

Factors Influencing Entrepreneurial Propensity Among Urban Poor Family in Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

Entrepreneurship is essential in contributing to economic growth, job creation, technological advances, etc. Past studies has concluded that entrepreneurship does not only contributes to stimulating innovation and technology, but also could distribute wealth and reduce poverty. This includes urban poor family (B40) in Malaysia. Hence, this paper intended to examine the entrepreneurial characteristics that influence the success of urban poor family entrepreneurs in business. Questionnaire was used as a data collection method that involves a total of 800 questionnaire distributed in Klang Valley, Pulau Pinang and Johor Bahru. A total of 360 usable responses were analyzed using SEM-PLS 3.0. Findings from the Partial Least Squares analysis revealed that willingness and initiatives, confidence and determination, and risk taking have positive relationship to entrepreneurial propensity. Self-efficacy, market orientation, creative and innovation, and social networking, on the other hand, was found to be negatively significant with entrepreneurial propensity. This study has several implications for entrepreneurs especially among the B40s. From a practical perspective, urban poor family entrepreneurs should acquire a sense of willingness and initiatives, confidence and determination, and risk taking in order to start a business. Thus, it is hoped that the findings of this study can help the parties concerned in the design and implementation of the country's agenda to stimulate the performance of entrepreneurs to a much higher level. It is also recommended that responsible parties play their roles to help these entrepreneurs boost their confidence through consistent workshops and trainings beside moral, financial and infrastructure support to ensure smooth sailing of these business owners.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial propensity, Influence, Urban poor families.

1. INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship is a key element for any country aiming to be competitive in today's global market as it has been generally viewed as a method promoting economic, Boldureanu et al. (2020). Yu et al. (2021) stated that mainly entrepreneurship contributes significantly to the economy, society, and humankind that involve in stimulating innovation and technological advancement; enhancing products, services, and quality management; creating capital, employment, and social mobility; exploits local natural and human resources; adding to productivity and government revenue; distributing wealth, mobilizes savings, and reducing poverty at the same time.

The B40 group is referred to as households' aspirations of very poor and poor people (Osman et al., 2020) who earn income less than RM3,860. B40 groups are not only found in rural area, but also in the urban area and contribute to the poverty rate in Malaysia. Poverty has consequences in the form of a moral responsibility for everyone to pay attention to the lives of people who live in poverty (Hanim, 2021).

Even though the rate of poverty in Malaysia was reported to decline from 1.7% in 2012 to 0.4% in 2016, but more than 400,000 households in this country with incomes below this level were considered as poor in 2019 (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2020). Malaysians would still not be free from poverty even in this time of COVID-19 Endemic situation and it continues to be a huge concern among citizens.

In a study by Wilson and Wilson (2017) stated that urban poor were less interested to start a business due to lack of knowledge and few other reasons. However, this is to be investigated in depth from the context of the urban poor families as there are a lot of opportunities in the city to be grabbed by these families.

One of the focus areas in 11MP is to uplift the B40 households towards middle-income society. This is in line with the fact that poverty rate should be reduced to achieve the status of a high income developed nation (Samat et al., 2021), and could be achieved through three main strategies; to raise the income and wealth of the B40 households; to address the increasing cost of living; and to enhance the delivery system of B40 household programmes (Mid-term Review 11th Malaysia Plan, 2018).

One of the top priorities in raising the income and wealth of the B40s is by encouraging them to venture into a business. Available evidence suggests a promising role for entrepreneurship in addressing poverty within any economies (Morris M.H. et al., 2020). Slivinski (2015) in his study had indicated that the highest rates of entrepreneurship demonstrated the largest reductions in poverty over a 6-year period and for every 1% increase in the rate of entrepreneurship, there was a 2% decline in the poverty rate.

There are also many entrepreneurial development programs undertaken by the Government in conjunction with private agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), (Fatimah et al., 2014). However, understanding the characteristics and behaviours are somehow very important as well.

