



**UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

**DEVELOPMENT OF ENTREPRENEURIAL LEADERSHIP  
COMPETENCIES AMONG MALAYSIAN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS**

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**DEVELOPMENT OF ENTREPRENEURIAL LEADERSHIP  
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**By**

**AFSANEH BAGHERI**

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, in  
Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

**March 2011**

## DEDICATION

*This thesis is dedicated to my family and friends whose support has carried me here. To my mother and father who have shown unconditional love and were my first and most inspiration to further my studies. To my husband who has sacrificed a lot when I was far from the family for more than four years. To my daughter whose love, passion, and patience has forever inspired me. To my sisters and brother who have supported me all through the journey of my studies.*

Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment  
of the requirement for degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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**Chairman : Prof. Zaidatul Akmaliah Lope Pihie, PhD**

**Faculty : Educational Studies**

Recent developments in entrepreneurial leadership raised many questions about how to develop entrepreneurial leadership competencies particularly, in university students as prospective entrepreneurial leaders. In particular, there is not enough knowledge on the specific competencies enabling university students to lead entrepreneurial activities, factors motivating them to learn and develop their entrepreneurial leadership competencies, the process of their entrepreneurial leadership competencies, and the roles that university entrepreneurship programs play in developing the students' entrepreneurial leadership competencies.

This research attempted to answer these questions through employing qualitative research method. A sample of fourteen undergraduate entrepreneurial leaders defined as students successfully leading the university entrepreneurship clubs and

activities for more than two semesters and four university entrepreneurship program coordinators was purposefully selected as the participants.

The main technique for data collection was semi-structured interviews. The interviews lasted between 50 to 110 minutes and were recorded in a digital audio recorder. Once the interviews were conducted, they were labelled and transferred to NVIVO 8 software to be transcribed. The interviews transcribed in 48 hours after the actual interview was conducted. Then, the transcriptions were sent to the participants for content validity.

Analysis of the data including the interview transcriptions and documents provided by the universities was carried out in two main phases. First, preliminary data analysis that was the process of data analysis conducted after obtaining each data. Second, thematic data analysis carried out by coding the data through open coding, axial coding, and selective coding. Analysis of the data revealed that student entrepreneurial leaders had two specific competencies that enabled them to lead university entrepreneurship clubs and activates including personal competencies and functional competencies. The dominant personal competencies of the student entrepreneurial leaders were: proactiveness, innovativeness, self-efficacy, love of challenges, and versatility. Functional competencies enabling student entrepreneurial leaders to successfully lead entrepreneurship clubs and activities were ability to create a caring interpersonal relationship, employing an enabling task delegation approach, and building self-confidence of their group members.

Two main factors emerged as the significant motives for the student entrepreneurial leaders to learn and develop their entrepreneurial leadership competencies including internal factors which are personal interest and self-development and external factors including entrepreneurial learning opportunities and programs, entrepreneurial leadership task demands and expectations, problems and opportunities, and significant others.

Student entrepreneurial leaders' entrepreneurial leadership competencies developed through a continuous and gradual process of learning, change, and maturity in personal and interpersonal competencies that occurs through involvement in practicing leadership roles and tasks and requires executing a lot of endeavour, ambition, and perseverance.

Thirty eight roles emerged as contributions of university entrepreneurship programs in developing student entrepreneurial leaders' entrepreneurial leadership competencies which were organized in two clusters including student-related and program-related roles. Student-related roles contained enhancing personal and functional competencies of the students. Program-related roles reflected providing entrepreneurial learning opportunities (experiential learning, social interactive learning, observational learning and reflective learning), linking students to entrepreneurial industries, and having a holistic approach to develop students' entrepreneurial competencies.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia Sebagai memenuhi Keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

**PEMBANGUNAN DAN KECEKAPAN KEUSAHAWANAN DI KALANGAN  
PELAJAR UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA**

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Perkembangan bidang kepemimpinan keusahawanan dewasa ini telah mencetuskan banyak persoalan tentang bagaimana untuk membentuk kompetensi kepemimpinan keusahawanan khususnya, dalam kalangan pelajar universiti sebagai pelapis pemimpin keusahawanan. Malah, secara spesifiknya masih kurang ilmu berkaitan kompetensi yang membolehkan pelajar pemimpin keusahawanan untuk menerajui aktiviti-aktiviti keusahawanan, proses perkembangan kompetensi kepemimpinan keusahawanan, dan peranan yang dimainkan oleh program keusahawanan universiti dalam membangunkan kompetensi kepemimpinan keusahawanan pelajar.

