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Determinants of Business Performance Amongst Women Entrepreneur in Johor, Malaysia

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Abstract

From historical and traditional perspectives, Malaysian women have long been involved in entrepreneurship. Although their percentage in this sector is still low compared to men, this field opens another opportunity for women to earn income. Therefore, this study is to examine the relationship between human factors, social factor, organizational factors and innovation towards business performance amongst women entrepreneurs in Johor, Malaysia. The study utilized quantitative approaches that comprised of a self-administered questionnaire to gain a better understanding of the study context. In the early stage, the study carried out preliminary interview with a women entrepreneur to observe current situation of women in handling business. In obtaining actual data, the study was later distributed questionnaire to selected women entrepreneur in Johor. The findings discovered that human factors, social factor, and organizational factors were a positive and significant relationship with business performance. However, the result from the hierarchical regression analysis shows that innovation does not moderate the relationship between organizational factors toward the business performance. From the results provide evidence and explanation of the determinants of business performance amongst women entrepreneurs in Johor, and also contribute some crucial insights to the policymakers to further develop and improve the current policy and training programs or workshops for the entrepreneurs. The study outcomes are significantly useful to the government agencies to develop upcoming policy and also set up proper support and training programs for the intended group women entrepreneurs, such as providing business skill training, increasing marketing services, providing workshops, creative thinking courses and some social welfare trade programs. To address the limitations of this study, future researchers may expand this research by emphasizing on other business platform types, so as to influence this present business performance trend amongst women entrepreneurs.

Keywords: Women Entrepreneurs, Human Factors, Social Factor, Organizational Factors, Innovation

Introduction

In 2016, estimated that 163 million women were starting or running new businesses in 54 economies around the world. In addition, an estimated of 111 million were running established businesses in various fields as reported in 2016-2017 Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) Women's Report published in 2017. This statistic not only shows the impact of women entrepreneurs across the globe but also highlights their contributions to the growth and well-being of their societies.

Although the increase of women entrepreneurs in the world is gradually recognized, only few studies were discussed (Nagarathanam and Buang, 2015). Furthermore, in-depth studies on women entrepreneur in Malaysia are still lacking (Nazira and Idros, 2012), thus this situation calls for more studies to be performed in order to fully understand the current phenomenon.

In Asia, Isa (2011) who conducted a study on women entrepreneurs in Malaysia reported that important factors influencing their business success are management skills, family support, inner drive and relationship with the society (Alam et al, 2011). However, in other studies done in Indonesia found that marketing and financial were affecting Indonesian women entrepreneurs' success (Tambunan, 2011).

From historical and traditional perspectives, Malaysian women have long been involved in entrepreneurship. Although their percentage in this sector is still low compared to men, this field opens another opportunity for women to earn income. There are still no complete data have been collected regard with their involvement. However, the number of women involved in entrepreneurship has increased every year. Besides that, research on entrepreneurs usually focused on male entrepreneurs and very few research related to determinants of business performance amongst women entrepreneurs in Malaysia. Therefore, the increase in number of women entrepreneurs has led this study to be conducted only on women entrepreneurs.

Related to the above mentioned, the main objective of this dissertation is to examine determinants of business performance amongst women entrepreneurs in Johor, Malaysia.

Literature Review

Business Performance

According to Camisón and López (2014), performance can be defined in various concepts depending on certain indicators for assessment reasons. Business performance measurement according to Melnyk et al, (2014) can be classified into two indicators which are operational and financial. Operational indicator related to non-financial factors such as satisfaction, quality of product, market share, new product development and market effectiveness while financial indicator related to economic factors such as profitability, return on investment, return on equity and return on sales.

Effectiveness and efficiency are two significant management dimensions in measuring business performance of business system. Effectiveness of dimension is related to the choice of the right goals (doing the right thing) while efficiency dimension is determined by the degree of rational use and engagement of the available resources (doing things in the right way). However, for a short time it is possible that success in business performance to be measured only with effectiveness, but it is guaranteed when both dimensions are used at the high level will achieve complete business performance (Leković and Marić, 2015).

In this research, the category of business performance was set as a dependent variable that related to management practice and the volume of management activities in businesses

in order to explain the relationships and possible influences in improving business results. Even though positive business performance initially referred to as any positive result, it has turned out to be progressively connected with wealth and prestige. According to Hupalu (2007), success in business performance can be measured by five methods; financial worth, quality of product, customer satisfaction, employee satisfaction and internal improvement. However, most authors agreed that success in business performance related to growth or profitability (Soininen et al., 2012). In other research, the authors stated that growth, profit, turnover or return of investment or number of employees are the concepts to define business performance in terms of financial performance (Simpson et al., 2012). Therefore, the higher profit received by a firm shows the higher level of business performance of an entrepreneur (De Waal et al., 2015).