Earlier studies highlighted the significance of understanding how entrepreneurial traits effect attitude towards entrepreneurship, its intention, and behaviour. Traits dictate the attitudes towards situations by describing the intensity of their work and organizing skills, interaction skills with others and the level of creativity (Gurol and Atsan, 2006).

The propensity towards entrepreneurship is the desire of an individual to become an entrepreneur that precedes entrepreneurial intention, and it forms the intention of a person to behave in certain manners. The attitude towards entrepreneurship had a positive relationship with entrepreneurial intention in which a person with a positive attitude towards entrepreneurship tends to prefer self-employment (Douglas and Shepherd, 2002; Agolla et al., 2019).

Both researchers and experts in entrepreneurship have reported that establishment of new companies is a key element in the process of development and growth of business. However, the entrepreneur by nature should be first defined as an individual undertaking risks, making plans, supervising, and monitoring, organizing, and controlling the business, as well as maximizing business opportunities, taking the initiatives, organizing the socio-economic mechanisms and accepting the risk of failure, being a leader and an innovator (Fatimah et al., 2014). Thus, this study aims to explore the factors influencing entrepreneurial propensity among urban poor families in Malaysia.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Entrepreneurial Propensity

Experts in the United States and overseas have long emphasized on the study of entrepreneurial propensity. The following are the recommendations of Chinese experts: Lin and Si (2014), who analysed the factors influencing university graduates' entrepreneurial propensity and made an evaluation and expectation for the entrepreneurial propensity model based on the traditional entrepreneurial propensity study; Jiang Haiyan (2012), who analysed the factors influencing university graduates' entrepreneurial propensity and made an evaluation and expectation for the entrepreneurial propensity model. Based on the findings of a previous study from university graduates as the unit of analysis, this paper investigates the factors influencing entrepreneurial propensity among Malaysian to start a business.

2.2 Self-Efficacy

Some scholars have highlighted the function of self-efficacy as a determinant in affecting individual behaviour since the growing study of the importance of cognition (Pihie and Bagheri, 2010). Self-efficacy is defined as “beliefs in one's ability to plan and carry out the actions necessary to achieve specific goals”. Bandura (2012) created the notion of self-efficacy from Bandura's (1977) social cognitive theory, which demonstrated that human behaviour is determined by several factors, including intrapersonal interactions, individual involvement, and circumstance. Interactions between these factors can influence a person's belief in their ability to do various behaviours in specific contexts, as well as their expectations for behavioural results (Pihie and Bagheri, 2013). The idea is that self-efficacy, which is a social-cognitive

process, can explain the impact of people's knowledge and actions on their attitude toward entrepreneurship. According to (Pihie and Bagheri, 2013), Self-efficacy has a significant impact on people's decision to act, regardless of the availability of alternatives, the amount of effort they put in to complete the action, their perseverance in the face of hurdles, and opportunities to act. Bandura (2012) claimed that self-efficacy is a significant factor that influences behaviour through the process, goal setting, outcome expectations, and situational challenges. The impact of entrepreneurial self-efficacy on individual behaviour has encouraged researchers in the field of entrepreneurship to study the concept (Piperopoulos and Dimov, 2015; Zhao et al., 2005).

Entrepreneurial intentions and activities were found to be influenced by self-efficacy (Ahmet et al., 2020; Neneh, 2020; Othman & Hisam, 2020). This finding was in line with the findings of other studies (Cardon & Kirk, 2015; Chang et al., 2019; Newman et al., 2019; Pérez-Lopez et al., 2019), which revealed that people with high self-efficacy have higher intents to start new businesses. Fuller et al. (2018) stated that personality influences cognition, which influences entrepreneurial tendencies, when discussing the link between personality and entrepreneurial aspirations.

