

Malay Women Entrepreneurs in the Small and Medium Sized ICT-Related Business: A Study on Need for Achievement

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Abstract

Basically, entrepreneurship is a decisive factor in order for today's economy of knowledge to attain its competitive and dynamic character. It is the driving force for the achievement of economic development and contributes to personal development. Specifically, psychological characteristics of entrepreneurs have received particular attention all over the world. Thus, research from the combination discipline of entrepreneur psychological has attempted to characterize important variables and one of variables called need of achievement. Not surprisingly, researchers have frequently asked questions about causal factors in successful entrepreneurs, with the familiar debate between the roles need of achievement and firms performances. Mainly, the purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between need of achievement and entrepreneurial success among women entrepreneurs in Malaysia who involved in ICT-related business. This study was conducted among 150 women entrepreneurs in Malaysia that were listed in the websites of USAHANITA's, PENIAGAWATI's, WAWASANITA's, and Wanita Niaga Dot Com. The finding obtained from this study indicated that there was a significant (2 tailed significant) positive correlation between variables need for achievement and entrepreneurial success. In addition, the results indicated that variable need for achievement contributes high influence to women entrepreneurial success and for this, suggestion were rise-up to establish the high level of variables need for achievement.

1.0 Introduction

Entrepreneurship is a decisive factor in order for today's economy of knowledge to attain its competitive and dynamic character. It is the driving force for the achievement of economic development and job creation, contributing at the same time to personal development and effectively dealing with numerous pathogenic social phenomena (Sarri, & Trihopoulou, 2005). Moreover, as Thurik and Wennekers (2004) stated that: "in today's world small businesses, and particularly new ones, are seen more than ever as a vehicle for entrepreneurship, contributing not just to employment and social and political stability, but also to innovative and competitive power". Starting a new firm is a very important decision to an individual, which is become the focal point in the investigation of entrepreneurship regarding individual's qualities as an entrepreneur.

According to Casson (1982) the characteristics typical the successful entrepreneurs are the ability to take risks, innovativeness, knowledge of how the market functions, manufacturing know-how, marketing skills, business management skills and the ability to co-operate. Meanwhile, firms owned by women entrepreneurs are growing phenomenon around the world today (Davidson & Burke, 2004). For instance, in 1992 women accounted for 38 percent of small business ownership in the USA, double the number of women entrepreneurs found in the same country in the early 1980s. In 1999 women accounted for almost half of all small businesses in the USA (McKay, 2001). A similar picture is seen in Australia where "women have played a major part in this growth in the number of small business" (Still & Timms, 2000). Furthermore, by the mid-1990s, it was estimated that women-owned firms in the UK accounted for between a quarter and a third of all business (Fielden, Davidson, Dawe, & Makin 2003). In France, women represent 26 percent of entrepreneurs (Orhan & Scott, 2001) and in Greece about one in every two women participates in the country's work force and 21.3 percent are self-employed (Eurostat, 2001). The above indicates that today, a growing percentage of small businesses in different parts of the world are owned independently by women entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurship development is also a current important issue related to economic development in Malaysia. Starting from the Sixth Malaysia Plan (RMK 6) Government of Malaysia appear to be concentrating on encouraging entrepreneurship as it symbolizes innovation and is a vital contributor to today's economy.

Entrepreneurship also has been characterized as a major force for job creation and a vital determinant of economic growth in Malaysia. As a result, several general plan of action by government of Malaysia that concern on industrial, privatization and entrepreneurship was able to increase the number of women entrepreneurs in business successfully (Maimunah, 2001). Therefore, the purposes of the study presented in this paper was to investigate whether any correlation exists between need for achievement and the successful of Malay women entrepreneurs in Small and Medium Sized of ICT - related business in Malaysia.

