



Malaysian Women Micro-Entrepreneur Performance, Role of Social Capital, Locus of Control, and Institutional Support on Entrepreneurial Orientation

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Abstract

This chapter proposed a framework for the interactive effect of social capital, locus of control, and institutional support on entrepreneurial orientation (EO) and micro-enterprise performance discourse lacking in a single study. The study used the unidimensional form of EO of women micro-enterprises in developing novel jobs towards narrowing the economic gaps of people. A quantitative approach is utilised with the help of the G-Power to establish the minimum sample size. The chapter provides significant value on the significance of the antecedent variables on women micro-entrepreneurs' perceived performance. The chapter is anchored on the model of strategic entrepreneurship, organisational learning, and learning organisation theories stressing how their adoption by women micro-entrepreneurs could enhance optimal performance. These findings' implications would offer a vital role on women entrepreneurs' performance. Further, the chapter will provide direction for policymakers and future research to enhance the optimal sustainable performance of women micro-entrepreneurs in Malaysia.

Chapter Preview

Top

1. Introduction

Micro-enterprises' contributions in any form contribute to nations' economic development. They may operate full-time, part-time businesses at home or out of homes or in small shops and beside street stalls, facilitating enterprise formation. According to the literature, micro-enterprises can greatly support low-income households' socioeconomic growth and provide sustained economic growth and subsequently develop into SMEs that significantly benefit SMEs and large businesses (Zaato et al., 2022; Al-Mamun & Fazal, 2018). Businesses that are mostly micro-enterprises are more likely to be innovative and actively focused on developing jobs for the public. Additionally, micro, and small businesses are seen as expanding business prospects, raising family incomes, and improving social well-being (Franzke et al., 2022; Halim et al., 2022). As a result, advanced and emerging economies are focusing on entrepreneurship policies and initiatives to boost the performance of micro, small, and medium-sized businesses (MSMEs). Due to the radical shifts in gender values across the globe, more and more women are starting their businesses. However, male entrepreneurs have dominated research on small and medium-sized businesses due to their propensity to launch new goods and services onto the market (Franzke et al., 2022).

Governments worldwide have encouraged women to become entrepreneurs with various strategies actively involved in promoting women's entrepreneurship. The global involvement and expansion of female entrepreneurs have gained much attention recently. Regional balance and employment targets are projected to increase in the next decade (Jing, 2022; Fazal et al., 2022). However, due to their low level of entrepreneurial orientation, concerns about their access to social capital and other forms of support, and their capacity to execute with a high sense of achievement in order to realise their vision, the majority of women entrepreneurs, particularly in emerging nations, operate in unofficial, semi-structured and short-lived businesses.

Studies highlighted women entrepreneurship as a growing phenomenon on a global scale and have garnered much scholarly interest in recent times. Women entrepreneurs help the country create jobs and thrive economically. They support greater entrepreneurial diversity at the family and community levels in a range of economic circumstances (i.e., Laguna et al., 2022; Franzke et al., 2022). Regardless of the significant contributions made by female entrepreneurs in Malaysia and around the world, they continue to face some barriers and difficulties that can hinder their entrepreneurial orientation, access to social capital, and ability to access government institutional support that can help them improve the performance of their businesses.

Likewise, few empirical types of research emerged on the performance of women microentrepreneurs in relation to the effect of variables such as social capital, locus of control, and institutional support influence on women entrepreneurs performance (e.g., Zakariah et al., 2022; Abdelwahed et al., 2022; Gugnani, 2022). Entrepreneurial orientation influence on firm performance is the subject of several recent empirical studies (Rasiah, Ng, & Cheong, 2023). The insufficient research of entrepreneurial orientation on particularly women micro-entrepreneurs performance could be attributed to a number of political and social, religious, customary, interpersonal, and other obstacles that may discourage women from pursuing entrepreneurship and proving themselves to the limelight with the necessary tools for success. Additionally, a variety of supports, such as household, a low level of social capital, and a weak locus of control, might impair the performance of an enterprise owned by women entrepreneurs (Yap, Keling, & Ho, 2022; Mata, & Ibrahim, 2020; Franzke et al., 2022), and a lack of entrepreneurial know-how has a significant impact on how well women entrepreneurs thrive. The performance of women entrepreneurs is further hampered by organisational assistance, government backing, culture, and the sector in which most businesses operate (Arellano, 2022; Fazal et al., 2022).

