

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ENTREPRENEURIAL PASSION AND
ENTREPRENEURIAL BEHAVIOURAL ENGAGEMENT WITH MEDIATING
AFFECT OF ACHIEVEMENT GOALS

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the
requirements for the award of the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy (Management)

Faculty of Management
Universiti Teknologi Malaysia

OCTOBER 2014

To my beloved father and mother whom did not degree
their prayers and blessings to me ever

To my dear wife, my son whom filled my life with joy and happiness,
and supported me all-through my journey

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In the name of Allah, the most beneficent, potent and most merciful. Praise be to Allah, the lord of the worlds, and his prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), his family and his companion. First of all I wish to express my gratitude and deep appreciation to Almighty Allah, who made this study possible and successful.

This study would not be accomplished unless the honest espousal that was extended from several sources for which I would like to express my sincere thankfulness and gratitude. Yet, there were significant contributors for my attained success and I cannot forget their input, especially my research supervisors, Dr. Rozeyta Omar and Dr. Siti Aisyah Bt. Panatik; whom did not spare an effort to guide me during my research journey.

I shall also acknowledge the extended assistance from the Faculty of Management (FM) administration team and the Faculty of Graduate Studies (SPS) administration team whom supported me all through my research experience and simplified the challenges I faced. Likewise, I shall not forget the ample efforts that were exerted from a generous doctoral scholar at UTM who is Mr. Zohair Ihsan especially in the online survey development stages.

For all whom I did not mention their names but I shall not neglect their significant contribution, plethora thanks for everything.

ABSTRACT

Scholars have invested a considerable amount of effort in understanding different types of motives that propel entrepreneurs but still we know relatively little about from where entrepreneurial motivation originates and how they motivate an individual to engage in entrepreneurial behaviour. Present study offers that one source of the particularly strong entrepreneurial motive can be their passion. Furthermore, this study validates the relationship between entrepreneurial passion and entrepreneurial behavioural engagement with the mediating effect of achievement motivation goals by proposing a new model. Empirical results according to Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) indicate that entrepreneurs harbouring harmonious passion seek increased levels of independence and set high ambition levels. However, the presence of obsessive passion leads to less risk-taking and close attachment to business customs, further leading to less ambition. The presence of harmonious passion results in high levels of mastery goals. On the other hand, the presence of obsessive passion leads to all three achievement motivation goals (i.e. mastery, performance-approach goals and performance-avoidance goals). Mastery goals additionally lead to entrepreneurs' need for independence and creativity but result in restraint from high ambition levels. In addition, performance-avoidance goals negatively predict entrepreneurs' need for creativity. Besides confirming that mastery goals are exacerbated by harmonious and obsessive passion, they are found to significantly mediate the relationships between the following: harmonious passion and independence, harmonious passion and creativity, obsessive passion and creativity, and obsessive passion and daring. Performance-avoidance goals, on the other hand, significantly mediate the following relations: obsessive passion and creativity, obsessive passion and daring, and obsessive passion and ambition.

