

Entrepreneurial Passion, Achievement Motivation Goals and Behavioural Engagements in Malaysia: Are There Any Differences Across Ethnic Groups?

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Abstract

This study was set out to investigate entrepreneurial passion, achievement motivation goals and behavioural engagement among Malaysian entrepreneurs. In addition, this empirical study was also intended to compare entrepreneurial passion with goal settings and behavioural engagement of Malay and Chinese Malaysians. From a sample of 305 entrepreneurs, the findings show there is a significant difference between the two ethnic groups in terms of passion, goals and need for creativity, ambition and daring. Malaysian Chinese were found to harbour higher harmonious passion than their counterparts, while both Malay and Chinese Malaysians share a moderate perception of obsessive passion. Furthermore, Chinese Malaysians perceive a strong relationship with the dimensions of mastery, performance and performance avoidance goals. On the other hand, Malay Malaysians have a high perception of mastery and performance goals but moderate perception of performance avoidance goals. The estimation coefficients also indicate that Malaysian entrepreneurs perceive strong relationships with their need for independence, ambition, daring and creativity.

Keywords: achievement motivation goals, behavioural engagements, harmonious passion, obsessive passion

1. Introduction

Entrepreneurship continues to capture the awareness of Malaysians and is viewed by many as a viable means of achieving their dreams (Omar, 2006). 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). According to the Department Of Statistics (2013), Malay and Chinese represent 67.4% and 24.6% of the total Malaysian population respectively making the Malay representation in the total labour force higher (58.5%) than Chinese (23%). Small entrepreneurial businesses (SEBs) 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, SEB offers employment to 60% of the total work force. Despite SEB's representation and contribution to the total employment, output remains on the low side (i.e., 45%).

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 the Chinese. Furthermore, Gomez, Loh, and Lee (2004) reported that Chinese owned 50% of the construction sector equity, 82% of the wholesales trade, 58% of the retail trade and about 40% of the manufacturing sector. On the other hand, Shafii, Abiddin, and Ahmad (2009) uphold the view that the participation of a particular ethnic group in the economy should be analyzed by looking at economic factors such as income distribution, poverty, share ownership and ownership of real property.

The yearbook of statistics for 2012 indicates that the average income earned by a Malay was RM3,624 in 2009, whereas a Chinese earned RM5,011 (Department Of Statistics, 2012). One of the reasons for this gap may be income generation from self employment, as 23.0% of income earned by Chinese was generated from self employment compared with 14.0% by Malay. Consequently, the poverty level among Chinese decreased from 1.2% in 1999 to 0.6% in 2009, but Malay remained by far at the highest poverty level despite a decrease from 12.4% in 1999 to 5.3% in 2009 (Department Of Statistics, 2012).

The mid-term review report on the 9th Malaysian Plan (2008) highlights that equity held by Malay individuals and government-linked agencies increased from 2.4% in 1970 to its peak of 20.6% in 1995 before falling to 19.4% in 2006. Nonetheless, Chinese equity ownership continued to rise during the New Economic Policy (NEP) decades from 27.2% to 45.5% though the volume of their equity ownership declined to 42.4% in 2006. The ownership vector can also serve as an indicator to measure the wealth disparity among ethnic groups in Malaysia. As revealed by Malaysian Statistics (2007), Chinese owned 76.1% of various types of business premises, which is much higher than Malays who owned only 15% (Department Of Statistics, 2012). The Malaysian government has attempted to stimulate the expansion of Malaysian businesses through government agencies and independent advocacy groups. Yet the overall rate of business ownership has remained stagnant over the past years, holding at about 19% for Malay ownership against 42% Chinese ownership (Department Of Statistics, 2012). In the present study it is proposed that entrepreneurial passion, goal setting and behavioural engagement are factors that can define this elusive gap between Chinese and Malay entrepreneurs.