Complete Chapter List

Search this Book:

[Reset](#)

Table of Contents

[View Full PDF \(/pdf.aspx?tid=328334&ptid=315768&ctid=15&t=Table of Contents&isxn=9781668487815\)](#)

Detailed Table of Contents

[View Full PDF \(/pdf.aspx?tid=328335&ptid=315768&ctid=15&t=Detailed Table of Contents&isxn=9781668487815\)](#)

Preface

Ramakrishna Yanamandra, Logaiswari Indiran

[View Full PDF \(/pdf.aspx?tid=328336&ptid=315768&ctid=15&t=Preface&isxn=9781668487815\)](#)

Chapter 1

A Systematic Literature Review on Entrepreneurship Intention Among Engineering Students: Impact of Personal, Academic, and Social Factors (/chapter/a-systematic-literature-review-on-entrepreneurship-intention-among-engineering-students/328337) (pages 1-28)

Jingjun Lei, Logaiswari Indiran, Yanamandra Ramakrishna, Prageetha Raju, Umar Haiyat Abdul Kohar

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[\(/viewtitlesample.aspx?id=328337&ptid=315768&t=A](#)

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Systematic Literature Review on Entrepreneurship Intention Among Engineering Students: Impact of Personal, Academic, and Social Factors&isxn=9781668487815)

Chapter 2

An Investigation of Patterns of Entrepreneurial Competencies Among Undergraduates at a Malaysian Public University (/chapter/an-investigation-of-patterns-of-entrepreneurial-competencies-among-undergraduates-at-a-malaysian-public-university/328338) (pages 29-49)

Ponmalar N. Alagappar, Janitha V. Nadarajah, Jesrina Ann Xavier

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[\(/viewtitlesample.aspx?id=328338&ptid=315768&t=An](#)

[Add to Cart](#)
Investigation of Patterns of Entrepreneurial Competencies Among Undergraduates at a Malaysian Public University&isxn=9781668487815)

Chapter 3

Aversion of a Person Facing the Risk of Failure When Starting a Business in Mexico: An Approach Through Some Educational Factors (/chapter/aversion-of-a-person-facing-the-risk-of-failure-when-starting-a-business-in-mexico/328339) (pages 50-81)

Gerardo Reyes Ruiz

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 (/viewtitlesample.aspx? Add to Cart
 id=328339&ptid=315768&t=Aversion
 of a Person
 Facing the Risk
 of Failure When
 Starting a
 Business in
 Mexico: An
 Approach
 Through Some
 Educational
 Factors&isxn=9781668487815)

Chapter 4

Boosting Gender Integration in Social Enterprises as a Solution to Poverty: Cases in India (/chapter/boosting-gender-integration-in-social-enterprises-as-a-solution-to-poverty/328340) (pages 82-102)

Prageetha G. Raju, Logaiswari Indiran

Preview Chapter \$37.50
 (/viewtitlesample.aspx? Add to Cart
 id=328340&ptid=315768&t=Boosting
 Gender
 Integration in
 Social
 Enterprises as a
 Solution to
 Poverty: Cases in
 India&isxn=9781668487815)

Chapter 5

Digital Entrepreneurship: Opportunities, Barriers, Key Drivers (/chapter/digital-entrepreneurship/328341) (pages 103-123)

Nik Herda Nik Abdullah

Preview Chapter \$37.50
 (/viewtitlesample.aspx? Add to Cart
 id=328341&ptid=315768&t=Digital
 Entrepreneurship:
 Opportunities,
 Barriers, Key
 Drivers&isxn=9781668487815)

Chapter 6

Do Engineering Students Intend to Be Entrepreneurs?: A Case Study From the University of Minho, Portugal (/chapter/do-engineering-students-intend-to-be-entrepreneurs/328342) (pages 124-147)

Filipa Vieira, Cristina S. Rodrigues, Iolanda Vieira

Preview Chapter \$37.50
 (/viewtitlesample.aspx? Add to Cart
 id=328342&ptid=315768&t=Do
 Engineering
 Students Intend
 to Be
 Entrepreneurs?:
 A Case Study
 From the
 University of
 Minho,
 Portugal&isxn=9781668487815)

Chapter 7

Does Digitalization Have a Bi-Directional Causal Relationship With the Entrepreneurship Ecosystem?: Evidence From a Country-Wise Panel Data Analysis (/chapter/does-digitalization-have-a-bi-directional-causal-relationship-with-the-entrepreneurship-ecosystem/328343) (pages 148-172)

Ajay Kumar Singh, Bhim Jyoti

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 (/viewtitlesample.aspx? Add to Cart
 id=328343&ptid=315768&t=Does
 Digitalization
 Have a Bi-
 Directional
 Causal
 Relationship With
 the
 Entrepreneurship
 Ecosystem?:
 Evidence From a
 Country-Wise
 Panel Data
 Analysis&isxn=9781668487815)