ABSTRAK

Para cendekiawan telah membuat banyak usaha dalam memahami pelbagai jenis motif yang mendorong para usahawan. Namun, secara relatifnya kita cuma mengetahui sedikit tentang punca terhadap motif keusahawanan dan bagaimana ia memotivasi seseorang individu untuk terlibat dalam kelakuan keusahawanan. Kajian ini menjelaskan yang satu sumber utama motif keusahawanan yang kuat adalah keghairahan para usahawan. Kajian ini mengesahkan hubungan di antara keghairahan keusahawanan dan kaitan kelakuan keusahawanan dengan kesan pengantara matlamat-matlamat motivasi pencapaian dengan mencadangkan satu model baru. Berdasarkan keputusan empirikal mengikut Model Persamaan Struktur (SEM) menunjukkan bahawa para usahawan yang mempunyai keghairahan harmoni mendapat tahap kebebasan tinggi dan menetapkan tahap cita-cita yang tinggi. Walau bagaimanapun, keghairahan keterlaluan membawa kepada pengambilan risiko yang rendah dan terlalu mengikut kebiasaan perniagaan menyebabkan usahawan kurang bercita-cita. Adanya keghairahan harmoni membawa kepada penguasaan matlamat yang tinggi. Sebaliknya, kewujudan keghairahan yang keterlaluan membawa kepada ketiga-tiga matlamat motivasi pencapaian (iaitu penguasaan, matlamat kaedah prestasi dan matlamat menghindari prestasi). Matlamat penguasaan seterusnya membawa kepada keperluan usahawan untuk kebebasan dan kreativiti tetapi menyebabkan mereka terhindar daripada tahap cita-cita yang tinggi. Tambahan pula, matlamat menghindari prestasi secara negatifnya dapat menjangka keperluan para usahawan ke atas kreativiti. Di samping mengesahkan yang matlamat penguasaan adalah diperkukuh dengan keghairahan yang harmoni dan keterlaluan, ia juga didapati menyederhana secara signifikan hubungan-hubungan berikut: keghairahan harmoni dan kebebasan, keghairahan harmoni dan kreativiti, keghairahan yang keterlaluan dan kreativiti, dan keghairahan keterlaluan serta keberanian. Matlamat-matlamat menghindari prestasi, sebaliknya, menjadi pengantara secara signifikan bagi hubungan-hubungan berikut: keghairahan keterlaluan dan kreativiti, keghairahan keterlaluan dan keberanian, dan keghairahan yang keterlaluan dan cita-cita.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Passion for life activities and its impact on individuals' behavioural engagement, well-being, and goal setting has generated much interest in recent decade (Vallerand, and Lavigne, 2009; Rip, Vallerand, and Lafrenie`re, 2012). Entrepreneurship scholars have highlighted that entrepreneurial passion is the key ingredient of entrepreneurial behavioural engagement (Cardon et al., 2009). Smilor (1997) saw passion as the most observed phenomenon in the entrepreneurial process. Cardon, Wincent, Singh, and Drnovsek (2009) are among those scholars who uphold the view that entrepreneurs have meagre chances of succeeding in such an unpredictable and competitive environment dominated by dynamic others (competitors). Consequently, in order to conquer, entrepreneurs need to be filled with the passion (the fire of desire) that pushes them to outdo any obstacle (Cardon et al., 2009).

Without passion, work is just work. Passion is the first and most essential ingredient for planning and beginning a business (Cardon, et al., 2009).

The present study is intended to gain a deeper understanding of the nature and experience of entrepreneurial passion, primarily the manifestation of entrepreneurial passion in the goal setting and behavioural engagement of entrepreneurs. First, by identifying and validating the relations between entrepreneurial passion and behavioural engagements, the intent will be to question entrepreneurial behavioural engagement and the underlying passion that causes it. The second issue is to find out how the presence or absence of particular achievement goals can shape whether people experience entrepreneurial passion as an advantage or disadvantage in their entrepreneurial endeavours.

1.2 Malaysian Entrepreneurs

Entrepreneurship continues to capture the awareness of Malaysians and is viewed by many as a viable means of achieving their dreams (Omar, 2006). Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) represent a major portion of overall business in Malaysia. A report by the Central Bank of Malaysia (2006) revealed this contribution is as high as 95%. In addition, SMEs offers employment to 60% of the total workforce. The Malaysian business scenario is unique in a sense that it encapsulates multiple ethnic groups (e.g., Malay, Chinese and Indian) who operate and behave in unique ways (i.e., perceived best by them). Past literature on Malaysian business indicates that certain ethnic groups have dominated certain types of business. For example, Omar (2006) reported that small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Malaysia are mostly owned by Malaysian Chinese. Many scholars tend to politicize studies of Chinese and Malay entrepreneurs and to criticize the role of the government in developing Malay entrepreneurs without providing constructive feedback on how the issues should be addressed (Yoshihara, 1988; Clad, 1989; Gomez and Jomo, 1999; Searle, 1999).