2.0 Problem Statement

Psychological characteristics of entrepreneurs have received particular attention all over the world. Research from the combination discipline of entrepreneur psychological has attempted to characterize important variables such as personality, attitudes, biography, demography and behaviour as important measurement in the real entrepreneur practice. Not surprisingly, researchers have also asked questions about causal factors in successful entrepreneurs, with the familiar debate between the roles of individual and social or situational factors, for instance family background, stage of career, features of the political and economic or social environment to the fore (McClelland, 1987). Nevertheless, the study regarding correlation between psychological characteristics and entrepreneurial success in Malaysia is still less especially among women entrepreneurs (Maimunah, 2001). Meanwhile, the SME sector is vital important to Malaysia economy where is can spurs growth and sustainability of the nation. Similarly, Verheugen (2005) cited that Micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) are the engine of the European economy. They are an essential source of jobs, create entrepreneurial spirit and innovation in the EU and are thus crucial for fostering competitiveness and employment. Therefore, this study is conducted in the hope that it can generate some idea in order to improve other entrepreneurs in Malaysia, especially in Small and Medium Sector in Malaysia.

3.0 Objective of the Research

The main objective of the research is to investigate the correlation between need for achievement and entrepreneurial success among women entrepreneurs in Small and Medium Sized ICT-related business in Malaysia.

4.0 Literature Review

Nowadays, women entrepreneurs become part of important factor in entrepreneurship world in contributing economic development and social inclusion. Moreover, the ability of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to foster innovation, experimentation, and adaptation in the business environment is crucial for countries undergoing radical transformation (European Bank for Reconstruction and Development 1995). Researcher such as Welter, Smallbone, Isakova, Aculai and Schakirova (2004) suggested that female-owned enterprises are special significance in the context of transitioning countries for a number of additional reasons. First, they tend to employ other women more frequently, which helps reduce the effect of discrimination against women in the labor market. Second, by reducing female unemployment, women-owned SMEs can assist in fighting the trafficking of women, which is of great concern in many transition countries. Third, female business owners can serve as role models for younger generations demonstrating new opportunities for employment. In addition, by encouraging potential female entrepreneurs to start businesses could result the increasing of innovative capacities and private sector development. Meanwhile, development of entrepreneurship, together with human skills improvement have become two crucial factors for a country to be a world leader in all aspects of life, e.g., economy, trade, military, technology, etc., and for a sustainable economic and social development.

The development of SMEs and changes over time in their employment and output shares, output composition, market orientation and location are usually thought to be related to many factors, including the level of economic development, changes in real income per capita, population growth and progress in technology (Tambunan, 2007). In spite of "classical" literature on SME development suggests that SMEs will become less important in the course of economic development as income per capita increases, The World Bank (2002, 2004), gives three core arguments supporting the view that SMEs can function as the engine of growth in developing countries. First, SMEs enhance competition and entrepreneurship and therefore, have external benefits on economy wide efficiency, innovation and aggregate productivity growth. Second, SMEs are generally more productive than large enterprises (LEs), but the financial market and other institutional failures and nonconductive macroeconomic environmental aspects impede SME development. Third, the expansion of SMEs will be able to increase employment more than LEs' growth because SMEs are more labor-intensive. In other words, the World Bank believes that SMEs can boost economic growth and development of country. The SMEs have also been recognized to have another important role, namely as an important engine for development and growth of exports, particularly in manufacture. This stems from evidence showing that the most successful cases of SME development in East and Southeast Asian countries such as South Korea,

Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore, have been directly related to trade and the adoption of export-oriented strategies. The experiences of these countries indicate that SMEs can compete effectively in both domestic and international markets (Tambunan, 2007). In addition, the definitions of SMEs provided by Small and Medium Industries Development Corporation (SMIDEC) Malaysia were used to identify appropriate businesses for inclusion in the study. Together, these definitions resulted in the following specifications for inclusion: (1) individuals who were actively participating in the management of the business; (2) the business must have less than 150 employees for manufacturing sector and less than 50 employees for service sector; and (3) the business must be a stand-alone firm, not a franchise or part of a larger organization (Noor Hazlina Ahmad & Pi-Shen Seet, 2010). Moreover, SMEs in Indonesia account for more than 90 percent of all firms outside the agricultural sector in the country, and thus are the biggest source of employment, providing livelihood for over 90 percent of the country's workforce, especially women and the young. The majority of SMEs are scattered widely throughout the rural area and therefore they may play an important role as a starting point for development of villagers' talents, especially women, as entrepreneurs (Tambunan, 2007).