In this study however, the researcher only focuses on financial indicator as the key measurement on business performance amongst women entrepreneur in Johor, Malaysia that covers business growth, number of employees (Coleman and Robb, 2012; Tantasuntisakul, 2015) and sales turnover (Robb, 2014; Coleman and Robb, 2012) because the measurements are clear, easy to compare and do not have bias. Besides that, most of past researchers (Tantasuntisakul, 2015; Dharmaratne, 2013; Nazira and Idros, 2012) used financial indicator to measure the business performance in their research.

Human Factors

The human factors' perspective proposes that the level of education, motivation, skill, dare to take risks, knowledge and work experience will influence women entrepreneurs' business performance (Dharmaratne, 2013; Hoe et al, 2012; Smith et al, 2009). Previous researches indicate that human factors play important roles in the profitability and growth of the firm and also have been cited as the measurement of performance on women entrepreneur (Kargwell, 2012; Sadi and Al-Ghazali, 2012; Itani et al, 2011; Nadgrodkiewicz, 2011; Zhu and Chu, 2010). In addition, according to Pfeffer (1994), human factor attributes include education, experience and skills of the business owner as a critical resource of the firm that affect the performance of business (Rauch and Rijdsdijk, 2013).

Soriano and Castrogiovanni (2012) found that there is a positive relationship between the overall levels of human factors as measured by level of education, work experience and economic performance at entrepreneur and firm level.

Social Factors

This present study discusses the social factor that could impact the business performance of a women entrepreneur in Johor namely work-family balance. Work-family balance can be defined as the extent to which individuals balancing work and family equally (Tantasutisakul, 2015). According to Thornthwaite (2002), the concept of balance is a perceptual phenomenon characterized by achieving a satisfactory resolution of the multiple demands of both work and family role. Therefore, there are a few terms such as quality of family life, life satisfaction and family life fulfilment come up to explain "family well-being" since previous researchers have unclear definition of it (Karakas et al., 2004).

The study by Joplin et al (2003) states that to measure balance of life is when an individual can manage family, work and personal considerations in their daily life. However, most of the respondents recognized "self-fulfilment" or "attainment of goals" as the prerequisite of a balanced life and they did not mention about work-family rivalry.

Nonetheless, the study of Hill et al (2004) mentioned that work-family problem contributes to decreasing of work flexibility but improve work-family fit.

From the previous research, the researcher illustrates that most successful women entrepreneur in Canada, Argentina and Mexico were unmarried and/or childless. In Canada, women entrepreneur use balancing as the principle for achieving success and to measure whether they have a balance between work and family life. Therefore, the success of women entrepreneur in life involves spouses and children (Lirio et al., 2007).

In Omani, study by McElwee and Al-Riyami (2003) found that there were 14 out of 25 successful women entrepreneurs were married with children and they did not face problems in balancing their work and family. Most of them are concentrated in service industry. According to Kargwell (2012), majority of women entrepreneurs in United Arab Emirates can manage business and family activities without having any negative impact on their family life.

As compared to the past, women nowadays mostly attempt to balance their responsibilities between work and family because they have the mother or wife roles rather than seeking for career development only (Naser et al., 2009). According to Kim and Ling (2001), successful women entrepreneur can manage stressful work and family dilemma because of their responsibility for employees' well-being and personal success. However, Ahl (2007) mentions that women cannot compete with men on professional grounds and some social mindset judge a woman's business as secondary to her husband's work and family. Therefore, work-family balance tends to be more difficult for women than men because both of them have different responsibilities that they have to cater (Bird, 2006).

Organizational Factors

Organizational factor is referred to the competencies owned by entrepreneurs which combine both resources and capabilities (Hitt et al., 2005). According to Md Isa et al, (2011), organizational factor also can be categorized as the core competencies of a firm which are management, marketing, operations and financial capabilities. Inherently, as stated by Lambert and Bytheway (1998), capability is "the ability of an organization to distribute products or services into the market place". Related to this, Rose et al (2006) discovered that there are significant relationship between entrepreneurial innovations and business growth in Malaysia which recommended the important of roles played by management, finance, operation, and human resource competencies on the business performance. Therefore, competencies are very important for building and securing a firm's long-term success (Prahalad and Hamel, 1993), especially the firms that continuously strive to win over the rivals (Carson and Gilmore, 2000).

Therefore, based on the reviews done, the present study focuses on four competencies that are considered critical for entrepreneurial success namely management, marketing, financial and operation competencies.