Scholars suggest that the lack of access to capital, both from personal and external sources, hinders Malaysian entrepreneurs in their ability to start, sustain and

grow their ventures (Fairlie and Robb, 2007). Scholars also suggest that the business network plays important roles in businesses (Ang, 2006; Gomez, 1999). Kotkin (1993) and Hamilton (1996) claim that networking is a characteristic features among Chinese-owned firms. Ang (2006) called the business network of Chinese entrepreneurs “The Bamboo Network,” which means strong ties or relationships with customers, suppliers, employees, government agencies and related parties. Still others suggest that an initial strategic focus on serving the Malays can impact survival and efforts to grow. While focusing on serving co-ethnics can initially be a strategic advantage, over time it may inhibit the venture's ability to expand to other markets. In addition, the business practices and dynamics that are expected in the Malay business community may not be deemed appropriate by the Chinese business community, which controls access to networks, partnerships, funding, customers and other critical resources (Brush, Monti, Ryan and Gannon, 2007).

Other studies stress that entrepreneurial cognition is at play. For instance, Chan (1986) reported that Chinese entrepreneurs had a higher need for achievement than their Malay counterparts. In an early attempt on Malaysian cognition, Popenoe (1970) concluded that cultural and contextual factors play a role and also emphasized that successful Malaysian entrepreneurs are from upper-class families and differ in terms of education, marriage, travelling opportunities, as well as associations and relationships with the Chinese. Mahmud (1981) found that firms owned by Malaysian Chinese are more highly capitalized, and Malaysian Chinese entrepreneurs are more knowledgeable in financial management and record keeping as well as management practices and there are no significant differences in socio-cultural values and attitudes between Malay and Chinese entrepreneurs. Furthermore, it was identified in Mahmud’s study that Malay entrepreneurs generally have a higher level of business ambition and seem to be more inclined towards risk-taking than their Chinese counterparts. This contradicts the viewpoint of many including Mahathir (1970) and Abdul Rahman (2002).

In contrast to Mahmud’s study, Sloane (1999) pointed out that Malaysian entrepreneurs’ self-perception and own view of their roles are at play: particularly,

Malaysian entrepreneurs' dedication towards other Malaysians, sharing opportunities and success, persistence and hard work, sincerity in one's endeavours, and the contention that entrepreneurship is not only about service and obligation but also about self-validation and a key transformation to modernity. Despite the above findings, Sloane (1999) does not believe that Malay entrepreneurs are competing in a true meritocracy. Sloane concluded that Malay entrepreneurs' attitude towards business in comparison to the Chinese is, to a large extent, still clouded with the "know-who" syndrome rather than the "know-how." After Sloane (1999) there have been limited documented studies on Malaysian entrepreneurs with few exceptions (Ahmed, et al. 2005). Ahmed et al.'s study (2005) is important for its contribution in tracing the historical development of Malay entrepreneurship in Malaysia. However, similar to Md. Said (1974), this study is merely factual and descriptive. In contrast to Ahmed, et al. (2005), the study by Othman et al. (2005) attempted only to explore demographic and personality characteristics. In addition, they found that Chinese entrepreneurs are generally more educated and more concerned with having power over people, and they believe more in being masters of their own fate as compared to Malay entrepreneurs. However, the literature is short of a unified reason that would provide an explanation for the gap in the behavioural engagement of Malaysian entrepreneurs.

1.3 Problem Statement

The lack of a universally accepted definition of entrepreneurs, their behaviour, and more especially their goal settings to achieve success in their entrepreneurial endeavours is the most serious obstacle in entrepreneurial literature (Kirkley, 2010). Malaysians share the common perception, that for example, any person who starts a business is an entrepreneur (Hamidon, 2009). Despite of this generally accepted notion, a review of previous literature highlights an idiosyncratic divergence between a venture creator and an entrepreneur (Markman and Baron, 2003). Moreover, understanding the individual entrepreneur has been the primary strategy

to understand and predict the success of an entrepreneurial venture (Davidsson, 2007). This individual focus began with Schumpeter's formulation of the entrepreneur as a uniquely innovative person who crafts new value out of existing resources (Schumpeter, 1934). Thirty years later, the focus shifted from how the entrepreneur affects the process of innovation to how the entrepreneur is driven by a unique motivation to achieve (McClelland et al., 1953). In the following twenty years, characteristics of risk taking, achievement orientation, and internal locus of control were identified as unique personality traits attributed to entrepreneurs' success (Hornaday and Aboud, 1971; McClelland, et al., 1953).