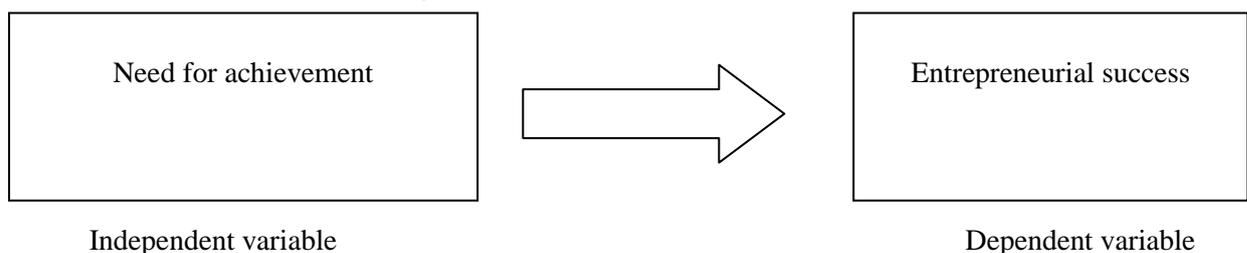
European Commission (2003) stated that Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) play a central role in the European economy. There are a major source of entrepreneurial skills, innovation, and employment. In the enlarge of the European Union of 25 countries, some 23 million SMEs provide around 75 million jobs and represent 99% of all enterprise. The category of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) is made up of enterprises which employ fewer than 250 persons and which have an annual turnover not exceeding 50 million euro and/or an annual balance sheet total not exceeding 43 million euro (European Commission, 2003). In the context of Malaysia, women entrepreneurs are increasingly recognized to play an important role to the unprecedented rate of growth of the SMEs and indirectly to the Malaysian economy. The number of women in Malaysian SMEs in 2003 was 1,122,000, or 36.8 percent of the total employment in SMEs and the figure is increasing each year (Ming-Yen & Siong-Choy, 2008).

5.0 Methodology of the Research

5.1 Research Framework and Variables Selection

The research framework used in the study is adapted from entrepreneurship model proposed by Martin, (1984) and Gartner (1989). On the other hand, this research framework also was used by Koh (1996) in research regarding relationship between psychological characteristics and entrepreneurial success. Initially, this model suggests among other things that certain entrepreneurial characteristics predispose entrepreneur towards entrepreneurial activities and these characteristics make them different from non-entrepreneur. Consequently, this model can be used as a guideline to develop research framework as an indicator the correlation between need for achievement and entrepreneurial success. The research framework employed in this study is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Research Framework.



Sources: Adapted from Martin (1984) and Gartner (1989)

The independent variable involved in this study was need for achievement. The main reasons for selecting this independent variable because of numerous studies have focused on this psychological characteristic (Entrialgo, Fernandez, & Vazquez, 2000). On the other hand, the dependent variable involved in this study was entrepreneurial success.

5.2 Hypothesis Testing

Correlation between entrepreneurial success and the need for achievement is setting and the hypothesis tested was:

H0: Individual entrepreneur success will not have correlation with the need for achievement.

H1: Individual entrepreneur success will have correlation with the need for achievement.

5.3 Sample Characteristics

The basic information of this study was come from the list of women entrepreneurs in the website of USAHANITA's (<http://www.usahanita.com.my>), PENIAGAWATI's (<http://www.peniagawati.org.my>),

WAWASANITA’s (<http://www.malaysianiaga.com.my>) and Wanita Niaga Dot Com (<http://www.wanitaniaga.com>). Totally, there are 150 of women entrepreneurs have been selected via purposive random sampling to become sample of this study. Women entrepreneurs in these websites was considered as an interesting and appropriate sample to conduct entrepreneurship studies because it provides complete necessary information such as owner of the company, phone number, e-mail and address. Only women entrepreneurs that involved in ICT-related business will select as sample of the study.