Innovation

The National Innovation Initiative (NII) defines innovation as "the inter-section of invention and insight, leading to the creative of social and economic value". In a competitive business environment, innovation is one of the important elements for firm's performance and survival (Jimenez and Sanz-Valle, 2011; Bell, 2005; Cho and Pucik, 2005) and sustainable competitive advantage (Standing and Kiniti, 2011; Bartel and Garud, 2009; Johannessen, 2008). There are so many definitions for innovation in the literature and also no global concurrence on the exact definition of innovation (Joachim et al, 2014). German economist

and political scientist Schumpeter who first define innovation as “the driving force for development”. Therefore, in this study, researcher is investigating moderator effect of innovation performance on the relationship between organizational factors and firm performance. However, to measure innovation performance researchers generally examine the indicators such as research and development (R&D), patents, new products and services offered by firms in order to optimize business performance (Hagedorn and Cloudt, 2003).

According to Okpara (2007), innovation can take a few structures;

- i. Innovation in processes that include changes and improvement to methods. These contribute to increases in productivity which lowers the cost and helps to increase demand.
- ii. Innovation in products or services can be classified into two types of progressive innovation which are predominant and radical innovation; that opens up new markets. These contribute to increases in effective demand which also encourage increases in employment and investment.
- iii. Innovation in management and work organization and the exploitation of human resources, together with the capacity to anticipate techniques.

Innovation at firm level refer to a firm’s responsiveness and tendency to implement new ideas in functional organization that lead to successful development and performance of the firm (Rubera and Kirca, 2012). The Oslo Manual (OECD and Eurostat, 2005) briefly defined organizational innovations as the application of new organizational method in the business practices firm organization or external relations. Innovation in organization can be predetermined to increase a firm’s performance by reducing administrative or transaction cost, reducing costs of supplies, improving workplace satisfaction and execution of a new marketing method with involving significant change in product design, product pricing, product promotion or product placement.

Therrien et al (2011) found that the organizational factors will increase the business performance of women entrepreneur when moderated by innovation. The researcher revealed to derive higher sales from innovations, firms need to offer new products with high level of uniqueness to the market or enter market early and dominate for years. Moreover, an empirical study covering Turkish manufacturing firms in different industries resulting the same. The researcher explored the outcomes of process, organization and marketing innovations on different aspects of firm performance, including achievements in management, production, marketing and finance (Gunday et al, 2011). Their study revealed that innovation does moderate organizational and firm performance in manufacturing industries.

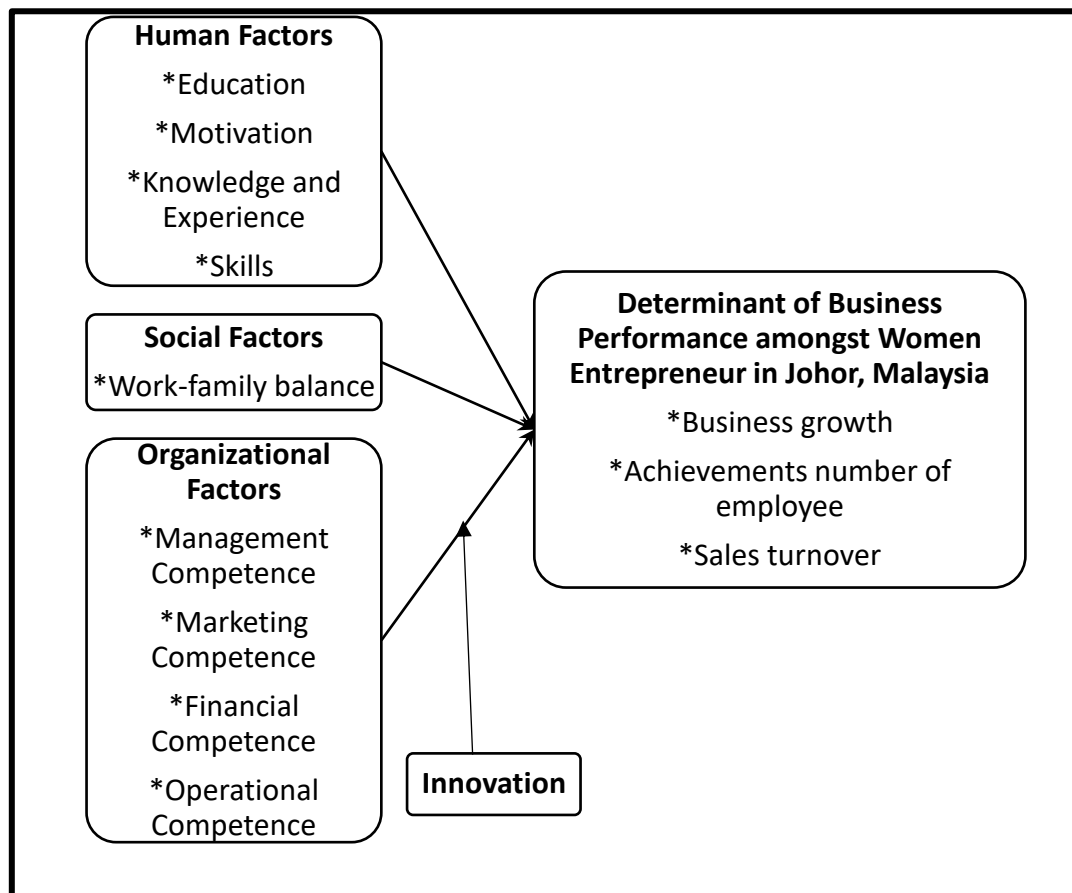
Therefore, based on the above mentioned theoretical and empirical findings in the literature, the following hypothesis is proposed which is innovation moderates the relationship between organizational factors and firm performance.