Throughout the literature review, the researcher did not find a unified theory that provides an explanation for entrepreneurial behavioural engagement, and particularly why passionate entrepreneurs do what others do not. It may be because researchers have investigated the behavioural phenomena among entrepreneurs from one single perspective: for instance, either through their personality traits (Kuratko, 2008; Rauch and Frese, 2007), their self-efficacy beliefs (Boyd and Vozikis, 1994; Chen, Greene and Crick, 1998), or through their intention and beliefs triggered towards entrepreneurial behaviour (Kreuger, 2007; Kreuger, Reilly and Carsud, 2000). This unidimensional conceptualization coupled with the unpredictable nature of entrepreneurs' activity engagement has led to inconsistency and misleading categorization. Such that Low and MacMillan (1988) commented:

Despite the difficulties associated with categorization on the basis of traits and characteristics, research has attempted to identify the environmental and situational factors associated with entrepreneurial activity (Kreuger, et al., 2000).

Kreuger, et al.'s (2000) conceptualization was based on the underlying postulation that if the contextual aspects are adequately stimulating, an individual will be motivated by entrepreneurial behavioural engagement. Complex entrepreneurial behavioural engagement, such as creating a new venture, is believed

by researchers (Segal, Borgia and Schoenfeld, 2005) to be a result of individuals' cognitive schemas. Hence, one starting point of an investigation into underlying factors for entrepreneurial behaviour is the examination of entrepreneurial behavioural engagement coupled with exploring the antecedents. The spirit of this conceptualization is highlighted by Kreuger (2007) as:

Most of us are unmindful of our deep beliefs or their impact on the ways we perceive, think and feel.

In line with Kreuger (2007), the current study also conceptualizes that investigating deep beliefs will offer the chance to delve deeper into entrepreneurship and most promising, the underlying factors that stimulate it, because:

*Behind entrepreneurial action are entrepreneurial intentions;
Behind entrepreneurial intentions are known entrepreneurial attitudes;
Behind entrepreneurial attitudes are deep cognitive structures;
Behind deep cognitive structures are deep beliefs.*

Kreuger (2007) argues that deep beliefs are the strong underlying assumptions that add force to our intellect and decision-making. Theoretical focus by researchers on deep beliefs in a business context, other than validating their role in decision making (Bennett, 1999; Morrison, 2000; Watson, 1964) is scant, and those that exist are operationalized in an educational and cultural context (Hofstede, 1980). Corresponding to Kirkley (2010), the current study conceptualizes deep beliefs as the personal and "strongly held principles or core values" that influence how we perceive the world, and motivate our way of thinking and actions. Furthermore, Rokeach (1973) defined deep beliefs as:

..an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence. (Rokeach, 1973)

McClelland, Koestner and Weinberger (1989) argued that studying entrepreneurial behavioural engagement (deep held need) in isolation from goals may be inconclusive. In addition, they suggested that although the motivation (for entrepreneurial behavioural engagements) encapsulates arousal and energy for an activity, they are not the sole reason underlying entrepreneurial behavioural engagements. Hence, for meaningful entrepreneurial behavioural engagement, some goals that will provide direction, energy and preservation need to be there (Earley, 2006; Locke and Latham, 1990; McClelland, et al., 1989). For example, imagine a person with a high need for achievement (i.e., has the propensity to exert high levels of effort) -- simply endorsing this motive will not assure that this s/he is an entrepreneur. In order to become an entrepreneur, s/he needs to have goals as well, which in turn focus the energy of these entrepreneurial behavioural engagement motives.

Despite the overwhelming importance of goals in entrepreneurship, research in this domain, remains unsatisfying because of the non-specific experience of goals setting, such as, which goals are responsible for particular entrepreneurial behavioural engagement (Naffziger, Hornsby and Kuratko, 1994). Goals are obviously important (Herron and Sapienza, 1992; Locke and Latham, 1990), but what factor arouses entrepreneurial goal setting? In order to increase our understanding of work surrounding entrepreneurial behavioural engagement motives, it appears that it would be helpful to find some factors or constructs that tend to oblige goal setting and behavioural engagement among entrepreneurs. It is proposed in the present study that this allusive gap in the literature on goal setting and how it is related to entrepreneurial endeavours (behavioural engagement) can be filled by studying the adaptive and maladaptive nature and experience of entrepreneurial passion.

