

THE TRIGGERS OF PERSONALITY TRAITS, ENTREPRENEURIAL MOTIVATION, AND COMPETENCIES: A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF E-COMMERCE VENTURE CREATION IN MALAYSIA.

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Received: May 2020 Revised and Accepted: August 2020

ABSTRACT: The last three decades have revealed the primary elements of entrepreneurship, especially for newly-created venture creation processes, throughout various works and heavy emphasis by scholars. An entrepreneur can be viewed as the principal component in entrepreneurship; they are tasked with creating new ventures, which requires cognitive and personality motivations and specific competencies to achieve such aim. Prior scholars investigating the elements of entrepreneurial psychology have succinctly viewed the general process of new venture creation, whereas e-commerce ventures have been disregarded. Furthermore, such works have expended the least efforts on entrepreneurial competencies resulting in e-commerce new venture creations. Accordingly, this study is attempting to bridge such gap and aims to distinguish the role played by personality traits, motivation, and competencies that promote new e-commerce ventures creation in Malaysia. To this end, a case study approach was implemented by which data collection was undertaken via interviews with 12 e-commerce entrepreneurs, which spanned from May 2013 until December 2014. As a result, seven crucial components of personalities were found to impact e-commerce new ventures in Malaysia, such as creativity, risk-taking, inspiration, need for autonomy and freedom, tolerance of ambiguity, hardworking and persistence, and optimism. Entrepreneurs could be driven by internal and external motivations, thus leading the identification of two groups of entrepreneurial motivation with regard to the former in this work, namely: (i) need for achievement, and (ii) interest. In contrast, external motivation was an outcome following correspondence with a conducive climate, such as consumers, family members, and surrounding industries. This resulted in an elevated entrepreneur motivation influencing the overall business success. Furthermore, the findings underlined the substantial contribution of entrepreneurial competencies in terms of computer and communication skills both towards new ventures creation.

KEYWORDS: Entrepreneurship, New Ventures Creation, Psychology, Competencies, E-Commerce.

I. INTRODUCTION

Various topics have been debated in detail so far regarding associated content in entrepreneurship research, which inevitably results in differing schools of thought in defining the concept itself. In particular, Davidsson (2005) has indicated different descriptions of entrepreneurship as a phenomenon according to different scholars. It can be described as a novel entry (Lumpkin & Dress, 1996), establishment of a new undertaking (Low & MacMillan, 1988), the formation of organisations (Gartner, 1988), and the creation process of a valuable and varying commodity (Hisrich & Peters, 1989). However, such definitions place an emphasis on the formation of mint organisations in line with Gartner's (1988) response to the following inquiry: "How does an organisation come into existence?". This revolves around an intricate affair consisting of different elements interacting with each other. Furthermore, prior works on entrepreneurship have primarily pinpointed on the topic of entrepreneur psychology, which is yet another crucial aspect of new venture creation. For example, Shane (2003) has investigated the manner in which individualised dissimilarities can affect an entrepreneur's decision-making process. The scholar further notes the potential impact of individual features (i.e. cognition, motivation, and personality) during decision-making, specifically in terms of unearthing and manipulating entrepreneurial opportunities.

In general, entrepreneurship works have been primarily discussed using the three psychological components of entrepreneurs, namely cognition, motivation, and personality, as well as bridging the current conceptualisations in the theory of economic and sociological outlooks. Modern tendencies underlined by Ahmad Firdause Md Fadzil (2018) have depicted the robust contribution of entrepreneurial qualities towards new ventures creation, such as creativity, risk-taking, inspiration, need for autonomy and freedom, tolerance of ambiguity, hardworking and persistent attitude, and optimism. Meanwhile, a recent study by Amber Waqar (2020) and Mahwish (2020) pointed out individual characteristics such as the need for achievement, locus of control, age, risk-taking propensity, previous experience, and education as the main elements for new social venture creation and the sustainability of entrepreneurial family. Moreover, previous entrepreneur works have highlighted the significance of motivation, with multiple studies substantiating its emerging role as one of the primary components resulting in entrepreneurs taking advantage of different business opportunities (Shane, Locke, & Christopher, 2003). Such notion is favoured by Segal, Borgia, and Schoenfeld (2005), whereby one's attempt at becoming an entrepreneur can be due to their high level of motivation for self-employment (i.e. obtaining side income). Besides, their personality is crucial in order to undertake a prosperous business. Cromie (2000) has specifically underlined the "psychological principal" as the driver pushing an individual towards founding their own business, which is founded upon their hunger for achievement, autonomy, risk-taking, locus of control, creativity, and tolerance of ambiguity.

Recent arguments have suggested the inadequacy of the psychological element alone in undertaking a new venture creation. Communication and computer skills, in particular, have been emphasised as crucial towards being a prosperous entrepreneur (Ahmad Firdause Md Fadzil, Fauzilah Salleh, Mohd Rafi Yaacob, Ahmad Shukri Yazid, & Sallehudin, 2020; Ahmad Firdause Md Fadzil, Mohd Rafi Yaacob, & Muhayiddin, 2017). Both studies have indicated the crucial role played by entrepreneur communication and computer competencies towards establishing new venture creation within the community of e-commerce entrepreneurs in Malaysia. It is noted that works detailing entrepreneurship and new venture creation in e-commerce especially are consistently the most overlooked area. Therefore, the current work is geared towards identifying the role of competencies in the context of new venture creation among Malaysian e-commerce entrepreneurs. In general, Dheeriya (2009) describes e-commerce as any venture undertaken only on the platforms of the internet or the World Wide Web. It differs from its conventional brick-and-mortar counterpart by primarily employing the internet and technology-based computer systems to achieve its goal. Furthermore, Dheeriya (2009) has noted the absence of a formally established theoretical framework on online entrepreneurship as of currently, whereas conventional entrepreneurship is a common scholarly discourse topic. According to Gartner (1985), new ventures creation is a process having a tendency for variety depending on the business type, specifically industry-based or specific entrepreneurship affairs, which impacts the development of new ones. This delineates the importance of an investigation regarding the manner in which entrepreneurial competencies affects newly-developing e-commerce new ventures creation.

Prior works have described entrepreneurship as a component contributing to national economic development (Carree & Thurik, 2005; Wennekers & Thurik, 1999). Such occurrence is influential on market activity and the economic system (Davidsson, 2008), specifically via wealth creation or production of an item of value (Drucker, 1985; Morris, 1998), which ultimately facilitates emerging entrepreneurial activities for products and services (Shane, 2003). Despite entrepreneurship not being viewed as a national resource, the scholarly consensus underlines entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship as the drivers fuelling economic growth.

Today's digital era characterised by highly advanced ICT and telecommunication is rife when the booming activities of e-commerce and similarly correlated businesses. However, e-commerce, in particular, is highly popular due to its various benefits. This fact especially rings true in view of the consistent increments contributed by e-commerce entrepreneurship, concomitantly earning billions of dollars and diminishing the orthodox business chain. As such, it plays a crucial role in the context of global sales revenue growth firms (Dheeriya, 2009). Furthermore, Mr. Azizan Mohd Findi, the General Secretariat of Planning and Coordination Commission, had been interviewed and reported by Sinar Harian on July 30th, 2013, clarifying the manner in which the domestic e-commerce trade amounted to approximately two billion dollars from 2010 until 2011, and further rose to three billion dollars in 2012 (Mohd Firdaus Hashim, 2013). The lack of precise numbers detailing the number of businesses dipped into the e-commerce business in Malaysia notwithstanding, the estimated figure of three billion Ringgit due to the trade in 2012 was stark evidence of the robust mushrooming of new e-commerce business locally.

As entrepreneurship has been noted as the driver of national economic growth (Baron & Shane, 2008; Gartner & Bellamy, 2009) via new businesses, occupation, and innovation establishment, a multitude of scholars has expressed their interest in the challenges of motivation. An example of such challenges includes the reason behind an entrepreneur's decision to initiate a new business, which may not be perceived by others (Townsend,

2010). Such notion may be the primary cause for prior scholarly interest towards comprehending the psychological reasons affecting new ventures creation, as well as entrepreneurial competencies.

II. METHODOLOGY

In this study, 12 accomplished entrepreneurs previously honoured by the Communication Commission (MCMC) 2013 were deliberately chosen as the sample population and subjected to interviews. The samples were highly dissimilar, each with e-commerce businesses and having varying business sectors, genders, locations, and historical background. However, they were united in the commonality of their identification as small and micro enterprises (SMEs), which are characterised as hosting employees not exceeding 30 individuals or logging total sales not exceeding RM30 million annually. Furthermore, the selected informants were highly active in e-commerce business in which they were running their respective full-time businesses, which had been operational for a period of one to six years (i.e. start-up duration). Accordingly, they were scheduled for interview sessions, which were undertaken using semi-structured questions. Every session was audio-recorded and subjected to transcription ad verbatim, whereby their analyses yielded certain tentative categories or themes geared towards answering the study aims (Merriam, 2009).