In line with the theory of planned behavior, researchers have found a significant link between self-efficacy and the entrepreneurial intentions of students at secondary school (Sanchez, 2013), undergraduate students (Austin & Nauta, 2016; Horvath, 2017; Hockerts, 2017) and post graduate students (Bacq et al., 2017; Douglas & Fitzsimmons, 2013). Numerous researchers have also found a link between self-efficacy and the entrepreneurial intentions of working people in both developed and developing countries (Biraglia & Kadile, 2017; Bullough et al., 2014; Dehghanpour, 2015; Naktiyok et al., 2010). For example, Venugopal et al. (2015) found that self-efficacy predicted entrepreneurial intentions of low-income women in India. Overall, self-efficacy is positively associated with a host of positive entrepreneurial outcomes for entrepreneurs (Golshan et al., 2019).

2.3 Market Orientation

The concept of market orientation is central to marketing philosophy. (Levitt, 1960). According to the marketing concept, a company's goal is to determine its consumers' needs and wants and to meet those needs more effectively and efficiently than the competitors. Market-oriented businesses strive to please their clients by planning and coordinating their activities and efforts to meet those needs (Levitt, 1960). In essence, a market-oriented approach focuses on enhancing the customer-provider connection, and it is reflected in an organization's culture, shared values, and attitudes toward putting the customer's needs first (Deshpande and Farley, 1999). Market Oriented has been researched from a behavioural and cultural perspective. Narver and Slater (1990) conceptualized market oriented as consisting of three cultural dimensions including, customer orientation, competitive orientation, and inter-functional coordination.

2.4 Social Networking

Social networks have become essential for entrepreneurship and have evolved into a basic paradigm for resource mobilization and company trust building (Ameh & Udu, 2016; Klyver & Schott 2011). Ogunnaike and Kehinde (2013) defined social networks as nodes of individuals, groups, organisations, and related systems linked by one or

more types of interdependence, such as shared values, visions, and ideas, social contacts, kinship, conflict, financial exchanges, trade, joint membership in organisations, and group participation in events. (Hassan et al., 2014) defined social networking as friendship and a desire to build relationships with other entrepreneurs.

Entrepreneurs may use social media to get the human, financial, and social capital they need to succeed (Purbasari, Muttaqin & Sari, 2021; Welter & Kautonen, 2005). This is the case because social networks can be leveraged to obtain valuable resources including advice, credibility/reputation, money, information, knowledge/skills, social legitimacy, and social support (Klyver, 2006). An entrepreneur's social network may include advisors, business partners, purchasers, customers, workers, friends/relatives, investors, mentors, shareholders, and suppliers (Klyver, 2007), with social networking activity varying depending on the requirements and/or strategies of the entrepreneur (Ostgaard & Birley, 1994).

Social networks have emerged as a fundamental paradigm for entrepreneurial performance in today's commercial environment. Because of the synergy that such networks confer on participants, interactions in them have evolved to give opportunities for resource mobilisation and innovation (Ameh & Udu, 2016). Social networking also provides a means of gathering new knowledge on entrepreneurship innovations and trends. People are now using social media sites for advertising, providing information, and exchanging ideas as a result of technology advancements.

According to (Ojewumi & Fagbenro, 2019; Usman et al., 2021), social networks have a strong impact on entrepreneurial intent among students. This means that students with a large social network are more likely to start a business than students with a small social network. (Okafor and Ameh, 2017) investigated undergraduates' social networks and entrepreneurial attitudes and discovered a link between the density of social networks and the proactiveness of Nigerian student entrepreneurs. (Felzensztein and Gimmon, 2013) revealed that social networking is important in facilitating entrepreneurial orientation. (Fairoz et al., 2010) investigate the impact of social network dimensions on entrepreneurial orientation among small and medium-sized businesses in Sri Lanka's Hambantota district. The research found a link between proactiveness, innovation, and risk-taking and entrepreneurial orientation. (Zafar et al., 2012) examined social networking on entrepreneurial intentions among entrepreneurs in Pakistan using survey design. The study revealed that social networking influence entrepreneurial intention. (Klyver and Schott, 2011) conducted a study on how social network's structure shapes entrepreneurial intention in Denmark. The study found that bridging social networks play an important role in shaping individuals' entrepreneurial intentions.