Philosophers such as Descartes, Rousseau and Hegel viewed passion in a constructive way. For instance, Descartes (1649) conceptualized passion as strong emotions with inherent behavioural tendencies that are attractive as long as the reasons lie beneath them. In the same fashion, Rousseau (1712/1778) upheld the view that passion leads an individual to knowledge and truth. Hegel (1770/1831) supported the notion that passion is necessary for the highest level of achievement. These positive comments on passion portray a passionate individual as an active participant, who is in control of his/her passion, and passion is not only beneficial for that particular individual but also society at large. On the other hand, Plato (429-347 BC) and Spinoza (1632-1677) had negative views of passion and contrasted it to reasoning. Reasoning elevates people in a divine direction, and passion, on the contrary, was presumed to direct people towards their animal instincts.

In contrast, psychological literature presents passion in motivational terms, as high-priority goals with emotionally important outcome whereby individuals devote time and effort (Frijda, Mesquita, Sonnemans and Van Goozen, 1991). In other studies, passion is defined in more emotional terms, such as love (for one's work) (Baum and Locke, 2004). Meanwhile, recent work by psychological researchers (e.g., Vallerand, 2010) has focused on passion for various life activities. However, the majority of entrepreneurship literature defines passion as a kind of love oriented towards work (Shane, Locke and Collins, 2003), and unlike philosophically and psychologically, it does not capture passion's apparent duality.

Furthermore, few theoretical and empirical endeavours have been directed at untangling entrepreneurial passion (Cardon et al., 2009; Shane et al., 2003). Undoubtedly, in the most comprehensive treatment of entrepreneurial passion, Cardon et al. (2009) summarized the existing work on passion as inconsistent. To provide direction for the field, they proposed integrating the emotional and motivational components of passion into a single construct (Cardon et al., 2009). They also encouraged more work on adaptive and maladaptive orientation of entrepreneurial passion. Thus, in an attempt to explain the elusive gap in entrepreneurial literature, the present study provides insight into the adaptive and

maladaptive nature and experience of entrepreneurial passion as well as its relationship with behavioural engagement with the mediating role of achievement motivation goals.

1.4 Research Questions

On the basis of the aforementioned research problem, the research questions that will be addressed in this research are:

1. Is there any relationship between entrepreneurial passion and entrepreneurial behavioural engagement?
2. Do achievement goals mediate the relationship between entrepreneurial passion and entrepreneurial behavioural engagement?
3. Is there any relationship between entrepreneurial passion and achievement goal setting?
4. Does achievement goal setting related to entrepreneurs' behavioural engagement?

1.5 Research Objectives

The objectives of this study are:

1. To investigate the relationship between entrepreneurial passion and behavioural engagement in Malaysian entrepreneurs.

2. To investigate the mediating role of achievement goals between entrepreneurial passion and behavioural engagement in Malaysian entrepreneurs.
3. To investigate the relationship between entrepreneurial passion and achievement goal setting in Malaysian entrepreneurs.
4. To investigate the relationship between achievement goals and behavioural engagement in Malaysian entrepreneurs.

1.6 Significance of the Research

This research has many milestones in supporting the competition towards originality and reserving its uniqueness at the forefront of management applications. The following points are documented for the theoretical significance and practical implication of this study:

1.6.1 Theoretical Contributions of the Study

A major contribution applicable to SMEs in Malaysia is the development of a theoretical model encapsulating the elements of entrepreneurial passion, achievement motivation goals and behavioural engagement. Drawing from psychological literature, several studies (Lafrenière et al., 2008, 2012; Mageau and Vallerand, 2007; Miquelon et al., 2005; Philippe et al., 2010; Philippe, Vallerand and Lavigne, 2009; Rip, Vallerand and Lafrenière, 2012) have examined the impact of passion on individuals' behavioural engagement, well-being, and goal setting. However, work on entrepreneurial passion has focused mainly on more emotional elements, such as love for one's work (Baum and Locke, 2004), romantic passion (Hatfield and Walster, 1978; Sternberg, 1986). A contribution of the current study is

that passion is conceptualized in both motivational and emotional terms, as high-priority entrepreneurial activities with emotionally important outcomes (Vallerand, 2010) in which people invest time and effort (Frijda et al., 1991).