5.4 Questionnaire Development

The survey instrument used in this study was a self-administered and fixed alternatives questionnaire. Fixed-alternative questions were used to facilitate ease of scoring to ensure a high response rate. The questionnaire comprises two major sections. The first section measures the psychological characteristics specified in the hypothesis above namely, need for achievement. The instrument used for measurement of need for achievement was adopted from Cassidy and Lynn (1989). Furthermore, this instrument also was used by Littunen, (2000). In this section, the entrepreneur’s need for achievement was measured by four different dimensions, each of which consisted of four different items, namely: the work of ethic, the pursuit of excellence, mastery and dominance. This section consists of 16 items. In this section respondents have been asked to indicate their degree of agreement or disagreement with each statement on a five-point Likert scale, from strongly disagree to strongly agree. A higher score indicates a greater need for achievement. The second section measures entrepreneurial success. To measure entrepreneurial success, respondents have been asked to indicate their life of the business whether three years and above consistently. Respondents who indicate their life of the business are three years and above consistently were considered as an entrepreneurial success. The others who indicate starting a business less than three years are considered as non-entrepreneurial success. That is, entrepreneurial success is measured as a dichotomous variable. This measurement is consistent with the definition of an entrepreneur success as one who his or her business continued to exist three years after the manager created the company or took over its control (Brockhaus, 1980).

6.0 Research Finding

6.1 Demographics Background

They were hundred percent of female responded and completed the questionnaire. Therefore, majority of respondents were come from group ages thirty until thirty five years old and minority was above forty five years old. Mean value generated from respondents data were 2.7733. Moreover, there were 50 % of respondents were married, widowed (38 %), single (8 %) and others (4 %). In addition, majority of respondent (52 %) gained higher education (bachelors, master and PhD level).

6.2 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics is based on need for achievement (Table 1). For need for achievement, there were some items had high values on standard deviation (more than 5.0), for instance hard work, busy all the time, leader in my group, and make a good leader of people. Totally, the mean was more toward right tendency excluded item work hard (1.1989).

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Need for Achievement.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Hard work	150	1.3733	.70992
Easily sit without doing nothing	150	4.7267	.49013
Work hard	150	1.1989	.40103
Easily get bored if don't have something	150	4.8400	.36783
Satisfaction in a job well done	150	4.9133	.28229
Satisfaction from good product finished	150	4.8667	.34107
No use to playing games.	150	4.8733	.33371
Satisfaction in working.	150	4.9000	.30101
Work in situations that require a high level of skill.	150	4.6933	.46265
Learn easy fun games than difficult.	150	4.9533	.21163
Busy all the time.	150	4.6400	.54686
Giving up quickly when things go wrong.	150	4.9400	.23828
People take notice what I say.	150	4.8200	.38547
Leader in my group.	150	4.6933	.51744
Enjoy having authority over people.	150	4.7400	.44010
Make a good leader of people.	150	4.7000	.52775
Valid N (leastwise)	150		

6.3 Results Analysis

To investigate the relationship between independent variables of psychological characteristics and dependent variable of entrepreneurial success, correlation test was conducted. Analyses were running based on every single variable and the overall result is shown below.

Overall, the outputs confirm the results that significant positive correlation exists between entrepreneurial success and work ethic items. Thus, higher entrepreneur success scores are associated with higher work ethic items scores (see Table 3). For Pursuit of Excellence, the results generated indicated that significant positive correlation exist between entrepreneurial success and work ethic items. Thus, higher entrepreneurial success scores are associated with Pursuit of Excellence items scores (see Table 4). The outputs confirm the results that significant positive correlation exists between entrepreneurial success and Mastery items. Thus, higher entrepreneurial success scores are associated with higher Mastery items scores (see Table 5). For Dominance, we can see results generated shown that significant positive correlation exist between entrepreneurial success and Dominance items. Thus, higher entrepreneurial success scores are associated with higher Dominance items scores (see Table 6)

Table 3: Correlations for Work Ethic Items.

