A RESEARCH OVERVIEW OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEUR'S IN MALAYSIA: HOW FAR HAVE THEY COME?

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Abstract

The number of women entrepreneurs in Malaysia has increased in the past three decades due to the emphasis on industrialisation, growing interests in privatisation, self-employment and business oriented employment. The government has been continuously working on creating or rather cultivate an enterprising culture among Malaysia women. This has spurred many local researchers to see if the national policies and programs have made a differences or rather has these efforts alleviated the poverty level. The numerous empirical research on women entrepreneurs were done especially among the Malay women involved in micro and small enterprise. The findings of these studies range from individual characteristics of the respondents, experience, management skill, competency, motives, barriers, challenged faced, size of their business and sector involved. However, these studies were done albeit in a fragmented fashion, it is important to see if the these critical factors significantly contributed towards the success of women entrepreneurs in Malaysia and to understand if there is a common challenge faced by these women. This study looks at the findings of these local researches to perceive the development of women entrepreneurs in the last 10 years, in order to capture the causal connections between interest, life impulse, having the necessary skills and how the environmental impacts the involvement of women entrepreneur in Malaysia. Have these women shown development in terms of human capital, social capital and financial capital over a span of 10 years? This helps in understanding if these women are able to create and sustain their business ventures successfully, which will have implications for Malaysian women entrepreneurs who wish to broaden their businesses successfully.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Human Capital, Social Capital, Financial Capital, Women, Malaysia.

Introduction

Today women entrepreneurs play an important role in the entrepreneurial landscape for sustained economic development and social progress (Teoh and Chong, 2008). Women entrepreneurs have emerged as a force that needs to be reckoned in many developing countries including Malaysia. The growing globalization, industrialization along with the increase opportunity in education has created awareness and opportunity for women to venture into entrepreneurship. However, there is still a need for a creation of an affable environment in developing countries to enable women