2.5 Willingness and Initiatives

The Theory of Personal Initiative (Frese & Fay, 2001) is founded on the fundamental premise that humans are both influenced and impacted by their environment (Tornau & Frese, 2013). Personal initiative is defined by its self-starting nature, proactive approach, and perseverance and resilience in overcoming challenges encountered when pursuing a goal. It is seen as a behavioural condition in which an individual approaches work goals in an active and self-starting manner and persisting in overcoming obstacles, and one of the outcomes of such an active approach is that the

individual's surroundings is altered. Showing initiative involves spotting and acting on opportunities by keeping one's minds open to new ideas and new possibilities that other people have not noticed. (Hassan et al., 2014) defined willingness and initiatives as an openness to new ideas and goods, as well as a desire to be the first to give these products and services to customers.

Personal initiative behaviour is a crucial feature in entrepreneurship. According to (Frese, 2009) increasing personal initiative leads to actively pursuing entrepreneurial activities, which promotes entrepreneurial success and business growth. Initiative is becoming increasingly important in today's businesses, and many entrepreneurs are looking for employees that are innovative and can act without being told what to do. Empirical evidence reveals that effects of entrepreneurial intention and action depend on individual's personal initiative supporting the claim that such actions (showing a higher degree of active performance) is a central determinant of successful entrepreneurship. (Glaub et al., 2014) designed a training intervention programme to boost entrepreneurs' personal initiative, and their findings revealed that changes in personal initiative led to higher company success over a one-year period. Against this context, for tertiary education students, cultivating personal initiative is a requirement rather than a luxury (Prabhu, 2013). According to (Reuel et al., 2016), impaired students' desire to establish a business is mostly dependent on their own initiative. However, there is study which show that entrepreneurs' willingness and initiative have no significant effect on influencing entrepreneurs' propensity. According to (Hassan et al., 2014), who studied the entrepreneurial traits of rural Malaysian women entrepreneurs, willingness and initiative were not a major predictor of business success.

2.6 Creative and Innovation

Creativity and innovativeness refer to the ability of entrepreneurs to bring out new ideas in their business. A creative and innovative entrepreneur can find faster, better, cheaper, easier ways to produce and deliver their products and services (Razali et al., 2017). The ability of an entrepreneur who was able to translate an idea or invention into a good or service, and later creates value that leads to customers who are willing to pay, that make them the difference (Fatimah et al., 2014).

2.7 Confidence and Determination

Confidence and determination described the belief of the entrepreneurs against their business design and their courage in facing the challenge and failure. In terms of risk-taking, it is a tremendously significant dimension in entrepreneurship and the people who are predisposed to accept risks when faced with situations that could be uncertain (Gurof and Atsan, 2006). Self-confidence is essential because it allows people to feel better and makes it easier to overcome challenges and persistency.

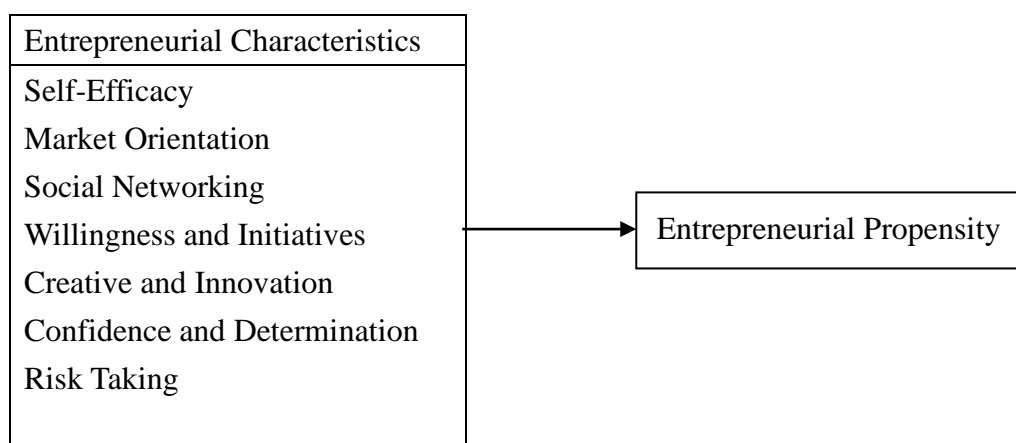
2.8 Risk Taking

Risk taking is involve in a work or project that the outcome is unsure and has a probability of having lost. The aspects of risk-taking described the willingness of entrepreneurs to engage in the risky work or no bail. In another sense, it refers to the ability to cover possible loss turned over decisions or projects carried out in their business. Positive attitude towards risk will allow the entrepreneur success and

