

ABSTRACT

Unfolding Context and Conditions of Biotechnology Women Entrepreneurs

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In yester years, Malaysian women venturing into business are rare but their numbers are growing. Malaysian cultures do not prevent women to involve in business and the government also strongly encourages women to be active in business by offering programs to improve their entrepreneurial skills. In Malaysian context, even though there are several successful women entrepreneurs who became role models for younger women entrepreneurs, their number is radically small in particular in biotechnology industry. Unlike the typical food and beverages, cleaning services, real estates, technology-related sectors in Malaysia are still new for women entrepreneurs. Managing a business is not easy for men, and for women entrepreneurs they experience tougher obstacles as they also carry the role of caretakers to their family. The involvement of women in biotechnology is still new and questions relating to their intentions involving in a male dominant sector are worth investigating. This study aimed to unfold women entrepreneurs' conditions and context surrounding their participations in biotechnology business based on two case studies of biotechnology women entrepreneurs in Johor. Using qualitative research strategy, two in-depth interviews were done and the thematic analysis highlighted several striking insights which reflect the current conditions and context of these women are experiencing. This paper focuses on two significant themes which are the power struggle of women entrepreneurs in making business decision making and the inexistence of mentor to assist and build up the confidence, resulting in money spent unwisely. These themes are contextually situated in one woman entrepreneur who if not properly dealt with will lead to further conflicts between her roles of being an entrepreneur and a caretaker of the family as well as imposing future risks to the business.

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