Theoretical Framework

From the previous authors, there are many studies on personal factors that influencing performance of an individual. However, the majority of the studies were carried out in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom. Due to that, this study will focus on individual factors and organization factors as they are significantly influencing the firms’ performance.

The research framework in Figure 1 illustrates the relationship between three main independent variables namely human factors, social factor, and organizational factors and a dependent variable called successful women entrepreneur (business performance).

Figure 1 Theoretical Framework



Methodology

The study adopted exploratory research design where preliminary interviews and observations towards women entrepreneurs were carried out to collect data thus providing evidence to develop theories and hypotheses for subsequent testing. Exploratory method is chosen because of there are only few studies to refer to or rely upon to predict an outcome that specifically discussing about the determinants of business performance amongst women entrepreneur as pointed out by Dyke and Murphy (2006). An exploratory research design has been denoted as quantitative in nature and has typically tested prior to the hypothesis construction by measuring relationships between variables and the data were analysed using statistical techniques (Kothari, 2004). In addition, there are three types of exploratory methods which are observational method, case study method, and survey method. However, the researcher decided to focus on the survey as the exploratory method for this study because survey is relatively inexpensive and can be administered in many modes including online survey, email survey, social media survey, paper survey, mobile survey, telephone survey, and face-to-face interview survey. Other than that, survey is useful in describing the characteristics of a large population. No other research methods can provide this broad

capability, which ensures a more accurate sample to gather targeted results in order to draw conclusions.

Based on the review of previous literature on women entrepreneurs, the author found that many academicians in this area of study applied two main research approaches to achieve the research objectives. The two main approaches are either qualitative or quantitative research approach. However, for this study, the researcher chose to use a mixed methods research design (quantitative and qualitative data collection approaches), which utilized a self-administered questionnaire (Bradburn et al., 2004) and a semi-structure interview to collect data (Johnson et al., 2007). There are four kinds of mixed methods designs; first, triangulation which merges qualitative and quantitative data to understand a research problem. Second, embedded which uses either qualitative or quantitative data to answer research questions. Third, explanatory which uses qualitative data to help to explain or elaborate quantitative results and fourth, exploratory which collects quantitative data to test and explain a relationship found in qualitative data (Creswell & Clark, 2007).

Mixed methods research were accepted by researchers from social and behavioural sciences (Tashakkori and Creswell, 2008) and it also has been listed as the third methodological movement (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2010). From the various definitions of mixed methods, it can be concluded that mixed methods research is an approach to knowledge (theory and practice) that combines methods of different types (qualitative and quantitative) in a single study with the purposes of deeper understanding of a phenomenon (Greene et al., 1989) and obtaining a fuller picture (Chen, 2006). In addition, according to Teddlie and Tashakkori (2003), mixed methods research also offers stronger conclusions than single methods.

Additionally, a quantitative approach was applied because it assists the researcher to scrutinize whether there are statistically significant relationships between the constructs (Abu-Bader, 2010). By using quantitative approaches, not only it will help the researcher to avoid being bias, but the findings of this research can also be generalized and replicated (Creswell et al., 2008). A set of survey questionnaire has been used as a research instrument because it can provide a numeric description of these factors by studying a sample of the population. Moreover, the research method was selected as a tool for data collection because it is relatively less time-consuming and easy to administer. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to analyse the data. It is regularly stated as hypothesis-testing research. Normally, researches start with the theories which research hypotheses are impulse. At that point an experimental design is established in which the variables in question are measured while controlling for the effects of selected independent variables (Newman et al., 1998).