In addition, in the majority of entrepreneurship literature passion is defined as a kind of love towards work (Shane, et al., 2003). However, two distinct passion modes, one adaptive and the other maladaptive, appear to emerge from the analysis of philosophical and psychological literature on passion. Other concepts from some perspectives related to, but distinct from passion include positive addiction (Glasser, 1976) and dependence (Hausenblas and Downs, 2002) on activities that people enjoy, as well as the concepts of "grit" (perseverance and "passion" for long-term goals), flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1978), talent-related activities (Rathunde, 1996), well-developed interests (Renninger and Hidi, 2002), and commitment (Meyer and Allen, 1997). Although all of these concepts may be related to passion, none capture its apparent duality -- the adaptive and maladaptive character of passion. The present study contributes by clearly accounting for both the adaptive and maladaptive nature of entrepreneurial passion.

Additionally, the study validates the fundamental, deep beliefs underlying entrepreneurial behavioural engagement at the individual level. Since research on deep beliefs is most often associated with Western values (e.g., individualism, material gain, competitiveness) (Cauthorn, 1989; Hebert and Link, 1988; Schumpeter, 1950) other researchers have delved deeper into culturally-based values, such as individualism, masculinity and achievement (Berger, 1991; Hofstede, 1980; Lipset, 2000). However, we know little about the bond among values (deep beliefs) at an individual level or how they persuade entrepreneurial behavioural engagement.

The current study also offers a research model that validates how different dimensions of entrepreneurial passion (i.e., harmonious and obsessive passion) have different relationships with achievement motivation goals (i.e., mastery,

performance-approach and performance-avoidance goals) and behavioural engagement (i.e., creativity, independence, daring and ambition) experienced by entrepreneurs. Furthermore, employing structural equation modelling (SEM) provides an excellent platform to analyze the model with multiple variables simultaneously, assess achievement motivation goals as mediator, and provide multiple goodness-of-fit indices to determine whether the hypotheses are properly specified. This contribution is important in terms of the simultaneous examination of different dimensions of entrepreneurial passion, achievement motivation goals and behavioural engagement, and providing a better opportunity to comprehensively understand the interrelationships among the research constructs.

1.6.2 Practical Implications

The importance of entrepreneurship to world economies cannot be underestimated. Not only are governments taking increasing interest in the field as they attempt to rescue their flagging economies (Audretsch and Thurik, 2001; UN Conference on Trade and Development, 2004), individuals are also becoming increasingly circumspect about the choices they make regarding their careers (Spoonley, Du Puis and De Bruin, 2004). The Malaysian government has attempted to stimulate the growth of Malaysian business through government agencies and independent advocacy groups. Yet, the overall rate of business ownership has remained stagnant over the past years. In this study, an alternative means of identifying entrepreneurial behavioural engagement is developed, that is, through passion and achievement motivation goals. This contribution is important as it validates the role entrepreneurial passion plays in motivating individuals to engage in entrepreneurial activities.

To date, none of the previous studies on entrepreneurship and entrepreneurs' behavioural engagement have validated both direct and indirect relationships among entrepreneurial passion, achievement motivation goals and behavioural engagement.

Particularly, the multidimensional and mediating relationship between harmonious and obsessive passion and dimensions of behavioural engagement is an important distinction not taken into account in previous studies. As the conceptualized research model deals with both direct and indirect effects, the present study further contributes to the development of a research method to study the interrelationships among the different dimensions of entrepreneurial passion, achievement motivation goals and entrepreneurs' behavioural engagement.

In the present study, an alternative means of identifying entrepreneurial behavioural engagement is developed through passion profiling. Harmonious passion is viewed as having strong relations with entrepreneurs' need for autonomy (independence), creativity and ambition. Harmonious passion provides individual independence to freely accept the activity that further increases creativity. Autonomous internalization (harmonious passion) of an activity into the self engages entrepreneurs to pursue challenges and stimulation (Cardon, Wincent, Singh and Drnovsek, 2009) whereas obsessive passion is confirmed to be negatively related to creativity, independence and daring. As discussed by Cardon, et al. (2009) entrepreneurial passion that is too intense limits creative problem solving, as it will create obsessive passion (where one identity overcrowds other identities) and individuals become rigid rather than flexible (Vallerand, et al., 2003).