The initial phases of data analysis resulted in the inductive discovery of tentative themes in reference to the research questions. Following their establishment, a comparative analysis was undertaken using the data collected according to specific categories. In general, an inductive data analysis (i.e. category construction) can be done using several steps; first, open coding is carried out using an excerpt of the interview transcripts and functions to generate the answers to the research questions (Merriam, 2009). Then, the coding is characterised under one group, which is otherwise and theoretically known as axial coding (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Accordingly, thematic establishment can be grouped into three phases, namely open coding, axial coding, and selective coding per the proposal by Corbin and Strauss (2008) in their Grounded Theory. The scholars have suggested that the tentative themes are initiated upon the researcher's start into data analysis using open coding, thereby undertaking a constant examination of the interview transcripts line-by-line and thus distinguishing the resulting themes. Such themes are crucial towards delineating the research questions. Following the interviews, the transcribed content is extensively reviewed, whereby open coding is thus grouped under axial coding: "*coding that comes from a reflection of interpretation and meaning*". Therefore, axial coding can be obtained from multiple open codings having similar meanings and building a specific theme. Finally, the third phase of selective coding refers to the selective coding of the primary categories undertaken by the researcher, which consist of different axial codings and are in support of the aforementioned primary category establishment.

III. FINDINGS

This study yielded results depicting seven themes of entrepreneurial personality as a conceptual process of entrepreneurship. Further information regarding the emerged themes in support of entrepreneurial personality are as follows:

a. Creativity

The first theme of creativity refers to the manner in which entrepreneurs synthesise and apply their novel ideas towards attaining their business goals. In general, this concept is defined using two descriptions according to their comprehension of creativity in e-commerce. First, P1 offers a creative description pertaining to the way of thinking that pioneers amongst others of the field. Therefore, it is necessary for entrepreneurs to be creative in their thoughts and undertake creative actions beyond their counterparts, as business requires creativity and superior ideas rather than following trends and strategies others have employed. A business strategy that they offer should be distinct in order to generate competitiveness against other entrepreneurs. In particular, such difference and distinction refer to product sales in e-commerce, which is a topic that is yet to be conducted by others in the industry. In contrast, the definition offered by P5 describes creativity as the capacity that an entrepreneur has to innovate pre-existing conceptualisations and generate an enhanced product. It specifically delineates advertising creativity, namely via the placement of enticing product photos in order to achieve consumer conviction and causing them to purchase via the platforms implemented. The following excerpts are obtained from P1 and P5:

"The creativity is the idea that no one has created" (P1)

"That's creative; we changed something in another business concept..." (P5)

The first creativity pertains to the components of product marketing via a multitude of e-commerce business platforms in which certain entrepreneurs have suggested creative notions by emphasising on marketing strategies in introducing their products to customers. Their creativity entrepreneurs in e-commerce business can be underlined via photographic placement, digital icon implementation, effective sentence usage, and enticing

price packages and offers via the online advertising platforms utilised. In particular, effectual marketing pitch and excellent advertising approach are highly beneficial for attracting consumer attention to their preferred business platform, thereby yielding high sales. The following excerpts are obtained from P1 and P5;

"The first creative, the way marketing is. The way how to market the goods to customers; how to do, why we have to do it, and for whom we do..."(P1)

"Creativity to create a word, creativity to write sentences, design creativity to be advertised. If the picture is too blur, that is not interesting. Our creativity to make an interactive sentence that people like to read and creativity to play with the icons in Facebook and so on..."(P5)

Next, the second creativity refers to the perception of creativity in terms of product design, which is a particularly competitive aspect in the market. The process of product design necessitates entrepreneurs to show idea creativity in order to generate acceptable products for the consumers. They are required to synthesise ideas according to different information sources and in line with up-to-date consumer demands. As such, entrepreneurs are tasked with readying conventional and cutting-edge designs in order to answer current consumer demands, whereby failure to do this will result in a challenging pursuit of such demands, which consistently shifts per current fashion or design. The following excerpts are obtained from P9 and P2:

"It means we need to lead, to create the right product compare to others. We lead when others are don't think to come out something new. In fashion, it's very fast-changing. Then easily to be imitated. So, I have to think a step forward before someone else starts doing something. So I need always one step ahead "(P9)

"Yeah ... actually, as an entrepreneur, we are like a designer, we have to be creative. Creative is what it means; we are trying to produce a variety of product designs. Although it seems simple, we as an entrepreneur need to generate the idea and sometimes do to make it different. So creative entrepreneurs will lead the business to fulfill customer needs. They're always do something to make it change from others. It's a creative person "(P2)

b. Risk-taking

Risk-taking can be described as an entrepreneur willingness to anticipate and undertake any potential business. In general, e-commerce businesses are subject to various unpredictabilities that are associated with high risk. Therefore, entrepreneur inclination to undertake such risk for their e-commerce businesses can be perceived via their willingness to answer to any uncertainties and their aftermath.

The first risk commonly observed in e-commerce business is cyber-fraud, whereby one attempts to benefit off the weaknesses of sellers and buyers alike. Cybercrime, in particular, has influenced e-commerce business entrepreneurs via trading transactions and buyers are increasingly distrustful due to cyber-scaling improvements, which impacts the industry image as a whole. Both P1 and P10 agree and state the following:

"Online business must have the risk ...Goods received by customers by money did not receive in the transaction ... unlucky if our money lost in the account too" (P1)

"That's right ... business online has its own risk. When we deliver the goods to the customer, they are cheating us. Claim the goods received broken. So they want the money back. If there is no proof, that is the risk for us. Sometimes, products are delivered, but our customers are unsatisfied....so they return. It is our costs..."(P10)

Next, the second risk calling for entrepreneur willingness for risk-taking pertains to goods delivery process to consumers. Those undertaking e-commerce businesses oftentimes must foot any postage services themselves in order to deliver items to the consumers, which is subjected to risks extending beyond their scope of control. Therefore, risk liability oftentimes cited and faced by them includes the loss, damage, and delay of goods delivery to consumers due to postage services, thereby possibly generating either financial or non-financial side-effects to their business. P6 states that:

"Ok, sometimes may happen in terms of delivery, the delivery of goods to customers. Sometimes we have good packing; then when it comes to customers, maybe the box is broken... If it happens, we need to deal with the customer on how to create a win-win situation. The point is when something happens, please do not blame 100% of customers. We try to negotiate with customers how to solve a problem (replace the item), and each party gets the benefits "(P6)

Meanwhile, other correlated risks that entrepreneurs often encounter include challenging product design production designed for attracting consumers according to their demands. If they cannot offer something that

ticks off all of the consumer demands, entrepreneurs may find themselves unable to face losses due to the inability to sell their products in the market. Furthermore, they may perceive the risk of e-commerce business platform loss and closure by their service provider despite not getting any notice, whether due to violated policies or otherwise. Therefore, they must anticipate the risk of loss for the entire business. Besides, e-commerce entrepreneurs must constantly plug their products and not anticipate sudden miracles; such activities will inevitably be costlier and burdening them towards generating sales. Should their promotional investments fail to extensively affect their sales quantities, risk of loss is certainly possible. In fact, high-risk entrepreneurs are the only group that can cushion the impact of such event in order to achieve business sustainability. The following excerpts are obtained from P12, P8, and P5 in order to delineate the aforementioned circumstance:

"Customers, it hard to get our customer satisfaction. So, we know what our customers are interested in. That's hard. Until now, I still fail to understand what is customer needs. Our product sometimes fails; sometimes, it is excellent. To find our customer's needs is hard. So, we need to learn a little bit about the customer's needs. Which one they like and not..."(P12)

"First, Facebook is still not stable. So, we don't need only depending on Facebook, because anytime, Facebook will shut down. It was the most significant risk for online entrepreneurs who solely relied on online. If they are relying on Facebook or others, social media is popularity dropped sharply ... "(P8)