Chapter 8

Drivers of Innovation and Entrepreneurship (/chapter/drivers-of-innovation-and-entrepreneurship/328344) (pages 173-202)

Shankar Subramanian Iyer, Khyati S. Marwah, Rupinder Pal Kaur, Meenakshi P. Dhoundiyal

Preview Chapter **\$37.50**
 (/viewtitlesample.aspx? Add to Cart
 id=328344&ptid=315768&t=Drivers
 of Innovation and
 Entrepreneurship&isxn=9781668487815)

Chapter 9

Elements Influencing Entrepreneurial Intention Among Undergraduate Students: An Exploratory Study (/chapter/elements-influencing-entrepreneurial-intention-among-undergraduate-students/328345) (pages 203-220)

Rosman Bin Mahmood, Ahmad Suffian Bin Mohd Zahari, Zainuddin Bin Zakaria, Norlaila Binti Ibrahim, Norizan Binti Ahmed

Preview Chapter **\$37.50**
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 id=328345&ptid=315768&t=Elements
 Influencing
 Entrepreneurial
 Intention Among
 Undergraduate
 Students: An
 Exploratory
 Study&isxn=9781668487815)

Chapter 10

Employee Motivation for Sustainable Entrepreneurship: The Mediating Role of Green HRM (/chapter/employee-motivation-for-sustainable-entrepreneurship/328346) (pages 221-244)

Preksha Yadav, Jain Mathew, A. N. Raghavendra, Sonia Singh

Preview Chapter **\$37.50**
 (/viewtitlesample.aspx? Add to Cart
 id=328346&ptid=315768&t=Employee
 Motivation for
 Sustainable
 Entrepreneurship:
 The Mediating
 Role of Green
 HRM&isxn=9781668487815)

Chapter 11

Entrepreneurial Behavior in the Future With Special Emphasis on the United Arab Emirates (/chapter/entrepreneurial-behavior-in-the-future-with-special-emphasis-on-the-united-arab-emirates/328347) (pages 245-260)

Elif Pekcetin

Preview Chapter **\$37.50**
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 id=328347&ptid=315768&t=Entrepreneurial
 Behavior in the
 Future With
 Special
 Emphasis on the
 United Arab
 Emirates&isxn=9781668487815)

Chapter 12

Entrepreneurial Intensity and Strategic Entrepreneurship: An Empirical Investigation of Women Entrepreneurs (/chapter/entrepreneurial-intensity-and-strategic-entrepreneurship/328348) (pages 261-283)

Swati Sisodia, Sumaira Jan

Preview Chapter **\$37.50**
 (/viewtitlesample.aspx? Add to Cart
 id=328348&ptid=315768&t=Entrepreneurial
 Intensity and
 Strategic
 Entrepreneurship:
 An Empirical
 Investigation of
 Women
 Entrepreneurs&isxn=9781668487815)

Chapter 13

Entrepreneurial Intent and Opportunities Linkage for the Sustainable Tourism Sector (/chapter/entrepreneurial-intent-and-opportunities-linkage-for-the-sustainable-tourism-sector/328349) (pages 284-302)

Neeta Baporikar

Preview Chapter **\$37.50**
 (/viewtitlesample.aspx? Add to Cart
 id=328349&ptid=315768&t=Entrepreneurial
 Intent and
 Opportunities
 Linkage for the
 Sustainable
 Tourism
 Sector&isxn=9781668487815)

Chapter 14

Entrepreneurial Self-Efficacy of Indian Youth: Family Climate as a Driver (/chapter/entrepreneurial-self-efficacy-of-indian-youth/328350) (pages 303-325)

Mayuri Srivastava, Shradha Shivani, Sraboni Dutta

Preview Chapter **\$37.50**
 (/viewtitlesample.aspx? Add to Cart
 id=328350&ptid=315768&t=Entrepreneurial
 Self-Efficacy of
 Indian Youth:
 Family Climate
 as a
 Driver&isxn=9781668487815)

Chapter 15

Framework for Creating Mass Entrepreneurial Intention in India (/chapter/framework-for-creating-mass-entrepreneurial-intention-in-india/328351) (pages 326-347)

Sandeep Ganpat Kudtarkar, G. Ramesh

Preview Chapter **\$37.50**
 (/viewtitlesample.aspx? Add to Cart
 id=328351&ptid=315768&t=Framework
 for Creating
 Mass
 Entrepreneurial
 Intention in
 India&isxn=9781668487815)

Chapter 16

Has Malaysia Grown a Unicorn?: Examining Gen Z Entrepreneurship Intention and Its Propensity Factor (/chapter/has-malaysia-grown-a-unicorn/328352) (pages 348-367)