2. Literature Review

Past studies have proposed several reasons explaining this gap between Malays and Chinese entrepreneurs, but it continues to remain somewhat obscure. The most promising reasons are lack of access to capital, both from personal and external sources (Fairlie & Robb, 2007), business networks (Ann, 2006; Hamilton, 1998), serving strategies, business practices (Hamilton, 1998) and control over critical resources (e.g., access to networks, partnerships, funding, customers) (Brush, Monti, Ryan, & Gannon, 2007). Kotkin (1993) and Hamilton (1998) claimed that networking is a characteristic feature among Chinese-owned firms. Furthermore, Ann (2006) likened the business network of Chinese entrepreneurs to a “Bamboo Network,” meaning strong ties or relationships with customers, suppliers, employees, government agencies and related parties.

Other studies highlight 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. Popenoe highlighted that successful Malay entrepreneurs are from upper-class families and differ in terms of education, marriage, travelling opportunities, as well as associations and relationships with the Chinese. Two more studies were conducted not too long after Popenoe’s study, one by Md. Said (1974a) and another by Mahmud (1981). Md. Said (1974b) attempted to illustrate that the Malaysian traditional social structure inhibits entrepreneurial activities. However, the study lacks convincing data.

On the other hand, the study by Mahmud (1981) was more promising. It was concluded that Chinese firms are more highly capitalized, and 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 ambitions and seem to be more inclined towards risk-taking than their Chinese counterparts. This contradicts the viewpoint of many other writers such as Mahathir (1970) and Abdul Rahman (2002). The study by Mahmud (1981) also reveals the three most significant problems faced by both Malay and Chinese businesses, in terms of capital/credit, competition/sales and slow payment on sales.

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 Chinese entrepreneurs 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, Majar, & Alon, 2005; Othman, Ghazali, & Cheng, 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 whether there are differences between Malay and Chinese entrepreneurs with regard to their 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.

The literature review is short of a unified reason that would provide an explanation for the elusive gap between Malaysian entrepreneurs. It may be due to the fact that researchers have investigated the phenomenon among Malaysian entrepreneurs from a single perspective; for instance either by looking at personality traits (Kuratko, 2008; Rauch & Frese, 2007), self-efficacy beliefs (Boyd & Vozikis, 1994; Chen, Greene, & Crick, 1998), or intentions and beliefs triggered towards entrepreneurial behaviour (Kreuger, 2007; Kreuger, Reilly, & Carsrud, 2000; Krueger, 2005; Krueger & Carsrud, 1993). Although, the cognitive framework of Erez and Earley (1993) (i.e., cultural self-representation model) asserted that individuals' cognitive schema should be identified by examining their motivation, goal setting and values relative to a particular context. Thus, to explain the elusive gap between Malaysian entrepreneurs, we adopted a cultural self-representation lens: i.e., do Malaysian entrepreneurs differ in their passion (motivation), behavioural engagement (deep held need) and achievement motivation goals?

2.1 Entrepreneurial Passion

The Dualistic Model of Passion (DMP) implies that an individual may experience passion in two distinct ways, either obsessively or harmoniously. Harmonious passion is hypothesized to emerge from an autonomous internalization, whereas obsessive passion is conceptualized to surface from a controlled internalization of a valued activity into the individual's identity (Vallerand et al., 2003). Harmonious passion is coupled with high levels of concentration (Mageau, Vallerand, Rousseau, Ratelle, & Provencher, 2005) even prior to engagement in the activity (Vallerand et al., 2008). This is individual predominated by harmonious passion experience positive affect during and after passionate activity involvement, even if these individuals are prevented from activity involvement (Mageau et al., 2005; Vallerand et al., 2003). Furthermore, harmonious passion is associated with positive affective spillover -- a process whereby an individual will feel happy when engaging in a passionate activity and will be happier and more satisfied with life over time.