enduring in its business. Thus, courage to take risk is the first step should be considered by the entrepreneurs (Tracy, 2007).

2.9 Theoretical Framework

Based on the discussion in the review of the literature, this study was developed to explore the entrepreneurial preferences among urban poor families in Malaysia that affect their success in business by using the model recommended by Ashraf and Qureshi (2010). The following is a research model applied in this study.



Theoretical Framework

Source: Ashraf & Qureshi, 2010

3. METHODOLOGY

This is an exploratory study that collected an empirical data and information using a questionnaire. The questionnaire was adapted from Fatimah et al., 2014 to develop the research instrument for this study and measured with a 5-point Likert-scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. A total of 800 questionnaires were distributed in Klang Valley, Pulau Pinang and Johor Bahru by considering the possibility of lost data and uncompleted questionnaires. Zakuan (2009) reiterated that the sample size can impact the statistical test that the increase in the size of the sample chosen would result in an increase in power. Hence, non-probability sampling strategies was used to select the respondents. After a series of follow up session, 392 questionnaires were returned, however only 360 usable responses were analyzed using SEM-PLS 3.0. The data obtained were subjected to measurement model, discriminant validity and structural model.

4. ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.1 Measurement Model

Measurement model was analysed based on PLS-SEM (Smart PLS 3.0) (Ringle, Wende & Becker, 2015). Assessment of measurement model such as factor loading, composite reliability, Cronbach's alpha, average extracted variance (AVE), and discriminant validity were examined as well as heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) as

proposed by Henseler, Ringle and Sarstedt (2015). Figure 1 shows the measurement model for this study.