"Ok, we need to dare to take the risk in business, especially in online marketing. Online, we can't wait for our buyers to purchase. The roles of marketing are crucial. But we need to spend a lot on marketing, especially on social media. I paid Facebook close to a thousand dollars. We are not sure whether customers interested to buy or not. But I am brave ... "(P5)

c. Inspiration

The third theme of entrepreneur personality is the inspiration and ambition they show towards advancing the possibilities of e-commerce. A majority of the informants interviewed depicted highly robust motivation towards attaining their aims and goals for business growth in the country. P1, in particular, is highly keen towards delving further into the potential of e-commerce in Malaysia:

"This is a new thing; broadband ... the internet is all those things... I am so curious about something new ... I want to explore all these things" (P1)

In general, inspired entrepreneurs appear as those constantly eager for successful business developments. Several informants underlined their inspiration via specific goals that were to be attained in the future, which were an international market breakthrough, brand amplification, operational augmentation, and market leadership. This element serves as the platform for their advancement towards business success, whereas the lack of motivation for goal accomplishment renders a business unable to thrive, especially in the absence of clear-cut mission and vision. The following excerpts are obtained from P2, P10, and P8 to delineate the aforementioned circumstance:

"I want to see my brand is active with other popular brands in the world...To be a big name. The main goal is to make sure my beauty product to hit the target... I want to sell the product runs 1 million in sales soon... That's my plan ... "(P10)

"In terms of competition... There are so many competitors outside. But we want to win the competition... We want to be first. This means we want to be as the market leader in the industry, especially in online business. So, do it ..." (P2)

"... My goal is to bring our branding to the international stage. It means we don't want only to sell on Facebook but in the megamall boutique. We want to open a boutique in New York and Dubai. So, I have a vision, a goal. So when we have a clear goal, we will not easily give up..." (P8)

d. Need for Autonomy and Freedom

The fourth personality theme is the need for autonomy and freedom, which describes an entrepreneur's thirst for freedom, specifically in terms of career choice components. Their personality is especially novel compared to other individuals upon their decision to initiate new ventures and attaining a range of freedom otherwise unobtainable in other career pathways. Entrepreneurs are individuals who highly appreciate their freedom and the lack of restriction in the context of income generation. In particular, this was displayed by several informants who revealed their non-interest to work in tandem with other people due to non-preference for following specific instructions, which may restrict their creativity, freedom, and particular actions when in action. The

following excerpts are obtained from P12 and P7 to depict the aforementioned circumstance:

"I had experienced were work with others...I worked under someone for six months. From there, I learned how hard to work with someone... I realize I couldn't work under someone else. Whatever the boss says, I need to follow his instruction without my consent... It hard to accepts all it. I cannot work under anyone, and I will try to do my business without always depending on someone else" (P12)

"...I am from an accountant background. I just realized that I'm not interested in working with someone. I don't like to follow people's time. I always prefer someone to follow my time. That's my attitude. So I think that it is not suitable for me to find a job from others. So, starting a business is a good deal. In the beginning, I don't know what types of business to start, but when I realized the potential of e-commerce, I learned more. We read a lot; we learned from experiences peoples. I met them..." (P7)

Accordingly, e-commerce is a superior landscape for those who desire their professional freedom and occupational organisation in line with their flexibility without anyone disrupting or giving instructions. In the business, their jobs are ruled by their organisation and strategies towards achieving their own success. This is stated by P2:

"The freedom in the online business is much broader than in the regular business. It means that we are more flexible in terms of the time we have to work. In terms of business online, we are trading is more freedom. Meaning our store is open 24 hours. We want to update our blog anytime, anywhere, out of place, out of date. Which means we don't have to wait for someone else... So it's free. We can do it in the night, out of office hours. We can connect with customers every day... They can leave messages, so on ... So it's exciting. Something that means we can handle it well. So it does give you more autonomy than a regular business" (P2)

e. Tolerance for ambiguity

The fifth personality theme describes entrepreneur tolerance for ambiguity and their willingness to face variables following their chosen business career. Several informants interviewed confessed their high degree of tolerance for ambiguity and willingness to challenge any business difficulties. In particular, e-commerce businesses are highly vulnerable towards potential circumstances necessitating the owners to show a high degree of tolerance for ambiguity in view of risk, as opposed to other career pathways. This was evident in P12 and P6, both of whom initiated their e-commerce businesses despite the absence of the proper knowledge and background in order to challenge such potential. After their involvement in the business, the elements of self-confidence and courage inevitably rose despite the customer reviews are not always positive:

"I didn't expect that Cala qisya could grow up like this. It was not sure what to do at the beginning of my business. Because I don't have a background in business... But when I do, I enjoy it. People are coming in for a positive response. From there, I feel a little brave. So this is my kind of stuff I don't like to say. It's hard for me to work under anyone. So I think this is a good career for me. I try to fulfill the customer's expectations and the challenges; it never stops coming" (P12)

"I start into this business without ... with basic information. It tried as I could. If we don't try, we don't know what happens. In the beginning, I don't expect something, but once I realize customer feedback is positive. So this thing makes me happy, and then to be main income" (P6)

Entrepreneurs are deemed highly adaptable towards facing any potential business event compared to their counterparts who choose the secure pathway of working with others. Their entrepreneur career calls for them to challenge all possibilities head-on as opposed to colleagues who have a secure income, prospects, and no viable losses. P2's previous work experience in a factory was favourable and offered good income and promotion ladder, but they opted to challenge a business venture, which might not secure a good income in the future. Initially, they underwent recurrent episodes of business failures, but remained steadfast and were continuing their journey for business success:

"Well ... we have to try different fields of business ... I don't want to say my first business was going to be successful...Not always, we succeed ... In business, sometimes we tried 2-3 times to succeed. There is no success without failure...So don't afraid to fail in business ..." (P2)

As a local tertiary institution graduate, P3 describe similar predicaments of choosing to undertake their own venture despite the higher income they might obtain should they work in the private sector instead. Therefore, entrepreneurs must accept the uncertainties of their income and opt to challenge any potential occurrence

regardless. The following excerpt is obtained from P3:

"When we involved in the business, we need to be patient. Because I know when I start a business, I know my income is not very much. Second, everyone says I dare to take action. ... With my degree certificate, I can earn more than RM2000 at that time ... But I decided to do this (business) ... which is no expectation to received high income ..." (P3)

Business uncertainty should not be a justification for entrepreneurs to decline initiating their own ventures or venturing into insecure areas. This notion was due to certain informants having had faced different challenges even though safer and secure options were available. Therefore, they opted to disregard any potential circumstances in order to follow through their personal interests, aspirations, and successes. This is highly impossible should entrepreneurs lack a high degree of tolerance for ambiguities or uncertainties; being one comes with the knowledge of potential challenges occurring in the future.

f. Optimism

Next, the sixth personality theme of optimism refers to an entrepreneur's confidence towards an anticipated result. Here, their confidence in a future result is solid regardless of potential business uncertainties, whereby such high confidence is generated from a positive mindset and thoughts for goal achievements regardless of any challenges. In fact, positive thinking allows entrepreneurs to feel very confident about their future success as they dismiss any pessimistic connotations.

Certain informants revealed their positive attitude following their interview session as they challenged variabilities head-on in order to attain business success. Such positivity bolstered their confidence for progression beyond their peers. In fact, their faith in themselves was the key to P1's consistent achievements and competence in business:

"We need positive thoughts, nothing impossible to do it... We can do it!" (P1)

Entrepreneurs having a positive attitude are generally highly confident when it comes to attempting a new action for a unique goal and do not entertain negative probabilities. Despite any restrictions, they are more resolute; this is underlined by P6 who threw the gauntlet and ventured into e-commerce regardless of the ambiguity of future accomplishments:

"I want to say that if we want to do something, don't overthink it. Just do it. Start from beginning what have..." (P6)

Accordingly, an optimistic entrepreneur should display a positive mindset and bravery during decision-making despite any potential impacts as a result of the anticipated profitability. P9 proved this notion by displaying their optimism in undertaking a venture according to the expected profitability return instead of anticipating any potential possibilities:

"I am determining a person. I do when I decide something ... I do whatever it risky or not. If I decide to do something, no compromise what matters. I will do it right away till success... Just like that" (P9)

Optimistic entrepreneurs are also associated with a high level of stubbornness, which impacts their decision-making processes towards attaining their goals regardless of any challenges. Being highly determined allowed P12 to undertake their own venture and challenge any possibilities:

"I'm kind of stubborn. When we are stubborn, we don't care about obstacles. We will try to overcome those obstacles too" (P12)

Moreover, P11 also displayed similar tenacity as P12, showing their determination for business despite their family members being a particular hurdle initially. Their stubbornness rendered P11 highly optimistic regarding their decisions and goals for future success:

"As I said before, the one I am stubborn. I didn't hear anyone say anything. I mean, my dad's mom. When I first started the business, everyone disagreed with me to take it seriously. My parent disagrees with my decision..." (P11)

g. Hard-working and Persistence

The seventh personality theme of entrepreneurs is hard work and persistence when faced with uncertainties. These elements are the core attributes driving an entrepreneur's tenacity towards goal attainment, especially

during the initial phases. Their absence renders it impossible for them to face such variabilities, which may subsequently demand their willingness to answer all difficulties, especially the marketing-based ones. This is due to marketing demanding for a very high extent of efforts in order to achieve product sales in the market. The following excerpt is obtained from P9, who acknowledged their hard work in order to act despite facing marketing-focused hurdles:

"I was the kind of hard-working person. Someone's who are stubborn to take the risk in business. I will face all challenges especially in marketing" (P9)

In contrast, P2 encountered the theme differently, whereby such hard work was necessary for the production of quality products during the initial phase of the business itself. The criticisms and feedback obtained from consumers had extended their thirst for improved and enhanced product quality, causing them to work late hours. This allowed them to fulfil the consumer demands, ensure the product enhancement was maximised, and deliver their products in a timely manner. In fact, prompt and on-time product manufacturing is highly crucial to prevent inconvenienced parties:

"Well ... Once I do something, I continuously work hard. Regardless of a specific time. I will do my work till to end" (P2)

Besides being a hard-working individual, entrepreneurs must show a high level of persistence when facing the expectations placed on them, particularly during the initial business phases. During such phases, they must be highly persistent to handle all tasks and actions, encompassing marketing, product development, or customer relationships. In general, establishing a new venture is an intricate process and they should not give up in order to achieve success. Per P7, one must not easily give up and should expend consistent efforts:

"We, as an entrepreneur, cannot give up. Some people say we need persistence. So, we need to high effort how to make sure our business is growing" (P7)

In reality, the e-commerce business is less obtainable compared to assumptions in generating a sizeable amount of profit for the entrepreneurs. Its challenges necessitate them to consistently show their persistence, passion, and patience throughout business management. P11 was of the opinion that most entrepreneurs encountered failure as they were impatient following testing and challenges requiring high commitment:

"For online entrepreneurs, first of all, we need to be patient. Then, not to easily give up and higher motivation. Some peoples said online business id easy to generate the profit. But no ... it's challenging..." (P11)

Moreover, the interview sessions yielded various components of motivation, which strongly justified new e-commerce ventures creation in Malaysia. In particular, it is a result of specific elements impacting entrepreneur behaviour. Accordingly, this work classified incremental entrepreneur motivation into the two factors of internal and external stimulation, respectively. Internal stimulation describes the motivation present in an entrepreneur themselves due to their thirst for success and inherent interest impacting their attitude and action to achieve an aim. In contrast, external stimulation emerges from the surrounding landscape, influencing one's behaviour in an entrepreneur-based manner.

h. Need for achievement

The first internal stimulation of the entrepreneur motivation theme depicts one's specific keenness for business success in the future. Such motivation comes from their need for accomplishments, which is further influenced by different pusher factors. This consist of personal background and attractions, or their keenness for profitable income obtained from e-commerce business.

The historical background of an individual is largely significant at sparking their entrepreneurship instincts for success and goal attainment in the future. For example, one whose upbringing in poor circumstances may be more inclined towards entrepreneurial engagement for the purpose of shifting their lifestyle via business opportunities. The interviews conducted indicated several informants with familial challenges prior to their entrepreneurship stint, specifically P1, P2, P5, P7, P9, and P12, who each relayed their want for future successes.

In particular, P1 revealed their inclination for a transformed lifestyle via a business of *kapok* pillow products. Born in an underprivileged family living in a rural area of Kedah, they took over the family venture from 2006 onwards. Their high spirits and ambitious streak allowed P1 to successfully revert the business competition and undertake e-commerce since 2011. Moreover, they noted a high level of self-motivation after perceiving the potential of *kapok* pillows in their home location, which posed the least competition. P1 had designed and

attempted high goals towards shifting the conventional business model to e-commerce:

"first try looking at these areas... the way people do business ... will it go forward? Selling a pillow with a traditional platform? That motivated me to change the current business approach to e-commerce"(P1)

Similar circumstances were encountered by P9, whose poor familial background and desire for success spurred them to successfully become an entrepreneur by undertaking their own venture. They noted that working alongside other individuals was not a guarantee of future success and were keen to learn from another's failure towards shifting his lifestyle. Accordingly, his entrepreneur interest would allow a significant income, whereby P9 stated:

"Since a child, I was interested in doing business. My family comes from the most impoverished background. So I was determined since I was a child to be productive through my own business... I don't want to work with someone else because I know it won't change anything. When I retire, I don't want just to have a proton car. I don't want to be insulted, but I have seen it since I was a child. If you're going to be rich, do business... I remember the wealthiest person in my village... Doing a start-up petrol station business. ". (P9)

The aspiration that P9 had towards becoming a successful entrepreneur paralleled the e-commerce business trends in 2008, which guaranteed good opportunities. Therefore, P9 stated that:

"At that time in 2008 ... The trend was using a blog shop as a business platform. So, I took that opportunity. I know online as a good business. So, I make it. It's not about online business, but it's about good business. I do that. It looks to the new future. "(P9)

P2 was equally cognisant of this notion, revealing their lack of interest to work with other people following familial motivation towards becoming an accomplished entrepreneur. Here, the career choice is driven by familiar pride as opposed to the choice of working alongside other people, which ultimately does not result in shifting life standards. Accordingly, entrepreneurs are afforded the chance to amplify their earnings and elevate their lifestyle, far from their peers choosing otherwise:

"It's a matter of family motivation, my dad, even though my father is a farmer, but he has a spirit of enthusiasm for our siblings. It's no word to work with people, which is our family pride... Greater. Half of the family say working with the government is better than doing business, with business, one is not certain... But for us, government work is just temporary. I have four male siblings; all four of us resigned as government servants" (P2)

Moreover, familial background was the push behind the changes undertaken by P10, P12, and P5 in order to transform their fate and future. They collectively noted the difficulties of change in their lives in the absence of motivation and efforts expended towards initiating a business. Regardless of their background, these informants had always exhibited their keenness and priority in planning for a life transformation. As quoted from P12 regarding this aspect:

"I was raised in a low-income family. It means nothing special with my family, the same as others. My father was a lower-class worker. So I tried changing my life. I want to feel how happy, rich people feel. From there, I become passionate about doing business. From there, I tried my best to grow my business" (P12)

Entrepreneurs are previously described as people equipped with high ambitions for success, especially for their ventures. Besides motivation as a component spurred on by familiar history, one's aim for achievements may be driven by specific attributes attainable via e-commerce business. Such attributes define the aims they attempt to attain, whether financially-based or not. In this study, entrepreneurs are characterised by individuals with lofty aims for business success and whose goals are precise. This can be delineated via interview content from P4, P5, P6, P7, P8 P10, and P11, who revealed specific aims and business success to be attained in the future. However, only P11 and P8 were quoted as the justification and substantiation regarding such context. First, P11 stated their ultimate goal of being the leader for product brandings, whereby they regarded a substantial following on specific business platform as an excellent approach towards achieving this in the local market in the future:

"The thing that motivates me to become number one, I mean, is like my brand, is to be number one amongst the tops, that makes me want to plan. I think that's why I want to be the top brand and I'm famous for it. "(P11)

Similar perception was noted by P8 whose lofty business goals were specific regardless of their familial

disapproval. Besides their e-commerce business success, they were keen on penetrating international markets and expanding their network in Dubai, New York, and London. Such goal drove P8's hard-working tendencies further for these aims:

"The most motivating is the goal that can be achieved.... I want to go international, and I want to open a network up to Dubai, New York, and London. So it's a mission ... So I do not stop till I succeed." (P8)

Self-determination can be viewed as an entrepreneurial foundation towards attaining goals; the lack of a clear-cut goal renders it impossible for their business success while entrepreneurs with such goal are more receptive to business potential. Moreover, their capacity for distinguishing potential business opportunities are reliant upon the information they obtain, which is noted by P10. The informant stated their keenness of being a successful entrepreneur by generating their income via e-commerce business:

"I see that (success) ... because I'm getting the information in the book. I realize the potential to generate a lot of money, being able to enjoy doing business, I read not just one book, but many books. All the business books stories. Who are the rich people we see in the world? Most millionaires in the world or Malaysia, all of those are businessmen ... "(P10)