Furthermore, qualitative approach is designed to make suitable inferences from the amount of collected data. Qualitative data can also come from several primary or secondary sources; which are individual, focus groups, internet and government publications (Sekaran and Bougie, 2009). In this study, the researcher used semi-structured interviews where the interviewer asked only a few predetermined questions while the rest of the questions are not planned in advance in order to get more opportunities to implement the idea and for the respondents to answer the questions, give comments and suggestions about the study. The results from this approach may help the researcher to increase the findings because in semi-structured interviews some questions are predetermined and were asked to all candidates, while others arise spontaneously in a free-flowing conversation.

Hence, a deeper understanding of the determinant factors such as human factors, social factor, organizational factors, innovation and business performance of women entrepreneurs in Johor will be achieved via investigation using both quantitative and qualitative research approaches. Consequently, the researcher used qualitative research approach in earlier of the study to collect preliminary data while quantitative research approach was used to collect the data of women entrepreneurs in Johor, Malaysia

Population and Sample

There are four categories of ownership in Malaysia business models namely sole proprietor, partnership, limited company and public company. From Table 2, Malaysian SMEs can be defined according to size, turnover and activity. Those relevant to this study find SMEs in Malaysia falling into two broad categories which are manufacturing, manufacturing-related services and agro-based industries and services, primary agriculture and information and communication technology (ICT) (Saleh and Ndubisi, 2006). An enterprise is considered to be an SME based on the annual sales turnover or number of full-time employees as indicated in Table 2 below.

Table 2 Definition of SMEs in Malaysia

Category	Micro-enterprise	Small enterprise	Medium enterprise
Manufacturing, manufacturing-related services and agro-based industries	Sales turnover of less than RM250,000 or fewer than five full-time employees.	Sales turnover between RM250,000 and RM10 million or between five and 50 full-time employees.	Sales turnover between RM10 million and RM25 million or between 51 and 150 full-time employees.
Services, primary agriculture and information and communication technology (ICT)	Sales turnover of less than RM200,000 or fewer than five full-time employees.	Sales turnover between RM200,000 and RM1 million or between five and 19 full-time employees.	Sales turnover between RM1 million and RM5 million or between 20 and 50 full-time employees.

Source: Small and Medium Industries Development Corporation (SMIDEC) (2016)

This research focused on those respondents who are women entrepreneurs in Johor, Malaysia. SMEs sole proprietors who are under the supervision of Majlis Amanah Rakyat (MARA) and registered with the Companies Commission of Malaysia (CCM) were chosen for this study. Johor state was chosen as the study area because this is the centre of economic, trades and transports where it is a major seaport and a gateway welcoming Indonesian and Singaporean tourists (Foreign Office, 2011).

Besides that, the researcher conducted a study in the state of Johor which has a population of about 3.554 million and the nearest to Singapore. The population for this study are women entrepreneurs who are sole proprietor in the Johor province, Malaysia and operating their business for more than 2 years. These SMEs are under the supervision of Majlis Amanah Rakyat (MARA).

Sampling and Sample Size

In this study, researcher used simple random sampling because it is suitable when the population is already known and when the researcher has an accurate list of the entire populations. Coherently, the researcher chose stratified random sampling to be used and it also gives a fair chance for every population of women entrepreneurs in SMEs to be selected and able to control the sample size in strata. Stratified random sampling is a process of stratifying or grouping of elements within a population and then proceed with random selection of subjects from each group. This research already identified the number of populations which are 320 women entrepreneurs in Johor and researcher obtained an accurate list of the entire population from MARA. As the total population of this research is 320, the number of sample size for this study is 175 (Krejcie and Morgan, 1970). Therefore, 175 of sample was chosen using Random Number Table (New York: The Free Press, 1995).

A sample is a subgroup or a subset of the population. The reasons for using a sample rather than collecting data from the entire population are self-evident. This is mostly because fatigue can be reduced and fewer errors can be avoided during the data collection process, especially when a large number of elements is involved (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). The sample size of 100 or more can have a significant power and become acceptable with a moderate effect size at 0.05 and 0.01 alpha levels (Hair et al, 2010).

Results

The Pearson correlation coefficient analysis is used to explain the strength and direction of all the variable relationships. The correlation coefficient ranges can vary from -1 to 1. The value of +1 shows a perfect positive relationship, 0 shows no relationship, and -1 shows a perfect negative relationship (Hair et al, 2010).