A further contribution is to develop an alternative means of identifying entrepreneurial talent through personally held value profiling. Entrepreneurs harbouring passion for opportunity recognition that aids with behavioural engagement in creative persuasion of identifying, inventing and exploring new ideas (Wilson and Stokes, 2005) will seek creativity, autonomy (independence), and ambitiousness (pro-activeness) (Chandra, Styles and Wilkinson, 2009). Whereas entrepreneurial passion associated with the pursuit of venture creation roles comes particularly with the creativity, independence and ambitiousness of the entrepreneur. Furthermore, entrepreneurial passion in pursuing venture growth comes particularly with ambition and autonomy (Cardon, et al., 2009).

The present study provides guidelines for entrepreneurial motivation, behaviour and goal setting under threat. This contribution is important as entrepreneurs under identity threat may resolve the threat either by withdrawing from all roles or at least eliminating one or more roles that are certainly unhealthy for the economy. Policy makers should be aware that harmonious passion evolves from an autonomous internalization (Deci and Ryan, 2000) of a cherished activity into one's self, thus harmonious passion endorses entirely volitional and flexible involvement in the cherished activity (Rip, Fortin and Vallerand, 2006; Vallerand, et al., 2003). Furthermore, harmoniously passionate individuals remain in harmony with their other life pursuits, which over time shape their sense of identity. Obsessive passion that evolves from a controlled internalization (Deci and Ryan, 2000) of a cherished activity into one's self occurs when the perception of self-esteem, social acceptance, or life satisfaction become associated with the particular activity (Mageau, et al., 2009; Vallerand, et al., 2003). Thus, obsessive passion is highly vulnerable to the identity-threat condition, potentially leading to conflict and a self-contingency ridden identity (Vallerand, 2010).

The manifestation of entrepreneurial passion and its consequences among Malaysian entrepreneurs extends its theory to a new geographical region that is characterized as a collectivistic, high power distance country. A number of previous studies on passion have been carried out in the European and American contexts. Since these studies were conducted in Western societies, their findings might not be transferable to the Malaysian society that is based on collectivist and high power distance values (Ahmad and Aafaqi, 2004). An in-depth literature review shows that very little or nothing is available on entrepreneurial passion and outcomes of two important variables (i.e., goal setting and behaviour) within the Malaysian context. Because this research is carried out in Malaysia, the existing body of knowledge related to the work design model will be expanded to a different culture.

1.7 Definitions of Terms

Below are the operational definitions of the independent, dependent and mediating constructs of this study:

Entrepreneur: Entrepreneurs are defined as owners/managers of small and medium enterprises (SMEs). These individuals are mostly interpreted based on their behaviour. One interpretation suggests that entrepreneurial behaviour is a “proactive search for opportunities within a market and the propensity to take risk in order to achieve certain goals” (Drucker, 1985). Recognizing such opportunities requires an individual “in whose mind all of the possibilities come together, who believes that innovation is possible, and who has the motivation to persist until the job is done” (Shane, et al., 2003). The founding component of entrepreneurial behaviour is the underlying meaning attached by the individual entrepreneur.

Entrepreneurial passion: The term ‘entrepreneurial passion’ is used throughout this paper and it refers to strong inclination towards a self-defining activity that one likes (or even loves) and in which they invest their time and energy (Vallerand et al., 2003). Entrepreneurial passion is acknowledged as “harmonious” or “obsessive” only as expressed by self-described Malaysian entrepreneurs. Harmonious passion is operationalized as an intense motivation for a self-meaning activity but which remains under the person’s control. Such passion is a result of the autonomous internalization of the activity (Boelen, 1992; Deci and Ryan, 2000; Vallerand et al., 2003). A person freely accepts the activity without attaching any contingencies important for them (Sheldon, 2002; Vallerand, 1997). Under such condition, the activity captures a significant but not overpowering space in one’s identity and coexists in harmony with other identities (Vallerand, et al., 2003). Obsessive passion entails the same intense motivation for a salient activity as that of harmonious passion. However, the activity is not under the person’s control, where to a certain extent, the activity itself controls the person. This type of passion originates from the controlled internalization of the activity into the self-identity

(Vallerand, et al., 2003). Such internalization is attached with some contingencies such as feelings of social belonging, self-esteem and performance. Although a person likes other activities, they cannot engage in them due to a lack of control over these contingencies attached with internalization that seem to control the person under such passion.

