

Exploring the Career Experiences of Young Social Entrepreneur in Malaysia

Nur Raihan Che Nawi, Siti Raba'ah Hamzah & Ismi Arif Ismail

Department of Professional Development and Continuing Education,

Faculty of Educational Studies,

Universiti Putra Malaysia, Serdang, 43400, Selangor Darul Ehsan, Malaysia.

raihannurche@gmail.com

Introduction

Social entrepreneurship is viewed as a process to promote the development of society and economic at the same time. These activities contribute to the gross domestic product of the country, and the Malaysian government also embarked steps to encourage young people to engage in social entrepreneurship activities. In Malaysia social entrepreneurship activities, it's still at an infancy stage, compare to other country (Farok, 2011; Sarif, Ismail & Sarwar, 2013; Othman & Abd. Wahid, 2014; MaGIC, 2015). According to Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM, 2009), social entrepreneurship in Malaysia is still of an early stage which is only 0.2% of the organizations were involved. Over five years ago, more than 75% of the 100 organizations related to social enterprises was established in Malaysia (MaGIC, 2015). The third strategic pillars in Rancangan Malaysia Kesebelas (2016 -2020), is to empower communities to build a productive and well-being society. There are five core areas of strategic focus in all three of the areas of focus A (household), B (community), C (rural), D (growth areas), and E (bumiputera economic community). In the B area it focuses on empowering the community (including families, youth, women, children, the elderly and the disabled) to build a productive and well-being society. However, the B2 strategy is focussed on the potential of youth, namely: 1) develop a dynamic leadership and have various abilities of youth; 2) increase the power of entrepreneurship; and 3) foster the spirit of volunteerism among youth. (Unit Perancang Ekonomi, 2015). A combination between business activities and volunteer activities, will form the concept of social entrepreneurship (Westlund & Gawell, 2012).

Literature review

This study used a System Theory Framework of Career Development (McMahon & Patton, 1995), Positive Theory Social Entrepreneurship (Santos, 2009), Ecology Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1977), Social Capital Theory (Liao & Welsch, 2003) and Competency Model (Lucia & Lepsinger, 1999). System Theory Framework of Career Development provides the understanding of the new phenomenon career among youth in social entrepreneurship, social

entrepreneurs. Centre of this framework, the individual's systems, which affects the career of an individual. This theory has two components which is content and process. In components content, it's about individual and context may influence career development by an individual. The word 'influence' describe interpersonal factors and also the context in career development process. For process components there is a recursive (ongoing relationship) during the process of interaction between individual with the context, and interaction between individual in the context. Recursive may contribute in micro process during decision making, and also in macro process in change over time. However, system theory framework has identified the relevance and importance of 'chance' (McMahon & Patton, 1995, 2014; McMahon, 2002; Patton & McMahon, 1999, 2006).

The Positive Theory of Social Entrepreneurship is also used to understand the social entrepreneurship of youth participant in their social entrepreneurial activity. Santos (2009) states that the role of social entrepreneur is to fulfill in the economy in the event of malfunction in the system and at the same time to complement the government's effort to address the problems. Hereby, this study will contribute to the field of Social Entrepreneurship. Ecology System Theory proposed by Bronfenbrenner (1977) emphasizes that environmental influences the behavior of an individual. This theory explains the development of a person was the result of interaction with their environment. In the context of the social entrepreneurship activity, commercial entrepreneurs interact with environment which is believed to affect them to participate in social entrepreneurship activities.

Inception the activities of social entrepreneurship, social entrepreneurs need the element of social capital, which is related to career success (Tersejen, 2005) and also in entrepreneurial activity (Davidson & Honig, 2003). To explain social capital, researchers apply the theory of social capital by Liao and Welsch (2003). Social capital is generally described by researchers as a real asset and a potential that is embedded in the relationship between the individual, society, and the public network (Burt, 1997; Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998; Walker, Kogut, Shan, 1997). Social entrepreneurs also must have a competence in the development of social enterprises to achieve their social mission. Therefore, researchers used the basic model competence Lucia and Lepsinger (1999). This model includes the ability of individual social entrepreneur that include talent and also capability such as skills, knowledge. Competence is the merger between the skills and knowledge throughout life experience.