Table 3 Results of Correlation Analysis

Variables	Mean	SD	HF	SF	OF	I	BP
HF	3.97	.694	1				
SF	4.08	.649	.192*	1			
OF	3.82	.780	.171	.200*	1		
I	4.15	.647	.077	.274**	.109	1	
BP	2.07	.721	.326**	.432**	.387**	-.005	1

Notes: **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed)

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (1-tailed), N=123

Table 3 presents the intercorrelational results among all variables studied. The results of the correlation analysis proved the existence of the relationships between the business performance (DV) and human factors and social factor and organizational factors (IVs). The correlation between business performance (BP) with the independent variables, is clear which business performance (BP) has shown significant and positive correlations with the independent variables (IVs). Business performance (BP) correlates with human factors (HF) with the coefficient values of $r = 0.326$, social factor (SF) ($r = 0.432$), organizational factors (OF) ($r = 0.387$), and innovation (I) ($r = 0.005$), at $p < 0.01$.

The correlation results disclosed strong relations between the dependent (DV) and independent variables (IVs). As shown in Table 3, the overall correlation coefficient values of the study variables is in the range of between 0.005 to 0.432 ($p < 0.01$), thus implying that the values are in between low to moderate level.

Pertaining to the coefficient value, multicollinearity is said to occur when two or more independent variables in a multiple regression model have high correlation of 0.70 and above. In most instances, checking correlation of independent variables matrix is the easiest way to detect multicollinearity. Before using regression analysis, researcher has to ascertain the degree of multicollinearity (Sekaran & Bougie, 2009). Based on the correlation results, it is clear that multicollinearity does not exist in this study because the correlation coefficient (r) is less than 0.70 and thus, the variables are comfortably ready for the subsequent regression analyses.

Multiple Regression Analysis

In this study, multiple regression technique was employed to analyze the relationship between the factors influencing business performance of women entrepreneurs in Johor.

Table 4 Results of Multiple Regression Analysis

Variables	Dependent Variables		
	Business Performance		
Independent Variables	Beta values	t	Sig.
Human Factors	.364	4.428	.000
Social Factors	.336	4.283	.000
Organizational Factors	.159	1.976	.000
R	.579		
R ²	.335		
Adjusted R ²	.313		
F values	41.563		
Sig F values	.000		
Durbin Watson	1.663		

From Table 4, the result of regression analysis shows that human factors, social factor and organizational factors were positively and significantly related to business performance.

Evidently, the independent variable in this regression model explained approximately 31.3% of variation (Adjusted $R^2 = 0.313$) in business performance. The overall model fits for simple regression equation and it is found to be significant with F value at 41.563 ($p = 0.01$). Implicatively, the Durbin Watson value of 1.663 falls within the acceptable range of 1.50 to 2.50. As a conclusion, amongst all the three variables that were regressed with business performance; human factors, social factor, and organizational factors were positive and have significant relationships with business performance.

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis to Test for Innovation as Moderator

In this study, hierarchical regression technique was employed to analyze the effect of innovation towards organizational factors and business performance of women entrepreneurs in Johor. On the other hand, hierarchical regression deals with how predictor (independent) variables are selected and entered the model. Specifically, hierarchical regression refers to the process of adding or removing predictor variables from the regression model in steps.

Table 5 Results of Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analysis

Variable Entered	Dependent Variable (Business Performance)		
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
IV : Organizational Factors	.324*	.105	.243
M : Innovation		.125*	.000
Product term : Organizational Factors x Innovation			.003
R ²	.105	.011	.059
Adjusted R ²	.098	.003	.051
R ² Change	.105	.011	.059
Sig. F Change	.000	.250	.007

*P < 0.05

Table 5 presents the results that indicate a moderating effect the relationship between organizational factors and business performance is higher for women entrepreneur that have innovation as compared to women entrepreneurs that do not have innovation. Therefore, innovation increased the relationship between organizational factors; education, motivation, knowledge and experiences and skills and business performance amongst women entrepreneur in Johor with the value of $p < 0.05$.

Table 6 Summary of Hypotheses Testing (Business Performance)

	Hypothesis	Decision
H1	There is the positive influence of human factors towards business performance of women entrepreneur in Johor, Malaysia.	Supported
H2	There is the positive influence of social factors towards business performance of women entrepreneur in Johor, Malaysia.	Supported
H3	There is the positive influence of organizational factors towards business performance of women entrepreneur in Johor, Malaysia.	Supported
H4	Innovation moderates the relationship between organizational factors towards business performance of women entrepreneur in Johor, Malaysia.	Not supported

From the first result of the multiple regression analysis in Table 4, human factors, social factor and organizational factors have positive and significant relationships with business performance. In addition, from hierarchical multiple regression analysis in Table 5 shows that it is clear that innovation has relationship with business performance of women entrepreneur in Johor.

Discussions

Based on the research question, all discussions below are based on both quantitative and qualitative analyses of this study.