Kajian ini cuba untuk menjawab segala persoalan ini melalui kaedah kajian kualitatif. Sampel 14 pelajar sarjana muda yang terdiri daripada pemimpin keusahawanan yang dikategorikan sebagai pelajar yang berjaya mengetuai kelab dan

aktiviti keusahawanan universiti melebihi dua semester pengajian dan koordinator bagi empat program keusahawanan universiti telah dipilih sebagai peserta kajian ini. Teknik utama bagi pengumpulan data merupakan temuramah separa struktur. Temuramah yang dijalankan adalah dalam tempoh masa 50 sehingga 110 minit dan direkodkan dalam pita rakaman digital. Setelah temuramah dijalankan, hasil rakaman dilabel dan dipindahkan ke dalam perisian NVIVO 8 bagi tujuan transkripsi. Ia dilakukan setelah 48 jam temuramah sebenar dijalankan. Setelah itu, segala transkrip dihantar kepada para peserta untuk kesahan kandungan.

Analisis data yang merangkumi transkripsi hasil temuramah dan dokumen yang disediakan oleh pihak universiti telah dijalankan dalam dua fasa utama. Pertama, data analisis saringan yang merupakan proses yang dijalankan setelah setiap data dikumpulkan. Kedua, analisis data utama yang dijalankan dengan mengkodkan data melalui pengkodan terbuka, pengkodan berpaksi, dan pengkodan terpilih. Analisis data menunjukkan pelajar pemimpin keusahawanan mempunyai dua kompetensi khusus yang membolehkan mereka menerajui kelab dan aktiviti keusahawanan universiti, meliputi kompetensi peribadi dan kompetensi berfungsi.

Kompetensi peribadi utama pelajar pemimpin keusahawanan adalah: proaktif, inovatif, efikasi sendiri, sukakan cabaran dan serba boleh. Kompetensi berfungsi yang membolehkan pelajar pemimpin keusahawanan untuk menerajui kelab dan aktiviti keusahawanan merupakan keupayaan untuk membina hubungan interpersonal yang baik, mengaplikasikan pendekatan pembelajaran dan pembangunan terhadap kumpulan tugas, serta membangunkan keyakinan diri ahli-ahli kumpulan.



Dua faktor utama yang muncul sebagai motif yang signifikan bagi pelajar pemimpin keusahawanan untuk belajar dan membangunkan keupayaan kepemimpinan keusahawanan mereka adalah merangkumi faktor dalaman iaitu minat peribadi dan pembangunan peribadi, manakala faktor luaran meliputi peluang dan program pembelajaran keusahawanan, permintaan tugas dan tanggapan terhadap kepemimpinan keusahawanan, masalah dan peluang, serta lain-lain lagi.

Seterusnya, kepemimpinan keusahawanan pelajar pemimpin keusahawanan dikembangkan melalui proses pembelajaran yang berterusan dan beransur-ansur, perubahan, dan peningkatan kompetensi peribadi dan interpersonal melalui penglibatan dalam mempraktikkan peranan dan tugas kepemimpinan yang memerlukan perlaksanaan usaha, impian, dan keteguhan diri.

Tiga puluh lapan peranan muncul sebagai sumbangan program keusahawanan universiti dalam membangunkan kompetensi kepemimpinan keusahawanan pelajar pemimpin keusahawanan yang dikategorikan dalam dua kluster, merangkumi 'student-related' dan 'program related'. Peranan 'Student-related' merangkumi peningkatan kompetensi peribadi dan fungsional para pelajar. Peranan 'Program-related' menyediakan peluang-peluang pembelajaran keusahawanan (pembelajaran berpengalaman, pembelajaran interaktif sosial, dan pembelajaran reflektif), motivasi untuk belajar dan membangunkan kompetensi kepemimpinan keusahawanan, minat pelajar terhadap industri keusahawanan, dan pendekatan secara keseluruhan untuk membentuk kompetensi keusahawanan pelajar.

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Finally I would have had a heavy burden to carry if it was not for the support I got from my friends. They all did but Dr. Mah Lok Abdullah and his wife and Susan Zhalehpour more than most. Thank you.

I certify that a Thesis Examination Committee has met on 2/3/2011 to conduct the final examination of Afsaneh Bagheri on her thesis entitled “Entrepreneurial Leadership Competencies Development among Malaysian University Students” in accordance with Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U.(A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Doctor of Philosophy of Educational Administration.

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## DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis is my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledge. I also declare that it has not been previously, and is not concurrently, submitted for any other degree at Universiti Putra Malaysia or at any other institution.

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**AFSANEH BAGHERI**

Date: 2 March 2011

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