Moreover, P3 was of the same sentiment and highlighted that scouring information on internet success stories yielded various potential e-commerce businesses, especially the background content on business start-ups by foreign entrepreneurs. They are characterised by identical attributes: during the initial stages, the businesses operate at home and under low costs before amplifying their business reputation slowly. One should note that computer skills and strategic marketing techniques are highly inspirational among fellow entrepreneurs:

"Because I was searching on the internet ... I read I did some research in the US, in the UK, what all of them did business and went through the same process. Starting a business at the house, no need much money, free ... But they used the internet for marketing..." (P3)

E-commerce business and its potentials are limitless towards generating money and those sufficiently brave to grab such opportunity and delve deeper will yield a higher competitive edge due to business advantages. E-commerce is an excellent source of income, which is revealed by P10. Their experience committing to the expensive city lifestyle spurred their e-commerce business initiation so as to easily generate income and foot the costs:

"It can give a better income. Living in the city is very expensive, and we might fail to deal with the commitments of surviving here...So how? How can we make sure that we have an income every month to pay our commitments? So I see that e-commerce is potential, and that motivated me to do so. I'm interested in online business; I see the potential of being very easy with the knowledge ... make money via online business"(P10)

The attribute of excellent income generation via e-commerce is rooted in the potential unlimited product dispensing and sales at specific locations while larger market coverage is also allowed. Entrepreneurs equipped with wider market penetration will achieve higher product sales, which is noted by P7 and P4. They stated that limitless e-commerce business (sales volume), as opposed to conventional forms, was the result of a highly penetrative market. According to P7:

"Online marketing is unlimited. If you sell a burger a day for at least 100 pieces, tomorrow 150 pieces, after that 120 pieces ... this is an average quantity...but if you sell online, the income is unlimited ... It's fun doing online business... we have no average. unlimited quantity of selling"(P7)

As a result, income generation renders entrepreneurs to attempt for sizeable business profits via product sales in domestic and global markets alike. Large business profits may be attained by them placing an importance on the marketing aspect and undertaking product introductions seriously. Accordingly, P1 and P5 revealed their initial approach e-commerce business established was the by-product of marketing product wishes and sizeable income generation. Such business allows higher income following a limitless market extension, whereby P1 notes the following:

"As I said before, start from marketing ... emphasize on marketing. So we introduce our goods, customers are out there "(P1)

"To succeed, we need to sell our goods. So if we do not sell our goods, how can we get profit? The way of

marketing... which is the way of our product is marketed (online) ... "(P1)

Today, marketing trajectories in e-commerce is a highly effectual route in which entrepreneurs must go for opportunities in order to sustainably grow. In particular, business success is easily assessed per the assumption of a larger market penetration resulting in higher sales quantities. Therefore, various e-commerce marketing techniques are complimentary with general marketing tools in the context of consumer introduction and enticement for product purchases, as stated by P2:

"It's about business success; we need to go through an online platform. This online business is one of the latest marketing techniques nowadays, so if you want to be successful today, the online store is more comfortable to succeed. It's easy for us to sell our products if we have an online business ... "(P2)

Entrepreneurial business successes are commonly assessed via product sales quantity in the market; those aiming for such goal must emphasise on their marketing aspects and undertake product introductions accordingly. A sizeable income can be generated according to the number of products purchased via market penetration, thereby spurring entrepreneurs to grab such opportunity and initiate their e-commerce business. By exploring new market opportunities, more profits can be obtained. Therefore, P1 was confident in their ability to run a business and extend their products globally via e-commerce business:

"So if we want to expand our market. We can't only depend on the existing market. We need to improve ourselves by having a good marketing plan. Emphasize on marketing first. So, that why marketing is important to entrepreneurs "(P1)

"If you do not do online business, the product market spread is lesser. So we need to introduce our product. It's essential to be marketed. So the current situation in this era need everyone uses online to good move "(P1)

Accordingly, P12 agreed and noted the opportunities for marketing products via e-commerce business for more profits. Currently, entrepreneurs are very reliant on such businesses in order to gain more profits as opposed to conventional business as e-commerce is a platform for product marketing throughout the country. Extending their product market renders e-commerce business the correct decision for enticing far-located consumers, whereby entrepreneurs link with such consumers via the internet. P12 stated that:

"As I said, we want to market our brand, our products; we use online. It means if we are not using online, how do we get buyers from all over in Malaysia? From there, we can see online is very important. It means we use it online as well. We know online; we understand how buyers use online to buy our goods. We can generate more revenue "(P12)

i. Interest

The second sub-theme of entrepreneur interest greatly impacted new e-commerce ventures in Malaysia. In particular, interest is the intrinsic factor driving the entrepreneurial motivation for initiating new ventures, as well as to succeed. However, interest and need for achievement can be distinguished by motive: interest is gained from one's predisposition or wants for something meeting their internal requirements without any motives. Meanwhile, the need for achievement is spurred by motives such as life transformation and wanting to be a rice person, thereby impacting individual behaviour. Hence, one's interest for anything may spur e-commerce new ventures in Malaysia.

The current work indicated that seven out of twelve informants attributed their interest and motivation towards new e-commerce venture creation in Malaysia. Such interest can be classified into the two attributes of business and information technology, both of which are crucial in combination for new e-commerce ventures.

Meanwhile, interest in business is fundamentally crucial in motivating one's ambition as an entrepreneur and venturing into new businesses. It facilitates the behavioural intention for something despite lacking a motive, which is correlated with historical background spurring such behaviour. This was seen in P1, whose interest was due to self-disclosure of businesses acquired following their time spent aiding their small-scale family businesses. Similar to this, P3 had a special interest in the field from a young age. Their hard-working attitude was particularly advantageous for initiating new ventures as consistent developed currently. P1 and P3 stated their opinions accordingly as such:

"Business knowledge is original because of an interest ... When you are interested in business, it comes too ... Because I was born, my mom was already involved in a small business ... she was selling a variety of goodies such as cakes"(P1)

"I like doing business; I always think about business matters. I'm workaholic. I work as hard as I could ... So if I was doing business, the more money I can get ... So, I do business "(P3)

In contrast, P11 differed slightly following his interest in business after undertaking a tourism and marketing degree; their knowledge of marketing spurred their business interest, which was exploited accordingly after graduating:

"So, Alhamdulillah, that tourism courses are a lot of marketing study... After that, I know what I'm interested in ... after my graduation. That's time I know my interests in doing business. "(P11)

Moreover, interest widened the opportunities for P11 and P8, working consistently until their business prevailed. The lack of interest renders it impossible for one to be an entrepreneur and handle challenging businesses. As such, business interest teaches one consistency and perseverance despite huge losses. P11 and P8 said the following:

"I have an interest in the business, but I do not know. Because at the beginning I don't think serious when doing business... When I give up, I will stop doing business ... But everything changed when I was involved with hijab stuff... I never want to stop doing business". (P11)

"Both... passion ... deep interest. But some people may not see them as necessary, but for me, passion and interest have caused me to become despair quickly. My losses were not RM50 or RM100 ... But hundreds of thousands. I stay on making t-shirts and not to do anything else "(P8)

P7's scrutiny in e-commerce business was spurred by the potential of earning more, whereby their extensive time spent on online gaming opened the avenue for different influential activities, such as e-commerce business. Such mindset change spurred their interest in e-commerce and resulted in business success:

"One, the main point is in deep interest. We are interested in doing online business because it can give a good income... So, from there, I think we could get easy money from online business... So, the main point is to be interested in business "(P7)

Beyond business interest, entrepreneurs are associated with a high curiosity in information technology (IT) as the foundation of an e-commerce business. Those with such interest are highly receptive to e-commerce business due to the close relationship assumed between the two attributes. In contrast, entrepreneurs less interested in IT show less tendency e-commerce business as it is highly demanding and requires heavy computer usage:

"Interest in IT.... If we are not interested in IT or computers, we can't do it online. Better to go offline ... conventional business. There are people like that "(P9)

This was agreed by P10, who was interested in computers and found the use when handling his business: they could obtain much more revenue. As quoted by P10:

"But I'm interested in computers; I'm impressed with the internet... My father was angry with me because I forgot to eat and to do prayers. He disconnected the internet at home... I did not lose hope ... So I went to the cyber cafe, from morning to night "(P10)

j. External stimulation

The third sub-theme of external motivation triggers an entrepreneur's extrinsic motivation. In contrast to internal motivation's need for achievement and interest, external motivation is spurred by attributes influencing decisions and actions. The interview outcomes revealed external factors that impacted entrepreneur motivation in the process of creating ventures; their absence made it hard to amplify the business spirit. P12 stated that his consumer feedbacks for products pushed him for business success, whereby continuous consumer flow allowed them a creative product design towards fulfilling consumer expectation following their consistent support for product offerings. Such consumers who are highly interested in sale products and their existence is evidence of business support, thus driving P12's decision for the next step without being bogged by market demand-related concerns. According to P12:

"The main reason is the strong support from my regular customers who are always demanding new products from Cala qisya. From there, I was motivated to continue my business"(P12)

"When we've created an attractive product, and we market it, we've got buyers, so our customers never stop purchasing. They need to know what is the new product line, and this makes them eager and waiting... From there, we can proceed with our business. We feed our customers with information on our new items as well as update them with the current trend "(P12)

Furthermore, consumer support for products is yet another criterion serving as an external stimulus for the entrepreneurs, apart from being internally motivated. Interview sessions with the entrepreneurs revealed this as a trigger for their motivation in overcoming the existing business market gap. In the case of P2, they attempted extending the footprint of traditional crafts, which was nearly defunct due to the non-interest of present-time youth. Currently, active entrepreneurs are non-productive and less driven in the context of product manufacturing in today's market. Therefore, such chasm should be considered towards enhancing the traditional crafts industry in tandem with the general population's expectations of the younger people:

"An example (of moral support) comes from customers who want us to continue this business because the current generation seems to be able to it ... Most are old businessmen, so customers had to wait a long time for parang making ... So we tried to solve the gap. We would try to fulfill customers' orders within 1-2 months... So we try to reach our target. Every order will be no more than two months ... Customer will then receive the items ordered"(P2)

The current climate of the traditional craft industry is highly troubling due to middlemen monopoly over the market price. This impacts traditional craft entrepreneurs, specifically in terms of the ensuing difficulties and delayed order completion beyond the negotiated deadline. This form of oppression against such entrepreneurs drove P2 towards besting such gap, whereby a viable resolution is changing the strategy via e-commerce in order to eliminate the monopoly and market the products directly. Per P2:

"Kelantan has a lot of artisans ... but all of them are poor... Why? The main reason is the role of middlemen... The middlemen mainly control the market price. Customers would contact the middlemen to order the products ... As an entrepreneur, I don't like what is happening, why the middlemen are playing too much in this industry "(P2)

Similarly, the extent of entrepreneurial motivation is not merely depending upon internal motivation; it shows a reliance on external motivation as well, which is where the interactions and support system obtained from close individuals can improve the productivity. Herein, the circle of supportive individuals around an entrepreneur may impact their motivation and influence their business actions. Different acts such as personal aid, advice, prompting, and information distribution drive their goals towards an accomplished business. In line with the situations encountered by P4 and P10, they noted the support obtained from their family members during problem-solving durations in business:

"In terms of friends, surrounding people ... or my family, especially – they always push me to change in life and give me money to run the business start-up "(P4)

"But the wife is ... she always motivates me to succeed in business. So the motivation comes back. When it comes back, and I will be stronger to face any business challenges... "(P10)

In this study, a majority of the informants reached a consensus regarding the significant contribution made by communication skills towards successfully undertaking the creation of their new venture in e-commerce. This element is particularly crucial when an entrepreneur is establishing their trade, specifically during sales generation. Their capacity for proper communication is very advantageous in attracting consumers to purchase a product. In enticing the consumers, an entrepreneur must possess the fundamental communication skills, such as appropriate language usage in emails or social media chat sites, as their effectual usage can sway consumers to make positive purchasing decisions. In terms of P2, the informant was noted to display better communication skills in comparison with their employees when convincing the consumers regarding their products:

"Maybe it is the way we interact with the customers. It makes a difference when we can explain well. How good we are when we are communicating with our customers..." (P2)

Therefore, entrepreneurs should always make use of the correct word selection during communication with consumers, which will ascertain their satisfaction during the transactional processes. In particular, P2

consistently ensured they extended respect to the consumers, social standing notwithstanding, as well as excellently negotiating with them for price reductions, product quality, and additional demands.

“When we contact our customers via emails, we use proper words. We do not use any short forms. Customers are valuable. We do not know the age of the customers who email us. They might be professionals, like doctors. We could never know. All we know is their names, not their status. Thus, we must use the standard form while communicating with them to show our respect.” (P2)

Similarly, P3 agreed with such notion and recommended fellow entrepreneurs to comprehend internet marketing in detail in order to entice potential consumers and product purchase. Undoubtedly so, communication skills are equally important components of marketing strategies.

“We need to talk wisely; [we] must have high communication skills to convince the customers to attract them... We must learn about internet marketing. It will not cost anything, only a good time spent” (P3)

The aforementioned ability to undertake excellent communication well with the consumers is one not all are blessed with. Accordingly, this renders them highly and consistently approachable for the consumers.

“As an entrepreneur, I always improve my communication skills. Entrepreneurs need to be friendly at all time... Very friendly; customers are always right...” (P3)

She would always ensure excellent communication with the consumers to ascertain their satisfaction with the services rendered. Gaining their trust requires the ability to communicate properly, particularly during negotiations of product pricing and quality. Therefore, each entrepreneur must understand how crucial it is for them to ensure their consumers perceive the feelings of importance, value, and appreciation.

“We cannot be timid... We should not be shy, and when we talk to the clients, we want our customers to feel fun shopping at our store. They come here to buy goods... Door gift that they have to buy (for a wedding) ... How can we be sure that they will buy those things here and not next door (other shops)? The key is to have a good communication skill...” (P3)

Such particular answering pattern was highly prevalent among the informants. P8 stated that e-commerce entrepreneurs should display excellent communication skills during consumer interactions, as their relationship will only be strongly built in the presence of excellent communication throughout the transaction. However, a less formal and friend-like atmosphere is the best kind of communication between a seller and consumer. Nevertheless, sellers should always communicate accordingly, especially in the case of consumers of the opposite gender.

“For online business (communication skills), the relationship isn’t fixed. The customers come to our store; we greet and entertain them formally... No, it is more to the informal type of relationship. We treat them like friends, not customers. We use informal language with them but still respect them. Address them politely; call them, sir.” (P8)

Communication skills are something entrepreneurs can achieve as one can simply learn it. Regardless, a good communicator requires them to behave naturally and not put up a pretence, which will reassure consumers of the seller’s trustworthiness in business and indirectly entice them to purchase. Therefore, excellent communication skills are undoubtedly a crucial marketing tool for the purpose of enticing and recruiting consumers.

“It is straightforward, just be our self... The way we talk shows who we are, so do not act wrongly. We need to be friendly when we are dealing with our customers...” (P8)

Furthermore, another component contributing to an accomplished new venture creation by e-commerce entrepreneurs is the presence of computer-based skills. P2 revealed that their computer competencies were due to previous work experience in a factory, which had required handling the MS-DOS computer operating system. Following this, such background was immensely useful when delving into their online business.

“Because during my previous work in a factory, we have always used computer software even without internet access... we started to use the computers since MS-DOS time; we know that already...” (P2)

Their e-commerce venture was initiated in 2008/2009 and took up approximately four years before a brand-new brick-and-mortar shop was opened due to recognition of the business opportunities. At the time, the internet was

slowly on the rise. Therefore, computer skills are undoubtedly an advantageous edge for Malaysian entrepreneurs when establishing their trades. Those capable of excellent computer usage are generally highly recognised in the business, as opposed to those lacking it.

"I realized the opportunity since I am used to working with computers since the monochrome operating system era. So I was one step ahead of other people. I used the computers when others knew nothing about it..." (P2)

According to P8, possession of fundamental computer skills was highly important upon one's initiation of new venture creation in e-commerce. In fact, those who kick-start their trade via Facebook as the primary platform will be required to build a fan page, which serves as the medium of interaction with consumers. Accordingly, computer literacy is helpful in developing Facebook as a medium for finding targeted consumers.

"In online business, we usually need the skill to create a fan page (Facebook), where we need to go through a "trial and error" process to get it done. In doing business online, we need skills on how to close a sale. In other words, how to keep our customers coming back for more. That is the real challenge..." (P8)

IV. DISCUSSION

Based on the current work, entrepreneur personality was clearly demonstrated to heavily affect the process of new e-commerce ventures creation in the context of Malaysia. In particular, its seven elements, namely creativity, risk-taking, inspiration, need for autonomy and freedom, tolerance of ambiguity, hardworking and persistence, and optimism are the core elements in influencing e-commerce new ventures.