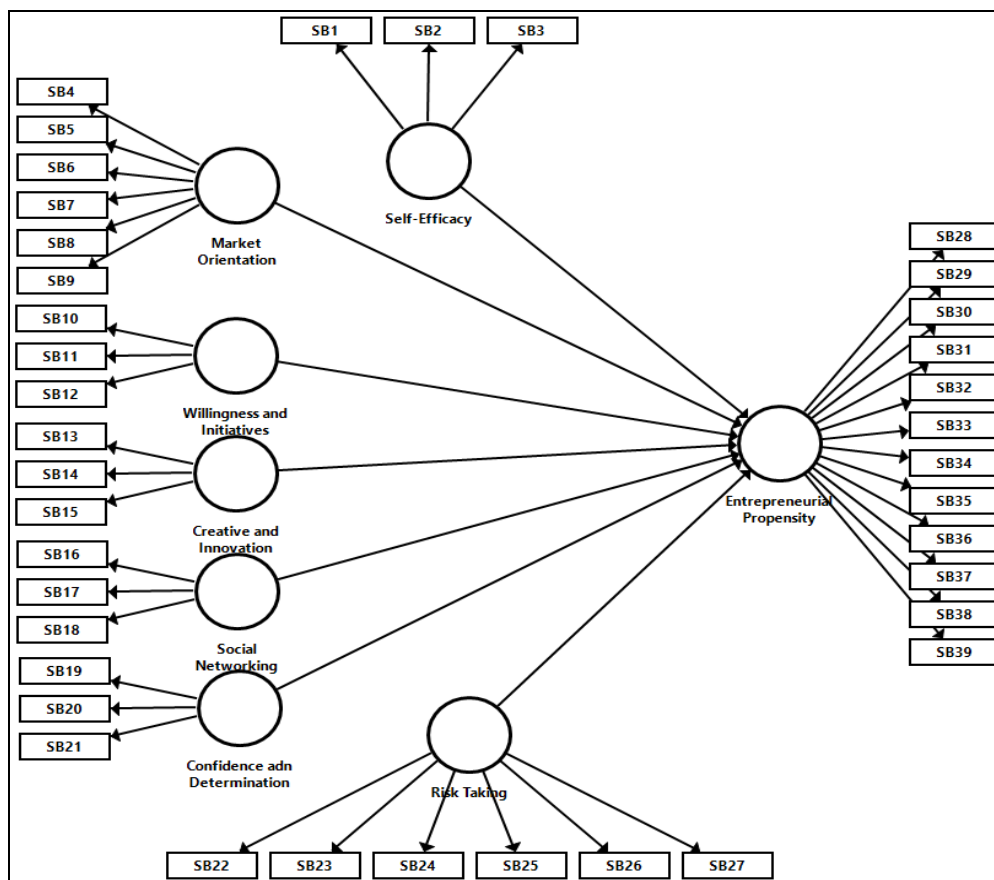


Figure 1: Measurement Model

Table 1 shows that indicator loadings for all items exceeded the recommended values of 0.6 (Hair, Black, Babin & Anderson, 2009). AVEs are in the range of 0.598 and 0.781 which are above recommended value of 0.5 and CR ranged from 0.843 to 0.945 which exceed the recommended value of 0.7 (Hair et al., 2009).

Table 1: Measurement Model Result

Construct	Item	Loading	CR	AVE (>0.50)	Cronbach Alpha (α)
Self-Efficacy (SE)	SB1	0.864	0.907	0.766	0.847
	SB2	0.885			
	SB3	0.877			
Market Orientation (MO)	SB4	0.799	0.923	0.666	0.899
	SB5	0.803			
	SB6	0.824			
	SB7	0.798			

	SB8	0.832			
	SB9	0.838			
Social Networking (SN)	SB16	0.889	0.915	0.781	0.860
	SB17	0.878			
	SB18	0.885			
Willingness and Initiatives (W&I)	SB10	0.904	0.843	0.645	0.724
	SB12	0.898			
Creative and Innovation (C&I)	SB13	0.883	0.906	0.762	0.844
	SB14	0.882			
	SB15	0.854			
Confidence and Determination (C&D)	SB19	0.831	0.892	0.733	0.818
	SB20	0.878			
	SB21	0.859			
Risk Taking (RT)	SB22	0.830	0.926	0.677	0.905
	SB23	0.825			
	SB24	0.838			
	SB25	0.829			
	SB26	0.788			
	SB27	0.827			
	SB28	0.846	0.945	0.598	0.935
Entrepreneurial Propensity (EP)	SB29	0.828			
	SB30	0.852			
	SB31	0.845			
	SB32	0.846			
	SB33	0.870			
	SB34	0.808			
	SB35	0.851			
	SB39	0.702			

AVE: Average Variance extracted; CR: Composite Reliability

4.2 Discriminant Validity

Henseler et al. (2015) proposed a rigorous approach of establishing discriminant validity by using the heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) correlation ratio. As a criterion, HTMT requires comparing it to a predetermined threshold. According to Gold, Malhotra, and Segars (2011), a result of 0.90 indicates a lack of discriminant validity. As a result, Table 2 demonstrates that discriminant validity has been proven.

Table 2: Heterotrait– Monotrait (HTMT)

	C&D	C&I	EP	MO	RT	SE	SN	W&I
C&D	0.856							
C&I	0.734	0.873						
EP	0.836	0.773	0.773					
MO	0.734	0.825	0.779	0.816				
RT	0.839	0.716	0.898	0.753	0.823			
SE	0.600	0.725	0.667	0.736	0.612	0.875		
SN	0.676	0.777	0.741	0.799	0.691	0.683	0.884	
W&I	0.721	0.680	0.853	0.706	0.868	0.609	0.676	0.803

