

Sustainable Growth in Women Owned Technoprises: A Conceptual Framework

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Abstract

Sustainable growth of firms (SMEs) is highly related to the Technopreneurship development robustness in a region. Where importance of innovative capability in development of a technology based firm had been considered inevitable, the essentiality of managing this innovative capability for long-term business success has evolved vividly in the recent years. Literature reveals dire need of research on attaining sustainable growth in women owned SMEs. In pursuit of resolving this issue, this study provides a conceptual framework suggesting the significance of developing and managing innovative capability for sustainable growth of women owned technoprises (SMEs).

Key Words: Innovative Capability; Sustainable growth; Technopreneurship development

1. Introduction

The contemporary issues related to promote technopreneurship development globally is compelling healthy participation of the '*fairer techs*' in most of the emerging economies [28][3]. Literature on technological entrepreneurship strongly signifies the importance of elevating the entrepreneurial stance of these women technopreneurs in respect to their innovative capability which may help them to augment the sustainable growth of their technoprises [11]. Women with all their

potential to lift up the entrepreneurial and national economic stature of any nation are hence required to acquire the desirable characteristics for ensuring not only their smooth entrance in this highly skilled techno-world by developing and managing their firms' innovative capability but also to maintain their growth buoyancy [28].

Although there is a hype for investigating sustainable business growth and need for innovative capability among technological enterprises [12] [8] [25][28], however, most of the studies related to this issue have been conducted in the developed countries [30][16]. There is a big gap of identifying the current status and needs for developing innovative capability for sustainability of growth among women owned technoprises (SMEs) specifically in developing countries like Malaysia [1] [26] [28]. In pursuit of filling this gap, the objective of this study is to provide a conceptual framework subsequent to 1) illustrating relationship between innovative capability and firms' sustainable growth and 2) postulating interactive role of TED framework by Bessant et al [5] in this relationship.

1.1 Innovative Capability and Sustainable Growth

Technopreneurship development greatly resides on the innovative capability of individuals (entrepreneurs), firms and industry [28] and their ability to sustain a

long-term growth [17]. Firms are acknowledged to have sustainable growth when they are growing and making profits without any major impediments related to its financial, structural and strategic position [31]. Innovative capability is known as the ability to produce and update novel products and processes by envisioning market demand and trend and counteracting uncertainties related to industry, market and competitors [2][12]. These innovative capabilities are closely related to competitive performance and sustainable growth of the technology based firms in the uncertain and rapidly changing environment of technological industry [8] [26][17]. Tie-Jun and Jin [30] found that innovative capability of SMEs is factor of firms' internal factors. The capacity to develop and manage innovativeness in small firms is greatly determined by the entrepreneurs' personal approach to business regarding technology, innovation, strategic and market orientation as a whole [4].

1.2 Innovative Capability and Sustainable Growth in Women owned technoprisers

Women have significant role in the development of entrepreneurship in any country especially through their participation in SMEs development [7][27][28]. However, their entry and success in entrepreneurship has been described as a factor of both internal and external factors [10]. Their internal factors mainly comprise of their education, knowledge, experience, skills, abilities, and motivations, whereof, external factors are related to the environment (industry, market, social networks, culture, government policies and Financial agencies) in which they exist [24] [14] [19]. Prominently working in non-technological business sectors [10], these women entrepreneurs have restrained inclination towards growth and profitability as compared to

the male entrepreneurs making them a weak contributor to the overall economic growth [20].

SMEs and women share the commonality of limitations regarding lack of internal and external resources, networking, market and learning approach and strategic orientation [7] [15][30] [9][27][28] [22] which is a big reason for their less innovative capability and hampered growth [18][28].

1.3 Technology entrepreneurship development activities for Innovation Management

Women owned SMEs are generally low growth oriented [7][28], due to a number of factors including their greater reliance on financial and business assistance from their strong ties (family and friends) only[29], avoiding business networking due to lack of access, knowledge and expertise [6], inability to identify, adopt and adapt to technological changes [21][23], inadequate learning and market orientation [22], and strategic shortcomings for a sustainable business approach [7] [6]. Hence, in the theoretical framework the technological development framework by Bessant et al [5] with its eight dimensions comprising of Awareness, Search, Strategy, Linkage, Learning, Leadership, Core Competency and Technology Paradigm had been illustrated as moderator to relationship between innovative capability and sustainable growth of women owned technology based SMEs. (See Fig. 1).

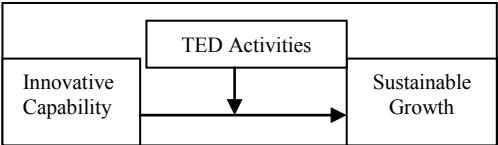


Fig.1: Conceptual Framework

2. Conclusion

This study is a novel attempt to highlight

the importance of managing innovative capability among women-owned technopreneurs for better growth prospects. The future research on the applicability and validity of the framework will help women technopreneurs to foster technopreneurship development in Malaysia.

3. References

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