Furthermore, entrepreneur motivation and competencies can greatly impact such process as well, whereby the need for achievement or one's thirst for accomplishment is an extremely driven component influencing the process of e-commerce new venture creation. Similarly, entrepreneurs looking to attain success may benefit from a high level of motivation, which is dependent on specific stimulations. This study found two main elements underlying the need for achievement or desire to succeed, which stimulated the entrepreneurial motivation for the creation of new ventures. These two elements are shaped by push factors (e.g. personal background) and pull factors, wherein an entrepreneur's desire for high income will spur on their want for success.

In particular, the personal background is very influential towards the creation of an e-commerce start-up business, such as in the case of entrepreneurs who come from impoverished families. Their upbringing generally motivates them towards transforming their lifestyle and becoming highly accomplished in the future. Thus, attaining a better life may be pursued only by undertaking business opportunities instead of working with others as the income one can earn via business is limitless. In contrast, a contracted individual will earn a static amount, which will not significantly increase. Hence, changing one's life requires them to grasp opportunities of e-commerce venture creation, which bodes limitless income. Meanwhile, the second component is one's keenness for high-income earnings due to business involvement. Here, e-commerce allocates budding entrepreneurs with various benefits, especially in the case of product marketing factors, which are noted to be highly disseminated worldwide. Those highly ambitious in business should undertake such opportunity and start-up e-commerce ventures offering more products and services in the local market. Accordingly, a high and wide-ranging level of market penetration can influence the product sales quantity and thus result in more earnings.

This research revealed interest as one of the essential components resulting in entrepreneurial action for e-commerce new ventures establishment. It can impact one's decision and action in line with a specific tendency. In this work, the informants were entrepreneurs who undertook e-commerce new ventures following their great interest in business, according to the elements of historical background, motive, and more. Besides, they expressed their curiosity in IT-based elements such as computer, the internet, and others, which are inevitably the important effects of starting the new ventures.

In general, external motivation was one of the components impacting entrepreneurial motivation and action to initiate new ventures creation. Its high levels following interactions with the surrounding ecosystem make entrepreneurs feel confident in their decision-making processes. Such interactions with the consumers, family members, and industry players alike can enhance the motivation and guarantee their business accomplishment in the future in contrast with those surrounded negatively.

One's entrepreneurial skills can be influenced by the two crucial elements of prior experience with computer usage and personal communication skills, which will highly impact their personal judgment and decision for new venture creation. This study's findings revealed clear-cut outcomes linking entrepreneurial competencies and entrepreneurial personal communication and computer skills. They are highly advantageous in initiating a new venture creation in e-commerce. First, a computer is considered the primary tool employed in an e-

commerce business, necessitating entrepreneurs to wield specialised skills for exploring the internet. Such skills are crucial in e-commerce platform creation (e.g. blogs, Facebook, and website) and undertaking marketing during the initial phase. Meanwhile, personal communication is another crucial element determining the level of success for e-commerce new venture creation in e-commerce as entrepreneurs should display a specific skill set when interacting with the consumers. In particular, they should creatively and tactfully utilise the correct words during communication to entice positive decision and eventual purchase. Figure 1 displays a framework for entrepreneurial motivation and competencies, which is especially crucial for the initial e-commerce new venture creation.

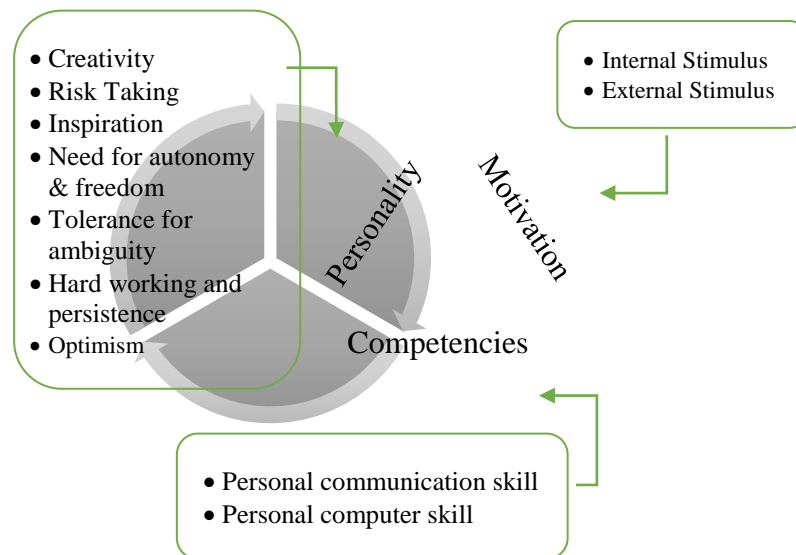


Figure 1: Entrepreneur’s personality traits, entrepreneurial motivation, and competencies contributing to e-commerce new venture creation in Malaysia.

Figure 1 above reveals that the first component of entrepreneur personality can be correlated to creativity in online marketing strategies via social media, some examples being Facebook, blogs, and YouTube, among others. In particular, entrepreneurs should display a high level of creativity when designing their marketing strategies, rather than merely expecting the consumers to approach them despite the lack of any actions to entice their interest. Accordingly, entrepreneurial creativity in designing effective marketing strategies include the introduction of online promotions, showcasing eye-catching visuals, and implementing catchy texts. On top of this, e-commerce itself is founded upon virtual communication via delivery formats such as effective writing and appropriate visuals insertion, as opposed to verbal communication. In fact, creativity in e-commerce is a conceptualisation necessitating a high level of entrepreneur interaction on computers and the internet due to their role as the primary landscape for business. Hence, it can emerge upon the successful integration of various applications whether online or in a computer, which consequently catalyses the process of product marketing. As a result, entrepreneurs should exercise creativity as much as possible when drawing up their business strategies and incorporating online technologies in order to entice potential consumers.

Secondly, entrepreneur personality includes the component of willingness for taking risks in business that one initiates. Due to the novelty of e-commerce in Malaysia at present, entrepreneurs should anticipate the act of absorbing and facing any and all possibilities either within or beyond their anticipation, especially in the context of payment process during a business transaction. In this case, they should expect an issue to arise when transacting with deceitful consumers attempting to exploit e-commerce weaknesses. Moreover, they may be required to constantly absorb the losses due to the non-received of payment via electronic payment as the payment avenue despite the successful delivery of goods. Besides, the risks of item damage during postage or delayed delivery beyond the promised timeline are always evident, necessitating product replacement to regain consumer trust. Other than payment and delivery issues, investment risk of return is yet another risk an entrepreneur must anticipate, such as in the case of their engagement with online marketing (e.g. Facebook or Google ads) that does not reflect in sales. In contrast to conventional business, e-commerce business comes with less complicated risks, an example being their willingness to bear the high risks of intricate transactional processes due to indirect seller-consumer relationships. Accordingly, these challenges are linked with high entrepreneurial risks and demands for preparedness for any possibility.

Next, the third entrepreneurial personality can be correlated with their inspiration, namely the anticipated

potential of e-commerce. In general, a majority of entrepreneurs are cognisant of such possibility that the domestic e-commerce climate offers, especially for a global product marketing reach. Therefore, they would undertake an aspiring new business with a highly competitive mindset in the context of e-commerce business opportunities in Malaysia. Furthermore, some had already established business goals spanning from global product reach via e-commerce to a consistent and swift growth through new branches established shortly. Such acts are highly shaped by expanding businesses potentially as a result of wide markets via e-commerce as a platform. Moreover, the extent of consumer access is highly influenced by internet facilities and lifestyle transformation, rendering e-commerce purchase extremely robust in the country. Therefore, such business potentials should be exploited accordingly as both components will allow the expansion of their market share in the future.

Then, the fourth entrepreneurial personality links to the need for autonomy and freedom, namely their keenness for independent career and zero employer control. In this case, being self-employed and not controlled by an employer allows one to be fully satisfied with their trajectory and enjoy limitless income generated as an entrepreneur. In general, they can earn up to two-fold via product sales done through e-commerce, as well as exercise their personal flexibility when attending to daily tasks without normal working hours limiting them. This is due to the elements of time and commitment being fluid and not restricted to specific limitations, whereby prospective consumers may opt to engage with the entrepreneur throughout 24 hours at any time via email or social media.

Meanwhile, the fifth element of entrepreneur personality refers to the tolerance of ambiguity, which describes an entrepreneur's willingness to embrace the uncertainties prevalent in businesses. The novelty of e-commerce business in Malaysia thus requires entrepreneurs to anticipate and face any incoming variabilities, especially in a climate of limited knowledge. Regardless of its wide-ranging prospectives of market opportunities, this is not a definite promise of success and different e-commerce approaches must be learned in view of different risks that may manifest. Therefore, the informants in this study expressed their multiple prior failures in business, especially after letting go of their previous careers and relatively high income per their education level. This serves as evidence of their inherently high level of tolerance for ambiguity upon their decision to be an entrepreneur, whereby they opt for a dramatic decision full of vagueness that will come in the process of becoming a successful entrepreneur.