4.3 Structural Model

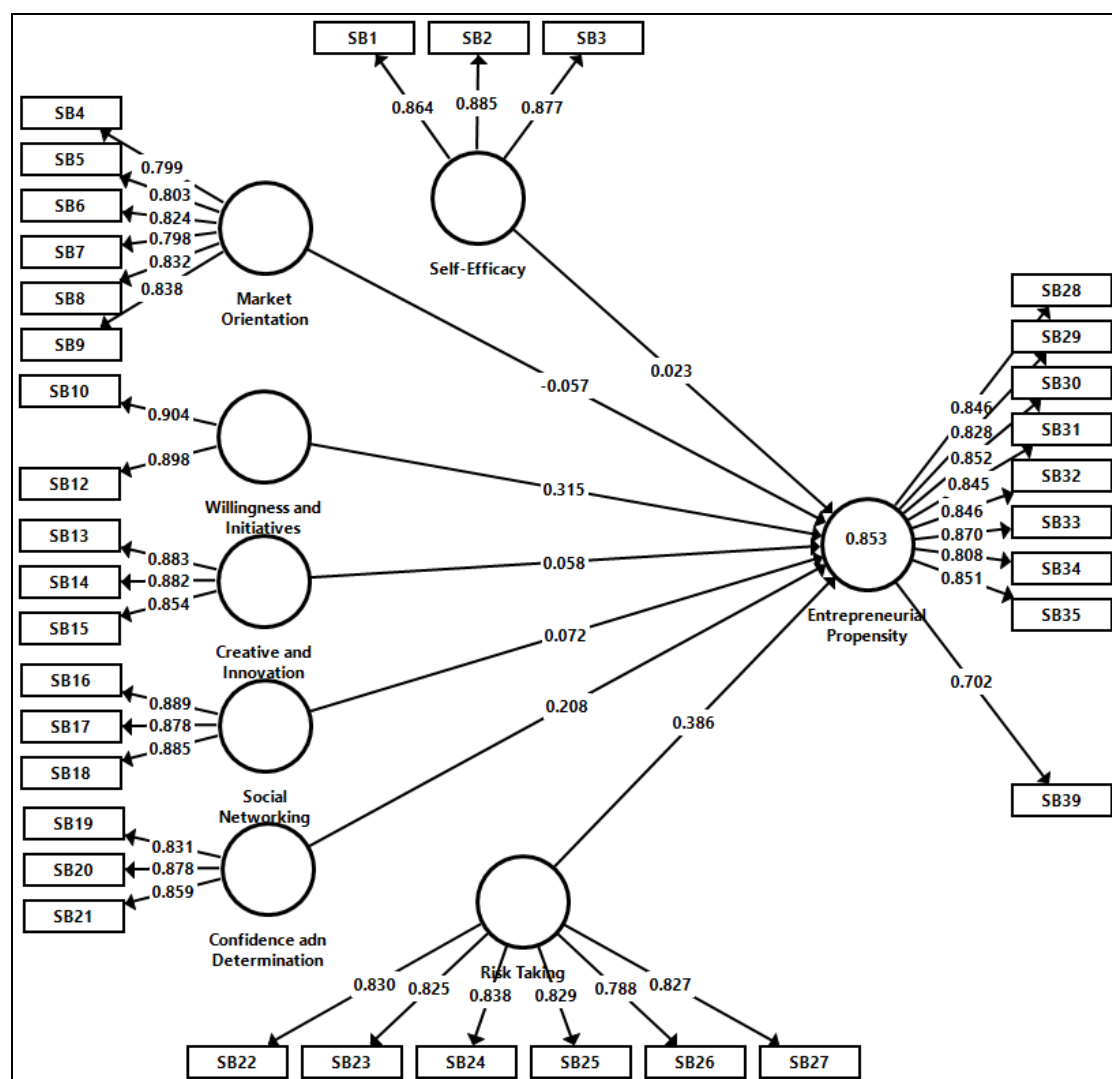


Figure 2: Structural Model

The structural model was evaluated using path analysis. The R2 values and the level of significance of the path coefficient are the major evaluation criteria for structural models (Barclay et al, 1995; Hair et al., 2011).

