

# **Women Entrepreneurship In Malaysia: Motivational Factors And Personnel Characteristics**

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Abstract**

This study examines the Malaysian women entrepreneurs' background, motivation factors, personal characteristics and perception on entrepreneurial behaviors. The overall sample consists of 685 women entrepreneurs in Malaysia. Field work was conducted between February and June 2007 and it covered all 16 countries in Malaysia which were divided into 5 zones. A structured 76 closed-ended items questionnaires were used to collect the data. The overall statistical analysis was divided into two separate groups, namely the descriptive and inferential statistics. The former examines how the respondents varied their responses to each question. The latter examines what is most important factor that motivates women entrepreneurs and the correlation between entrepreneurial incomes and their personal profiles. The results show that, the majority of the respondents are Malays and more than half of them aged above 40 and having at least three kids. Interestingly, about 70 percent of the respondents have secondary qualification, while 10 percent are university graduates and the remaining 20 percent have primary education. Even though not all of the respondents come from entrepreneurs' family, they managed to earn more money once they became one. The result of the analysis further showed three main findings. First, the correlation analysis shows that entrepreneur's income correlated very weak with both education and experience levels. On the other hand, there is no correlation between entrepreneurial income and age factor. Second, the paired T-test proves that women earned better income after they became entrepreneurs. Lastly, with the exception of age factor, entrepreneur's income differs significantly according to experience and education as indicated through one-way ANOVA. Factors analysis was used to summarize the structure of a set of variables. Eight factors were relatively significant from an original set of twelve factors using the SPSS factor analysis procedure. Eventually, only 20 items were selected from 63 items contained. Perception of economic environment in term of technology and information are the most pertinent factors. These are followed by work ethics and management values as key personal characteristics for women entrepreneurs.

Keywords: women entrepreneurs, motivating factors, personal characteristics.

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