This is because I realise, the more I learn the more I don't know. Therefore, the PhD journey has made me a better person for my future as I always think and plan ahead for my career.

### **Currently, what are your contributions to UiTM after coming back from PhD?**

I currently devote most of my time to giving webinar sessions on sharing tips to Graduate on Time (GoT), Success in PhD Journey, How to Write and Publish in High Impact Journal, etc.

I also devote my time to help other PhD students whether in my campus or outside UiTM. I offer free consultation and guidance. I'm also currently helping my friends in the Faculty to start writing for a journal publication and I encourage them to write as well as to apply for research grants.

### **What is your advice to potential and on-going PhD candidates?**

Doing a PhD can often be a journey filled with many successes and hardships. However, regardless of your reasons for doing doctoral research, the fact that you are doing it completes this journey. You have three or four years ahead of you to develop and learn. Much of that time will be focused on your research but it shouldn't stop there. You should also focus on YOU and make YOU a priority. When the priority is YOU, it will give you a warrior spirit to fight and to finish the journey.

In fact, gaining a PhD will be a huge achievement and can potentially broaden your access to a diverse range of possibilities but the PhD alone won't be enough. Now is the time to expand your skills, knowledge, and attributes. It is also the time to learn and grow and develop a greater understanding of what motivates and enthuses you, what you want from life, and where you fit.

Therefore, I'd encourage you to use this PhD journey to develop your confidence, build networks, gain insights, improve your self-awareness, add to your experience, and perhaps even have some fun. Start now and keep growing rather than thinking a better time will come.