Entrepreneurial propensity has an R2 of 0.853. The path estimates and t-statistics for the predicted link were obtained using bootstrapping techniques with a re-sampling of 500.

Table 3: Result of Direct Relationship

Hypothesis	Beta	t value	LL Value	UL Value	P values	Result
Self-Efficacy -> EP	0.040	0.578	-0.053	0.099	0.564	Not Supported
Market Orientation -> EP	0.064	0.881	-0.169	0.078	0.379	Not Supported
Willingness and Initiatives -> EP	0.049	6.485	0.214	0.410	0.000	Supported
Creative and Innovation -> EP	0.061	0.350	-0.049	0.182	0.342	Not Supported
Social Networking -> EP	0.046	1.588	-0.019	0.161	0.113	Not Supported
Confidence and Determination -> EP	0.064	3.237	0.074	0.323	0.001	Supported
Risk Taking -> EP	0.065	5.949	0.214	0.410	0.000	Supported

As a result of the findings, willingness and initiatives, confidence and determination, and risk taking have a positive relationship to entrepreneurial propensity. Self-efficacy, market orientation, creative and innovation, and social networking, on the other hand, was found to be negatively significant with entrepreneurial propensity. This is supported by Yu et al. (2021) who mentioned that such process-oriented approach (self-efficacy, market orientation, creative and innovation, and social networking) depended on how human think and these are not reasonable to them as people expect to pursue outcomes that they perceive to be either undesirable or unfeasible.

On the other hand, Aucken et al. (2021) suggested that creative and innovation among entrepreneurs could be considered as a way out of a crisis situation like we are facing today, even it was negatively significant with entrepreneurial propensity. Innovation has always been suggested as one of the most effective responses to crises (Wenzel et al., 2021). However, in the period of crisis, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, entrepreneurs among urban poor families must take advantage and gain access to the correct resources in a timely manner before it is too late as it requires quick and decisive actions.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONSLUSION

The aim of this study was to determine the factors influencing entrepreneurial propensity among urban poor family in Malaysia. This included identifying the entrepreneurial characteristics, i.e., risk taking, ability to explore, confidence and determination, willingness and initiative, vision, creativity and innovation, social networking and strategic thinking that influence the propensity among urban poor

families' entrepreneurs in business. The findings indicated that, in order to succeed in the business endeavor, entrepreneurs from urban poor families especially need to be willing to work hard, give extra initiatives. In addition, having confidence and determination in handling their business are equally important as taking risks in business. This finding is similar to the result from other studies that revealed that willingness & initiatives, and confidence & determination had certainly influenced and had positive relationship with entrepreneurial propensity (Fatimah et al., 2014).

Based on these findings, the researchers propose that to increase the number of successful B40 entrepreneurs in Malaysia, other entrepreneurs should emulate entrepreneurs who have been successful by observing these successful businessmen's characteristics. Key entrepreneurial traits possessed by successful entrepreneurs should be instilled in every other entrepreneur if they want to succeed in their business. In addition, entrepreneurs' development programs are important at the same time. Responsible parties are recommended to play their roles to help entrepreneurs boost their confidence and open themselves up on the challenges of doing businesses. This can be accomplished through consistent workshops and trainings beside moral, financial and infrastructure support to ensure smooth sailing of these business owners.

This study has several implications for entrepreneurs especially among the B40s. From a practical perspective, urban poor family entrepreneurs should acquire a sense of willingness and initiatives, confidence and determination, and risk taking in order to start a business. In addition, it is advised that they should foster innovation in order to adapt their products in any relevant situations. Hence, such proactive efforts could be aligned with achieving the objectives set in Eleventh Malaysia Plan (11MP) that include uplifting the B40 business owners' income and to reduce poverty line to achieve the status of a high income developed nation. The potential to reduce poverty is greatly enhanced when it becomes a community-wide effort. Creative intervention efforts that reflect the unique characteristics and resources of a given community are key (Morris M.H. et al., 2020).

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