Research Question 1

To what extent the human factors (education, motivation, knowledge and experience and skills) influence Johor women entrepreneurs' business performance?

According to the evidence given by the data analysis, there is a positive correlation between human factors and business performance of women entrepreneurs. This finding is in line with the previous studies which mentioned that human factors (education, motivation, knowledge and experience and skills) have significant influence on women entrepreneurs' business performance (Alam et al., 2011; Itani et al., 2011; Jamali, 2009).

Based on the quantitative result, majority of women entrepreneurs agreed that their background with higher education level do help them in managing business. Besides that, they were also often read the materials related to entrepreneurship to increase knowledge in business.

This study supports previous findings such as by Bates (1990); Bae et al (2014) who stated that entrepreneurs who had a college education were more performed in entrepreneurship than those who did not. Therefore, education is stated as "antecedents" (Cooper, 1989) and it helps to start a company, affect the performance and may assist in the accumulation of knowledge and skills of an entrepreneur to achieve the higher performance level (Volery et al., 2013; Davidsson and Honig, 2003).

Motivation is one of the most important factors in influencing the attitudes and behaviour of human beings, thereby causing various levels of performance. Results from previous chapter has shown that women entrepreneurs like to challenge themselves and do their best to achieve excellence in business. These were in line as to what stated by Lindenberg et al., (2011), motivation is the psychological characteristic that cause the organism to act, maintain specific desired goal, controls and maintain goal-directed behaviour. Therefore, profitability is one of motivations that drives a desire to high effort and becomes the reason or psychological cause of an action of women entrepreneurs to succeed in their business.

Most of women entrepreneurs agree that knowledge and experience help them in managing business. Results in descriptive analysis also show that majority of them have experience in business. According to Hoe et al (2012), basic knowledge and experience have impact toward successful business performance amongst women entrepreneur. This also agreed by Nazira and Idros (2012) that women entrepreneurs are urged to enhance their knowledge and experiences in business field in order to increase business performance. Therefore, women entrepreneurs are encouraged to attend seminars, talks and entrepreneurial conventions organized by relevant parties as well as attending courses and

training that are often organized by the government or private parties to improve their knowledge in entrepreneurship.

A study conducted by Hoe et al (2012) revealed that to become a successful woman entrepreneur, skills to manage, plan, monitor the organization and resources are needed. This research has shown that women entrepreneurs have skills in the businesses and some of them have special skills / approvals with the business field involved. Thus, business skills are important for idea generation and dealing with people and these related to performance.

Therefore, all human factors that applied in this present study showed women entrepreneurs that have education, motivation, knowledge and experience and skills are ultimately affecting their business performance.

Research Question 2

To what extent the social factor (work-family balance) influence Johor women entrepreneurs' business performance?

From the data analysis, there is a positive correlation between social factor and business performance of women entrepreneurs. Hence, the finding of this study is in line with the previous findings. For instance, according to Kargwell (2012), majority of women entrepreneurs in United Arab Emirates can manage business and family activities. Nonetheless, their business activities did not give any negative impact on their family life. To summarize this issue, it can be said that Johor women entrepreneurs do not face an imbalance work-family matters since they are able to manage both their work and family well which consequently, does not affecting their business performance. Most of women entrepreneurs are married and they achieve success in business and family affairs due to working together with their spouses and/or family members and have unconditional support and assistance from them. Their ability to balance work and family leads them to have a successful business and meaningful lives.

Research Question 3

To what extent the organizational factors (management competence, marketing competence, financial competence, and operational competence) influence Johor women entrepreneurs' business performance?

Based on the result analysis, it is found that women entrepreneurs always searching for continuous improvement and capable of seeing many solutions to a problem. Besides that, they are also ensuring employees to perform at their best and employ people that take personal responsibility. As study done by Colombo and Grilli (2005), management competence is one of the most important competencies in planning, budgeting, negotiating and recording activities. This competency is necessary to entrepreneurs, especially in goal setting, organizing, planning and motivating people, allocation of resources, coordination of work, leadership and delegation. In the same time, women entrepreneurs articulate strategies and inform all employees. This is in line with Tantasutisakul (2015) which stated that to be a successful entrepreneur, they need management and creativity skills for competitiveness purposes. Therefore, plan, skills to manage, monitor the organization and resources are very important to become a successful woman entrepreneur (Hoe et al, 2012).