The above-mentioned characteristics relate harmonious passion to several constructs of psychological well-being, such as vitality, life meaning, and life satisfaction, and they are negatively related to depression and anxiety (Rousseau & Vallerand, 2003; Vallerand et al., 2008, 2007). Harmonious passion initiates increased psychological well-being over time through positive emotional cycles, meaning that harmonious passion endorses positive situational affect (Rousseau & Vallerand, 2008). On the other hand, obsessive passion prevents concentration, whether on a passionate activity or other life activities (Ratelle, Vallerand, Mageau, Rousseau, & Provencher, 2004; Vallerand et al., 2003). Since rumination prevents an obsessively passionate person from experiencing flow (Philippe, Vallerand et al., 2009; Vallerand et al., 2003), it may lead to poor decision making (Philippe, Vallerand, Houliort, Lavigne, & Donahue, 2010). Obsessive passion leads to extreme persistence and risky behaviour owing to individual identity protection concerns that would motivate them toward extreme and risky persistence. Furthermore, individuals with predominant obsessive passion experience negative affects during passionate activity involvement (Mageau et al., 2005; Vallerand et al., 2003). Consequently, obsessively passionate individuals undergo depression, anxiety and reduced life satisfaction (Vallerand (Rousseau & Vallerand, 2003; Vallerand et al., 2008, 2007).

To sum up, passion is associated with various intrapersonal traits, but the overall picture is dualistic. On the one hand, harmonious passion tends to bestow cognitive and affective well-being, as well as performance benefits to individuals. Obsessive passion, on the other hand, tends to engender cognitive and affective ill-being. Obsessive passion is also negatively related to performance besides the lack thereof. More importantly, for our purposes, obsessive passion is associated with a lack of concentration that leads to low performance. In the present study it is hypothesized that:

H1: Malaysian entrepreneurs significantly differ in terms of entrepreneurial passion.

2.2 Achievement Motivation Goals

According to Elliot and Dweck (2005) achievement motivation addresses individuals' conception ability and regulates their cognitive thought patterns and behavioural choices associated with those cognitions. Furthermore, it is posited that competence is applicable across a broad range of levels. Nicholls (1984) upheld the view that competence can be achieved by learning skills or mastering tasks. Thus, in an achievement setting, individuals striving for high levels of competence, achieve task selection that will maximize their ability levels. Therefore, an individual's competence level sets their goals. The trichotomous achievement goals theory (Elliot & Church, 1997) differentiates these goals as: mastery goals (i.e., focused on mastering tasks and developing competence), and performance goals (i.e., meant to demonstrate competence relative to other individuals).

The primary intent of mastery goals is to master tasks and develop competence. The competence construct of mastery goals is conceptualized as self-referenced (i.e., a competence reference point is personally experienced).

Mastery goals are hypothesized to produce positive outcomes, including task persistence in the face of failure and task appreciation (Ames, 1992; Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Nicholls, 1989). In line with the scholarly work of Dweck (1986) mastery goals are anticipated to have adaptive processes and outcomes. Particularly, regardless of an individual's perception of competence, the person will relate to a task with positive affects, persistence and enjoyment. Mastery goals are also correlated with diverse variables, such as competence expectancy (Church, Elliot, & Gable, 2001), achievement motivation (Elliot & Church, 1997) and gender (Elliot & Church, 1997). Furthermore, the adoption of mastery goals is positively related to high levels of intrinsic motivation, self efficacy, positive affects, interest, utility, and adaptive help seeking (Elliot & Church, 1997; Grant & Dweck, 2003; Linnenbrink, 2005).

Performance goals are intended to demonstrate competence relative to other individuals. Thus outcomes are conceptualized as a focal point for performance goals. Adopting performance goals is directed towards avoiding unfavourable judgment of competence. Performance goals are characterized as those that represent striving to approach normative competence (Church et al., 2001; Cury, Elliot, Da Fonseca, & Moller, 2006) and as being self-regulated goals according to potentially positive outcomes (Elliot & Thrash, 2002). Furthermore, it is suggested that performance goals also generate negative processes and outcomes, such as fear of failure and decreased enjoyment with task involvement (Ames, 1992; Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Nicholls, 1989). According to the academic work of Dweck (1986) performance goals have either adaptive or maladaptive processes or outcomes. For instance, individuals with low levels of perceived competence may demonstrate maladaptive behaviour like negative affect, low levels of task persistence, decreased enjoyment and low effort levels. Overall, achievement motivation goals present duality: for one, mastery goals are related to intrinsic motivation, self efficacy, positive affects, interest, utility and adaptive help seeking, while on the other hand they are related to negative affects, low levels of task persistence, decreased enjoyment, low levels of effort, and most importantly, different levels of performance. Thus, it is hypothesized that:

H2: Malaysian entrepreneurs' achievement motivation goals significantly differ.