Achievement goals: Achievement goals are said to “regulate an individual’s cognitions about achievement as well as the thought patterns and behavioural choices associated with those cognitions” (Ames, 1984; Dweck and Leggett, 1988). Achievement goals are operationalized as mastery, performance-approach and mastery avoidance goals. Mastery goals are defined as self-referenced (i.e., a competence reference point that is personally experienced). Mastery goals are hypothesized to construct ‘positive’ outcomes, such as task persistence, in spite of failure in conjunction with task enjoyment (Ames, 1984; Dweck and Leggett, 1988; Nicholls, 1989). On the other hand primary intent of performance- approach and performance avoidance goals is to demonstrate competence relative to other individuals. Thus, ‘performance goals’ are said to have outcomes as their focal point. Furthermore, performance goals generate negative processes and outcomes, such as ‘fear of failure’ and decreased enjoyment during task involvement (Ames, 1984; Dweck and Leggett, 1988; Nicholls, 1989).

Behavioural Engagement: In the present study entrepreneurial behavioural engagement is used as meaning an individual’s innate need for independence, creativity, ambition and daring. Entrepreneurs’ independence is defined in terms of individuals’ ‘need for autonomy,’ an urge for ‘independence’ and ‘freedom’ (Van Gelderen and Jansen, 2006; Wilson, Marlino and Kickul, 2004). The notion of creativity denotes the generation of novel ideas (Shalley, Zhou and Oldman, 2004). Daring on the other side is defined as being adventurous in addition to being eager to take risk and ambition is defined in terms of an individual’s desire to achieve a particular goal. In the current context ambition entails pursuing challenges and stimulation.

1.8 Research Scope

The present study is intended to investigate the inherited duality in entrepreneurial passion and its relationship with two important variables (i.e., achievement goal setting and behavioural engagement), rather than a number of other possible subsequent effects of entrepreneurial passion. It will be illustrated how the three (i.e., entrepreneurial passion, achievement goals and behavioural engagement) compose the lived experience in the entrepreneurial journey by validating the relationship between the dualistic nature of entrepreneurial passion (i.e., harmonious and obsessive) and behavioural engagement (i.e., creativity, independence, daring and ambition). Furthermore, how the presence or absence of particular achievement goals can shape whether people experience entrepreneurial passion as an advantage or disadvantage in their entrepreneurial endeavours is examined. Moreover, financial and time constraint problems are the main reason for choosing to conduct this research only in the state of Johor, Malaysia.

1.9 Organization of Thesis

This write-up begins with a discussion on how each of the variables of interest — behavioural engagement (i.e., creativity, independence, ambition and daring), achievement goals (i.e., mastery, performance-approach and performance-avoidance goals), and entrepreneurial passion (i.e., harmonious and obsessive) — were studied both on their own and in interaction with the other variables. This approach facilitated an understanding of how these variables work so that propositions can be defined for others to test in research.

The rest of this thesis proceeds as follows: Chapter 2 starts with an explanation of the usefulness of the social cognitive theory in studying entrepreneurship as well as answering the particular research questions about entrepreneurs. Then specific

elements of an individual's cognitive schema, namely personal values, motivation (passion) and goals (achievement goals) are described in terms of how they may reflect on entrepreneurial behaviour. Furthermore, presents the theoretical framework of the study and development of hypotheses directed at uncovering the nature of entrepreneurial passion and its relationship to behavioural engagement mediated by achievement goals. Chapter 3 outlines the research methodology for hypothesis testing and Chapter 4 presents the results and discussion of the statistical analyses. Chapter 5 concludes and provide implications for future consideration.

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