According to Kargwell (2012), entrepreneurs should create their business strategies based on the SWOT analysis and marketing activities to achieve success. Research has shown

that most of women entrepreneurs used SWOT analysis to develop their business strategies and they are also understand that the market needs has significant implications for their business performance. Marketing competence is indeed necessary and it can influence the business performance among women entrepreneurs in Johor. An effective marketing strategy will positively influence the business competitive advantage (Tantasutisakul, 2015). Besides that, an enterprise cannot produce unique products and services for its targeted customers without wide marketing knowledge. Hence, women entrepreneurs must have a good business vision, pay full attention to product or service details, understand the market demand and continuously search for better marketing strategies to improve their business performance.

The results from the descriptive analysis in the quantitative study showed that financial competence has a relationship with business performance. The present findings are in line with the previous findings that suggested the significant influence of finance on entrepreneurs' success (Hoe et al, 2012; Isa, 2013). Even though financial support is the main problem during the start-up period of business, most women entrepreneurs utilized their own money or family's money to invest during start up and expansion of their business. Therefore, they have to be more careful when making decisions that relate to financial matters.

Other than that, funding capital from financial institutions is one of the biggest concerns among women entrepreneurs in Malaysia (Hashim, 2012). The result in previous chapter shown that women entrepreneurs faced difficulty of getting personal bank loans for business. However, due to being in small scale industries, this situation does not give a high impact on women entrepreneurs to expand their business. Therefore, it is recommended for financial institutions to offer different schemes to relieve the financial burden and to support small scale industries for women entrepreneurs.

The findings of this study are in line with the previous studies that revealed the significant relationship between operational competence and business performance (Md Isa et al, 2015). Operational competency helps entrepreneurs to make good decisions regarding business operation and enable the business to operate more effectively by using a proper business system or standard operating procedure (SOP) (Md Isa et al, 2013). In general, most women entrepreneurs in Johor have effective operational functions in their business premise due to small scale industries. Therefore, with the advance ICTs tools and up to date market demands, it is wise for the women entrepreneurs in Johor to adopt more ICT related operation in their business i.e. website, Facebook, and so forth to increase their business performance.

Thus, all organizational factors that applied in this present study showed women entrepreneurs that have management competence, marketing competence, financial competence and operational competence are ultimately affecting their business performance.

Research Question 4

To what extent the role of innovation in the relationship between organizational factors and Johor women entrepreneurs' business performance?

The results of the Pearson's correlation analysis give evidence that there is a negative correlation between organizational factors and business performance. Moreover, result from the hierarchical regression analysis in this study shows that innovation does not moderates the relationship between organizational factors towards business performance of women entrepreneur in Johor. From the data analysis, the findings of this study were opposed with

the previous findings. For instance, according to Therrien et al (2011), organizational factors will increase the business performance of women entrepreneur when moderated by innovation. Innovation does not affect business performance in Johor due to most of women entrepreneurs only own small-scale industries and they need large financial capital if they plan to implement innovation process in their business. Therefore, most of women entrepreneurs in Johor only focus on their personal effort to maintain their organizational factors in business. From this situation, the organizational factors for small-scale industries does not involve innovation. However, awareness of the importance of innovation should be increased among women entrepreneurs who owned small-scale industries to encourage them increase their performance in business. In a competitive business environment, innovation is one of the important elements for firm's performance and survival (Jimenez and Sanz-Valle, 2011; Bell, 2005; Cho and Pucik, 2005) and sustainable competitive advantage (Standing and Kiniti, 2011; Bartel and Garud, 2009; Johannessen, 2008).

Therefore, business performance of women entrepreneur in Johor was not moderated with the existence of innovation towards organizational factors; management competence, marketing competence, financial competence and operational competence.

Conclusion

This study investigated the variables (human factors, social factor, organizational factors and innovation) that could improve business performance among women entrepreneurs in Johor. The quantitative results of this study indicate that out of four hypotheses tested, three hypotheses are supported. Only one hypothesis is not supported which is innovation does not moderate the relationship between organizational factors and business performance.

In conclusion, a more comprehensive approach needs to be drawn up to help and monitor entrepreneurial activities among women entrepreneurs. Based on the analysis results, it found that the involvement of women entrepreneurs in business is high. However, it is only limited to businesses with small scale or medium enterprises. Most of them involve into business as the income is for themselves or as a side income to raise their standard of living with their families.

In addition, most of women entrepreneurs are doing their best to run their businesses and at the same time keep a good relationship with their family members despite that they need to face many problems. Besides that, government agencies should organize more training or workshop for women entrepreneurs to assist them in gaining and exchanging experiences in entrepreneurship. Therefore, a proper and adequate training will make them more competitive in a challenging market business.

Based on this study, more future researches can use the current results to further understand other various factors affecting women entrepreneurs' business performance in Johor and other possible dimensions of success. The findings of these future studies may show the positive impact of the ongoing development and expansion of Johor women businesses which will inherently influence the overall economy of Malaysia.

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