

# Social Capital and Survivability of Women-Owned Enterprises: The Case of Malaysian Women Entrepreneurs

Iklima Husna Abdul Rahim<sup>1</sup>  
Dzulkifli Mukhtar<sup>2</sup>  
Anis Amira Ab Rahman<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup>Faculty of Entrepreneurship and Business, Universiti Malaysia Kelantan, Malaysia

<sup>1</sup>Faculty of Business, Economic and Accountancy, Universiti Malaysia Sabah, Malaysia  
Correspondence email: iklimahusna@gmail.com

## ABSTRACT

Women-owned enterprise is one of the most important components for the success and development of a country where women entrepreneurs have emerged as the fastest growing sector of entrepreneurship worldwide. It has garnered the attention of numerous academics in recent years as women can make a substantial contribution to economic development and entrepreneurial activities. Thus, this shows that entrepreneurship is the best strategy to assist in improving the economy, whether for individuals, families, local, communities, or the country. However, the percentage of women who choose to pursue an entrepreneurial career is lower than men. Men entrepreneurs outnumber women entrepreneurs since men are responsible for the main household income while women are needed to establish work-life balance when managing both business and family. In discussing this issue, women entrepreneurs were perceived as subordinate to men because of the persistence of gender inequality in today's environment which led to poor access to resources in supporting their business. Therefore, the objective of this article is to investigate the influence of formal and informal social capital on the development and survivability of women-owned enterprises in Malaysia. The study will utilize qualitative method in which informants from Kelantan will be interviewed. The finding of this study is expected to be useful in enriching the understanding of women entrepreneurs and their enterprise survival.

**Keywords:** Social capital; Survivability; Women-owned enterprises; Women entrepreneurs; Entrepreneurship.

## INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurs are frequently viewed as national assets that must be developed, driven, and fully rewarded whenever possible. It shows that entrepreneurship has become a key component of business all around the world and has been embraced in all industries where entrepreneurial activity has risen to prominence as a primary driver of economic advancement. For a variety of reasons, from fostering social change to supporting innovation, entrepreneurship stands out as an essential component of business. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, entrepreneurship was primarily designated for men. Only at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, with the development of feminism, were women entrepreneurs widely acknowledged. It was only in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, with the availability of the internet and technology advancements, that women became more prevalent in the commercial world (Basit *et al.*, 2020).

Women entrepreneurs have emerged as the fastest growing sector of entrepreneurship worldwide. The global rate of women entrepreneurship increased by 10% in the last two years since 2014 (GEM, 2016). Approximately 231 million women started or operated firms in the 59 economies around the world (GEM, 2018). In fact, Teare and Desmond (2015) stated that the number of women founders in companies worldwide also increased from 117 people in