Then, hard-working and persistence are yet another crucial component of entrepreneurial personality that shapes the drive for attaining success in new venture creation. The lack of it may cause entrepreneurs some difficulties in facing challenges in such environment, as this underlying element demands their persistence, particularly in terms of product marketing and development purposes. Furthermore, persistence is highly crucial in ensuring effectual marketing strategies and selling the best products in the market. Therefore, all efforts should be poured into marketing items that are yet to be distinguished by consumers. This is a highly challenging goal among others as the initial stages of business development requires consumer demand to be built or otherwise face losses due to unsold products. Besides, entrepreneurs must be on the grind for product manufacturing and dismiss time spent in order to reassure on-time product delivery to consumers.

Entrepreneurs are highly associated with persistence in order to fulfil risk expectations, particularly during the initial stages of business development. At this point, they should be very patient and handle the different components of marketing, product development, or consumer relationships accordingly. Building a new business is a challenging process and they should not give up in order to achieve success. Regardless of its ability to generate high profit, e-commerce is tough to be handled and its challenges demand entrepreneurs to be persistent, eager, and patient during the process.

Finally, the entrepreneurial personality of optimistic refers to one's confidence level towards the future anticipated outcome for a business. Entrepreneurs should remain optimistic of the future anticipations regardless of any uncertainties they may face. The study informants revealed their highly confident nature and courageous mindset in decision-making despite any uncertainty, which were due to an inherent positive attitude and high level of stubbornness. Positive-minded people can moderately absorb any business uncertainties while those who are stubborn are highly courageous when making decisions. These attitudes will influence their opportunistic mindset in exploiting e-commerce and its great future potential. Thus, it is unsurprising that entrepreneurs remain courageous and moderate in order to meet any difficulties, which are due to their optimism of future achievements.

Beyond this, this work highlights the role played by motivation, which is established from the two primary components linked to e-commerce new venture creation in Malaysia. First, the internal stimulus is a component with two crucial attributes, namely: (i) need for achievement, and (ii) interest. One who has spent their childhood in a poor environment will be highly exposed to entrepreneurship in order to make life transformation via business opportunities, whereby their prior experience will drive their goal of being a successful

entrepreneur. Some have noted the lack of promise for life changes if they remain working with others and are highly interested in entrepreneurship due to the possibility of lucrative income. Then, the element of wanting substantial income due to business involvement is another attribute, which is satisfied by e-commerce. This is due to the platform rife with opportunities offered by e-commerce for entrepreneurs, particularly in the context of product marketing aspects, whereby products can be distributed sold everywhere worldwide. Those desiring for business success will thus need to exploit the opportunity and undertake an e-commerce venture, as it guarantees wide-ranging product marketability and allows larger market penetration. This will undoubtedly improve sales and yield lucrative income for them. Besides, entrepreneurial interest can greatly impact new e-commerce ventures in Malaysia, whereby interest itself is an internal stimulus shaping the entrepreneurial motivation for establishing new ventures and succeeding alike. The informants in this study underlined their interest in the context of business and information technology, whereby both types of interest when combined are crucial in e-commerce ventures and highly required.

The second component is external motivation in which external elements drives one's entrepreneurial motivation. This study showed that it is shaped by three core elements, namely family, consumer support, and situational factors, which will influence business success. Those who have fully supporting individuals around them will impact their motivation and action in business; personal support, advice, inspiration, and information will collectively drive an entrepreneur's likelihood for success. Furthermore, consistent consumer support for existing products may be viewed as another element driving the external stimulus for the production of different products in the future. Currently, the industry is under the market monopoly of middlemen, who then shape the market prices. In particular, this impacts traditional craft entrepreneurs due to their consistent oppression, thereby offering the solution of strategic transformation and implementing e-commerce in order to market products and remove any links to such middlemen.

Figure 1 depicts the entrepreneurial competencies established from the two primary components linked to an accomplished e-commerce new venture creation in Malaysia. First, communication or personal skills is a component referring to communication with consumers during a transaction, while the second component of entrepreneur computer skills links to their computer usage to establish the platform, undertake online marketing, and delving into new things.

In particular, personal communication skills is a very crucial component towards new e-commerce business in Malaysia as it affords entrepreneurs with an edge in enticing a consumer purchase. A close seller-buyer relationship can be established via good communication as the consumers will trust their seller. Specific skills and techniques are undoubtedly required when handling consumers, especially when explaining the options of products available. In contrast, brick-and-mortar businesses do not need these skills due to the lack of direct communication in e-commerce. The latter involves non-verbal communication primarily that occurs online usually either via emails, social chat rooms, or newsletters. Thus, entrepreneurs must be capable of writing and expressing themselves excellently and rhetorically to ensure consumer happiness and satisfaction. Effectual writing will undoubtedly play a part in gaining consumer trust and generating large profits.

In addition, entrepreneur computer skills are one of the influential elements contributing to a successful new venture creation by e-commerce entrepreneurs in Malaysia. Here, the informants' past work experience with computers was highly useful in establishing the business, while their knowledge of the equipment furthered their skills in delving into the internet and creating new platforms for business expansion, such as blogs, websites, and social media. Those with such skills are generally ahead of their peers due to their capacity in handling such technological element.

V. LIMITATION OF STUDY

This study was completed using interview-based methods, purposive sampling, and the snowball approach in which 12 e-commerce entrepreneurs were identified and sampled via MCMC 2012. Therefore, the small sample selection is a study limitation due to case study-based sample size selection has a tendency towards making the study inappropriate for adaptation for different locations and samples. In fact, Davidsson (2008, pp. 54-56) has argued that the studies on entrepreneurial processes are hindered by several issues, such as limited information availability. Entrepreneurship research demands a longitudinal study encompassing the lengthy process of data collection spanning from idea conception up until venture establishment. Similarly, the time taken for a new venture creation to occur is different. Hence, the use of cross-sectional data collection techniques in this work is applicable only after a new venture establishment, whereby the researcher is not attached to the initial stages of business set-up. Refer to Bryman and Bell (2011), "generalisation" is an issue of less importance in qualitative research due to the design's heavier emphasis on in-depth analysis. Therefore, this work is not a representation of the whole e-commerce entrepreneur population in Malaysia; it is merely an exploratory effort to study the manner in which the occurrence happens. This is reflected in the emphasis on details and information obtained by interviews.

VI. CONCLUSION

To conclude, the seven elements of personalities such as creativity, risk-taking, inspiration, need for autonomy and freedom, tolerance of ambiguity, hardworking and persistence, and optimistic are described as the qualities required by an entrepreneur in determining their involvement in e-commerce entrepreneurship in Malaysia.

First, entrepreneurial motivation is linked to internal stimulus made up of the two crucial elements of: (i) need for achievement, and (ii) interest. In particular, the need for achievement is further shaped by the elements of push factors (e.g. personal background) and pull factors, thereby sparking their keenness for lucrative income and success. Meanwhile, the element of interest is highly essential and triggers the actions behind establishing e-commerce new ventures in Malaysia. In terms of this work, starting up an e-commerce new venture is influenced by one's high interest in business and information technology (e.g. computers, the internet, and others) amongst others. In contrast, the external motivation also impacts is entrepreneurial motivation and action when establishing new ventures, as its high level is due to entrepreneurs' interaction and encounters with a conducive environment, such as consumers, family members, and industry. This boosts their motivation and leads towards future business success, in contrast to those stuck in a negative environment.

Besides, excellent communication skills can heavily impact consumer trust and confidence in a seller prior to their product purchase decisions. Therefore, e-commerce business demands an entrepreneur to understand the role of effectual communication via indirect methods. Furthermore, the situational business environment necessitates e-commerce entrepreneurs to emphasise on attracting potential consumers of varying locations via different platforms, such as blogs, websites, or social chat rooms. Failure of properly communication with consumers will render them struggling with sales and management as consumers will not trust them. Meanwhile, entrepreneur computer skills are yet another crucial tool in e-commerce business as an entrepreneur must be capable of using computers. They must know set up and maintain their online platforms adequately due to their importance in the process of e-commerce business establishment.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Ministry of Education Malaysia financially supported this work under the Fundamental Research Grant Scheme (FRGS) no. FRGS/1/2018/SS03/UNISZA/02/3. The authors are thankful to Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin.

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