		Entrepreneurial Success
Hard work	Pearson Correlation	.88
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002
	N	150
Easily sit without doing nothing.	Pearson Correlation	.89
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	150
Work hard	Pearson Correlation	.93
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001
	N	150
Easily get bored if don't have something	Pearson Correlation	.91
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001
	N	150
Entrepreneur Success	Pearson Correlation	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.
	N	150

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4: Correlations for Pursuit of Excellence.

		Entrepreneurial Success
Entrepreneurial Success	Pearson Correlation	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.
	N	150
Satisfaction in a job well done	Pearson Correlation	.91
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001
	N	150
Satisfaction from good product finished	Pearson Correlation	.89
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	150
No use to playing games.	Pearson Correlation	.87
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001
	N	150
Satisfaction in working.	Pearson Correlation	.89
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	150

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 5: Correlations for Mastery.

		Entrepreneurial Success
Entrepreneurial Success	Pearson Correlation	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.
	N	150
Work in situations that require a high level of skill.	Pearson Correlation	.910
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001
	N	150
Learn easy fun games than difficult.	Pearson Correlation	.93
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001
	N	150
Busy all the time.	Pearson Correlation	.830
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.00
	N	150
Giving up quickly when things go wrong.	Pearson Correlation	.87
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001
	N	150

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 6: Correlations for Dominance.

		Entrepreneurial Success
Entrepreneurial Success	Pearson Correlation	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.
	N	150
People take notice what I say.	Pearson Correlation	.890
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	150
Leader in my group.	Pearson Correlation	.870
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001
	N	150
Enjoy having authority over people.	Pearson Correlation	0.93
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	150
Make a good leader of people.	Pearson Correlation	.95
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001
	N	150

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

6.4 Hypothesis testing

Correlation between entrepreneurial success and the need for achievement

H0: Individual entrepreneur success will not have correlation with the need for achievement.

H1: Individual entrepreneur success will have correlation with the need for achievement.

Overall, Pearson correlation values was 0.939 (Work Ethic, Pursuit of Excellence, Mastery, and Dominance) and this value was high. Therefore, the correlation was high when we compare to 1.0 (max = 1.0). The result also showed positive correlation and this indicated that entrepreneurial success had correlation with the need for achievement. For significant (2-tailed) values, all of result was smaller than 0.05 (2 tailed). Therefore, entrepreneurial success had significant correlation with the need for achievement. Because of these two conditions, we decide to reject Ho. Clearly, the finding regarding significant positive correlation between need for achievement and entrepreneurial success was aligned with Entrialgo *et al* (2000).

7.0 Suggestion

Future research can investigate the correlation between entrepreneurial success and the other four variables of psychological characteristics namely: propensity to take risk, tolerance of ambiguity, self-confident, and innovativeness. Furthermore, future research also is encouraged to learn more about the important interplay between cultural values or in the other word is people's moral and personality traits, and the strategies that lead to success in business. In addition, the question about correlation between psychological characteristics and male entrepreneurial success, and what are psychological characteristics that have influenced more toward male entrepreneurial success could be an interesting topic for further research. This is because research that involves other population may yield findings that are different from those reported in the study. Meanwhile, future works could also focus on the influence of psychological characteristics on the entrepreneurial process. That is, do the psychological characteristics directly influence entrepreneurial process or rather affects the business motivations and to what extent it is explain the behaviour latter. Finally, contingency analyses could be undertaken, such as the influence of psychological characteristics in different organisational and industrial contexts.

8.0 Conclusion

The result of this study indicated that there was a significant positive correlation between psychological characteristic (need for achievement) and entrepreneurial success in the case of Malay women entrepreneurs in Small and Medium Sized ICT- related business in Malaysia. Perhaps, this is because of individual entrepreneur success will work hard to achieve the specific goal, always thinking about the improvement in doing the job, and high confident level in believing that they are able to control their life. This is aligned with Islamic point of view, all human should endeavour to become successful (Surah Ar-Rahd; Word 11). In future, women entrepreneurs in Malaysia will plays important role in nation economic development and the future study of women entrepreneur must be continuously progress for helps them in better achievement, as well as women entrepreneurs in other countries in the world.

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