THE MOTIVATION TO BECOME INDIGENOUS ENTREPRENEUR: A CASE OF ORANG ASLI IN MALAYSIA

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ABSTRACT

Entrepreneurship is an essential contribution to the economy and development of a nation. This study aims to understand what may motivate Orang Asli to become indigenous entrepreneurs. Using a qualitative approach, this study employs a semi-structured in-depth interview to collect data from ten indigenous entrepreneurs in the tourism business. According to the findings, the Orang Asli are motivated to become indigenous entrepreneurs because of the following reasons: to create job opportunities and income for the community, generate funds for the community, increase demand for tourist activities at their place, personal interest, promote and preserve the culture and lastly improve any negative perceptions towards Orang Asli. This study's findings provide a reference for the relevant authorities to strengthen training or entrepreneurship programs to support Orang Asli in pursuing indigenous entrepreneurial activities in the tourism business.

Keywords: Indigenous Entrepreneur, Orang Asli, Entrepreneurial Motivations

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

1. Entrepreneurial activities are considered as one of the ways to eradicate poverty among the community and reduce their dependence on government welfare. The Malaysian government attempts to foster entrepreneurship among the Orang Asli community.

2. Jabatan Kemajuan Orang Asli (JAKOA) has taken several initiatives and provided Orang Asli with many economic development activities. However, there were only 321 Orang Asli registered under JAKOA from 2016 to 2020 as indigenous entrepreneurs.

3. This study would be a reference for relevant authorities to enhance entrepreneurship programs to support Orang Asli in pursuing indigenous entrepreneurial activities.

Research Objectives

In Malaysia, the indigenous people are called Orang Asli. To uplift the life quality of the indigenous community, the Malaysian government has been urging indigenous people to venture into tourism related businesses. However, little is known about the motivations that may trigger Orang Asli to become an entrepreneur. Therefore, the objective of this study is to understand the motivations behind the decision of Orang Asli to become indigenous entrepreneurs.

Methodology

Using a qualitative approach, this study employed a semi-structured in-depth interview to collect data from ten indigenous entrepreneurs involved in the tourism business. The participants in this study were selected by the purposeful sampling method. A multiple-case studies strategy was chosen in this study. The participants in this study are aged between the late twenties and early sixties. All of them have experience in managing the tourism business. Before conducting the interview, JAKOA was contacted to obtain
permission for interview sessions with the indigenous entrepreneurs. The data are analysed through content analysis.

**Results**

The results revealed that several motivations inspire Orang Asli to become indigenous entrepreneurs. They shared their motives for getting involved in the tourism business, which includes creating job opportunities and income for the community, generating funds for the community, increasing demand for tourist activities at their place, personal interest, promoting and preserving the culture and lastly, improving any negative perceptions towards Orang Asli.

**Findings**

This study found that indigenous entrepreneurs were driven by numerous motivations to start a business. They were motivated by the “push” and “pull” factors. The main “push” factors are the need for job opportunities and income and generate funds for the community. However, it is believed that money is not the main indicator to measure the success of indigenous entrepreneurs (Foley, 2003). Besides, this study also found that indigenous entrepreneurs decided to start a business after realising that more and more people were visiting their village.

**References**


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