Nurul Hidayana Mohd Noor

Preview Chapter **\$37.50**
 (/viewtitlesample.aspx? Add to Cart
 id=328352&ptid=315768&t=Has
 Malaysia Grown
 a Unicorn?:
 Examining Gen Z
 Entrepreneurship
 Intention and Its
 Propensity
 Factor&isxn=9781668487815)

Chapter 17

Malaysian Women Micro-Entrepreneur Performance, Role of Social Capital, Locus of Control, and Institutional Support on Entrepreneurial Orientation (/chapter/malaysian-women-micro-entrepreneur-performance-role-of-social-capital-locus-of-control-and-institutional-support-on-entrepreneurial-orientation/328353) (pages 368-399)

Solomon Gbene Zaato, Sathiswaran Uthamaputhran, Mohammad Ismail, Balakrishnan Parasuraman, Noorshella Che Nawi, Ali Salmann

Preview Chapter **\$37.50**
 (/viewtitlesample.aspx? Add to Cart
 id=328353&ptid=315768&t=Malaysian
 Women Micro-
 Entrepreneur
 Performance,
 Role of Social
 Capital, Locus of
 Control, and
 Institutional
 Support on
 Entrepreneurial
 Orientation&isxn=9781668487815)

Chapter 18

Nurturing Students' Entrepreneurial Mindset: A Design Thinking Approach (/chapter/nurturing-students-entrepreneurial-mindset/328354) (pages 400-420)

Ponmalar N. Alagappan, Jesrina Ann Xavier, Manimekalai Jambulingam

Preview Chapter **\$37.50**
 (/viewtitlesample.aspx? Add to Cart
 id=328354&ptid=315768&t=Nurturing
 Students'
 Entrepreneurial
 Mindset: A
 Design Thinking
 Approach&isxn=9781668487815)

Chapter 19

Tax Policy and Entrepreneurship: Evidence From Morocco (/chapter/tax-policy-and-entrepreneurship/328355) (pages 421-442)

El Houssain Attak

Preview Chapter **\$37.50**
 (/viewtitlesample.aspx? Add to Cart
 id=328355&ptid=315768&t=Tax
 Policy and
 Entrepreneurship:
 Evidence From
 Morocco&isxn=9781668487815)

Chapter 20

Technology and Entrepreneurship Development: The Perspective of Malaysia (/chapter/technology-and-entrepreneurship-development/328356) (pages 443-464)

Faerozh Bin Madli, Yuzainy Janin, Shaierah Binti Gulabdin, Wong Sing Yun, Kelvin Yong, Diana Nabila Chau Abdullah

Preview Chapter **\$37.50**
(/viewtitlesample.aspx?id=328356&ptid=315768&t=Technology and Entrepreneurship Development: The Perspective of Malaysia&isxn=9781668487815)

Chapter 21

The Entrepreneurial Intention of Young Trainees in Agricultural Fields in Morocco (/chapter/the-entrepreneurial-intention-of-young-trainees-in-agricultural-fields-in-morocco/328357) (pages 465-483)

Aomar Ibourk, Soukaina Raoui

Preview Chapter **\$37.50**
(/viewtitlesample.aspx?id=328357&ptid=315768&t=The Entrepreneurial Intention of Young Trainees in Agricultural Fields in Morocco&isxn=9781668487815)

Chapter 22

Using Public Grants for Intrapreneurial Projects at a University: A Feasibility Study Example for the Medicinal and Aromatic Plants Research Center (/chapter/using-public-grants-for-intrapreneurial-projects-at-a-university/328358) (pages 484-499)

Zeynep Gormezoglu

Preview Chapter **\$37.50**
(/viewtitlesample.aspx?id=328358&ptid=315768&t=Using Public Grants for Intrapreneurial Projects at a University: A Feasibility Study Example for the Medicinal and Aromatic Plants Research Center&isxn=9781668487815)

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Women Entrepreneurs: Unleashing the Power of Inclusivity and Diversity (/chapter/women-entrepreneurs-328359) (pages 500-522)

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Women Entrepreneurs' Psychological Wellbeing: Relationship With Empowerment and Motivation (/chapter/women-entrepreneurs-psychological-wellbeing/328360) (pages 523-546)

Chandan Maheshkar, Neha Soni

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Preview Chapter **\$37.50**
(/viewtitlesample.aspx?id=328359&ptid=315768&t=Women Entrepreneurs' Unleashing the Power of Inclusivity and Diversity&isxn=9781668487815)

Preview Chapter **\$37.50**
(/viewtitlesample.aspx?id=328360&ptid=315768&t=Women Entrepreneurs' Psychological Wellbeing: Relationship With Empowerment and Motivation&isxn=9781668487815)

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Index

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