MOTIVATION OF MUSLIM WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS IN CHINA SMES: TOWARDS TRADING HALAL GOODS AND SERVICES

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INTRODUCTION

Undoubtedly, women are the backbone in a family. Children would not be able to grow up naturally without their proper care and attention. Thus far, women's roles are not restricted to domestic chores but in most cases, they also serve as the financial contributor to their family. In Islam, the involvement of women in business area is not a new phenomenon as this profession had been pioneered by the Prophet Muhammad’s PBUH wife, Sayidatina Khadijah who proved to be the most successful businesswoman during those days. Indeed, Islam does not forbid the participation of women in business as long as it is not contrary to the relevant guidelines highlighted in Quranic verses and Sunnah of the Prophet PBUH. Therefore, it is important to study issues pertaining Muslim women's involvement in business world especially in China, the second top country which has fast economic growth after USA. Particularly, the objective of this study is to examine the motivations of Muslim women entrepreneurs in China SMES.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Businesswomen

Businesswomen is defined as those women that start, own, operate, manage and take risk in their business (Thuaibah et al., 2007). Meanwhile, OECD in 1998 defines it as someone who has started a one-woman business or someone who is the principal in a family business or partnership or someone who is a shareholder in a publicly held company which she runs (Hossain et al., 2009).

Another word which denotes the same meaning with the word business is entrepreneurship. The word entrepreneur is derived from the French verb *entreprendre* that means to undertake. Thus, these two words are used interchangeably. Meanwhile, female entrepreneurs are defined as those who use their knowledge and resources to develop or create new business opportunities,