Methodology

The purpose of this study is to explore career experiences among young social entrepreneur in Malaysia. Studies have shown that social entrepreneurship has become a global phenomenon, which affects society through innovative approaches to solve social problems (Robinson, Mair, and Hockerts, 2009). However, there are still lack of research among Malaysian youth with regard to their career as a social entrepreneur in social entrepreneurship activities. Hence, this study has been conducted to explore career experiences towards youth social entrepreneur who actively undertake their social enterprise.

This study was conducted using a basic qualitative approach to collect and analyse data. A basic qualitative approach is interested in; 1) how people interpret their experiences, 2) how they contrast their world, and 3) what meaning they attribute to their experiences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). In qualitative research, researcher is a main instrument for collecting and analysing data. Researcher created interview guide while conducting the interview. The in-depth interview was recorded using voice recorder, which helped in ensuring rich data. The data was transcribed, verbatim and analyzed for grouping to identify theme by the researcher. Researchers selected informants from youth participated in social enterprise as social entrepreneurs. Researchers obtain informants information through website provided by Malaysia Global Innovation and Creativity Centre.

Findings

To become a social entrepreneur, an individual must have an experience in entrepreneurial activities. It is important part for everyone's entrepreneur to have entrepreneurial skills to sustain their business (Hessels, Van Gelderen & Thurik, 2008). The informant shared his career experiences:

My work experience goes to 15 to 16 years now. I used to be in manufacturing and also in hotel. So I have been some the whole thing experience at the same time. I run the business and work at hotel at that same time.

I have been in business field in 10 years. My age, even younger that I also start business, so from there I learnt all the trick and fair on business. And my family is become from family business background. From my mom, my dad, my brother. So we grow in the business environment. So we know business operate, we know how everything operate. We know the sequences everything.

The requirement for career development as a social entrepreneur

As a social entrepreneur, an individual must have a basic entrepreneurial skill to develop social enterprise, so that mission will be carried out smoothly.

Social capital

According Terjesen (2005), social capital is associated with career success. Social capital is the position of the individual within a network of relationships and resources that are available through the network (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). The informant said:

Everywhere or any business actually networking is number one. If I do know the next person, then is gone cost me more. I can get to save money and also maximise my business and help to know more people. If I get know what others person was doing, so we can collaborate and do something. Without networking, we can't do business without networking. It very impossible.

Competency

In entrepreneurial literature state that, an entrepreneur they must have an interest to succeed in business activity (Davidson & Honig, 2003). The informant said:

Competency is important. Very important. If I, I'm not the entrepreneur like really intelligence or attention to details. My speciality is sale and as well business development. So I help a growth new business, that's my speciality. I have been in business field in 10 years. So I know business operate, I know how everything operate, we know the sequences everything.

Environment factors

Environmental factors are also important influence in the social entrepreneurial activity (Ferri & Urbano, 2011; MaGIC, 2015). For example, social entrepreneurs usually identify irregularities that occurred in the social system. Which is the failure of public and private sector, where they will address social needs and also create social opportunities (Corner & Ho, 2010). The informant said:

Jenny before this, she did bake. So she bakes and sell. So left over she had when delivered to give it to charity of teenagers. What she found out of these teenagers. Young

kids, that their parents were not dead, still alive. So, she has to found that it's single parent and them can't sustain maintain their kids so then come and send to orphanage.

Jenny visited orphanage, that's why she inspired to create Delicious Cookies.

When she started Delicious Cookies, then the brand start building up. People know Delicious Cookies, it's training single mother, it's help single mother, it's growth single mother. The previous business model was big different. What we involved it's now, when we bring them to here, to train them, to get them to work here like a standard job what as well they can bring their kids.

Conclusion

This study is based on a basic qualitative study that explore the career experiences of youth social entrepreneur in Malaysia. Youth have their own reason in becoming a social entrepreneur. Several factors that involved with social entrepreneurship activity were identified; including the environment, personal goals and various factor based on an individual interaction. The findings of this study can be considered as a first attempt to understand of the new phenomena which is career as a social entrepreneur among youth in Malaysia. This finding significantly contribute to the body of knowledge of career development as part of human resource development fields. Thereby, social entrepreneurship activities and the role of social entrepreneurs as a change agent could be related to national human resource development. The findings of this study also would help future budding social entrepreneurs.

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