ADJUSTING TO LEGAL CHANGES BY FAMILY FIRMS: THE CASE OF MALAY TRADITIONAL AND COMPLEMENTARY MEDICINE (T&CM) PRACTITIONERS

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To my beloved mother, sisters, brother, uncles, and wife
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ABSTRACT

The Malaysian National T&CM Policy (2007) requires changes in traditional and complementary medicine (T&CM) practices for integrating T&CM into national health care system. This dissertation attempted to explore how Malay T&CM practitioners, whose practices are organized in the form small family enterprise, are responding and adapting to the required changes. Qualitative approach of investigation was used to explore this. Ten (10) Malay practitioners from Kuala Lumpur, Selangor and Johor were interviewed face-to-face. The interviewed practitioners where either tabib or dukun; pawang and bomoh were excluded. It has been discovered that for small practitioners, two things are mainly subject to regulation: practice, and education and training. The interviewed practitioners in general show readiness to adjust to change regarding practice while they appear to have reluctance to respond towards meeting the requirements for education and training. These apparently contradictory responses towards change are due to their understanding of the likely effect of T&CM integration initiative on them. By and large, they believe regulation of their practice is for the promotion and development of their T&CM business or earning potential. So they are either making changes or ready to change or will be ready to bring about changes in their practices in line with the integration policy initiative. However, the vast majority of the practitioners are not bent towards formal-institutional learning which is required under the integration initiative. Among the reasons for discomforting feeling or reluctance towards such learning include perceived barrier to professional development, unsatisfactory experience of attending official T&CM training, age factor, uniqueness of own practice and “know enough” attitude. The family involvement was explored as a contributory factor in making necessary adjustment to the change. Family’s supportive roles mainly manifested through spousal direct participation in the practice, supply of capital, source of motivation and inspiration, customer service and networking.
ABSTRAK