2.3 Behavioural Engagements

Chell, Haworth, and Brearley (1991) categorized entrepreneurial behavioural engagement in three phases: motivation, intent and identification. There is no objection to these phases albeit our view differs regarding the underlying factors, namely wealth creation and capital accumulation. Furthermore, we propose that these factors are deep-held values, such as individuals' innate need for independence, innovation, seeking challenge, stimulation and creativity, and these discern entrepreneurial behaviour from other managerial behaviours (Kasser, 2002; Shane, 2003). Historically, researchers have indicated monetary rewards and wealth as promising motivators for entrepreneurial behavioural engagement (Kirzner, 1979; McClelland, 1961). Other researchers have looked more profoundly into the underlying factors that motivate individuals to become self-employed. The majority of researchers highlight a person's need for autonomy, independence and freedom (Shane, 2003; Van Gelderen & Jansen, 2006; Wilson, Marlino, & Kickul, 2004). Likewise, the Self Determination Theory (SDT) argues that the fulfilment of a fundamental need for autonomy ("freedom of choice to engage in activities") eventually determines the quality of an individual's motivation (Gagné & Deci, 2005). To fulfil one's need for autonomy, people engage in different activities and interact with the environment to help them grow and develop a sense of self through the process of internalization (i.e., autonomous or controlled) (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Autonomous internalization directs an individual to greater levels of perceived autonomy (Mageau & Vallerand, 2007; Vallerand et al., 2003). Such elevated levels of perceived autonomy, or the belief they have control over activity processes and outcomes, increases creativity (Amabile & Mueller, 2007) given that perceived autonomy improves individuals' adaptivity and proactivity in the creative process (Ryan & Deci, 2000; Shalley, Zhou, & Oldman, 2004). Mageau et al. (2009) and Vallerand et al. (2006) further highlighted that the exhibition of positive affect during activity engagement is also due to autonomous activity internalization. Such positive affects enable an individual to develop connections between diverse ideas, optimally utilize resources and experiment with original designs, consequently making use of creativity (Isen, 2000).

The autonomous internalization of activity into the self engages entrepreneurs to pursue challenges and stimulation (Cardon et al., 2009). In view of the fact that positive feelings bolster the belief in success by entrepreneurs and validate entrepreneurial identity related to that passion, in such a way entrepreneurs become more confident in their judgment and evaluation of the respective activities. They are thus further prompted to focus on identity-related activities and suppressed from centring on irrelevant ones (Locke & Latham, 2002), while the experience of "flow" with high levels of focus takes place (Zu, Fredendall, & Douglas, 2008). This is evident from studies which found that when entrepreneurs are harmoniously passionate they put more effort than

obsessively passionate individuals (Vallerand et al., 2003). Thus, we theorize that Malaysian entrepreneurs do differ in activity internalization, which further leads to different levels of behavioural engagement.

H3: Malaysian entrepreneurs' behavioural engagement significantly differs.

3. Method

The electronic survey method was employed for this study, as it enables access to the channel of probable candidates (Mazzocchi, 2008). The distribution of Internet access throughout past years demonstrates that electronic surveys are the most widely used approach (Mazzocchi, 2008). An online version of the questionnaire (<http://www.entpassion.org>) was developed in order to receive responses from entrepreneurs who deal more with the Internet. The questionnaire was developed using PHP 5.4 in frontend and MySQL 5.6 database in backend. The responses were exported from the MySQL database in comma-separated values (CSV) file, which was later imported to SPSS for the required processing.

3.1 Sampling

The sampling frame of this study was built according to a list acquired from SME Corp Malaysia. A total of 343 surveys were received, out of which 305 useable questionnaires were used for the analysis. There were 235 (70.04%) male respondents and 70 (29.96%) female. The respondents' ages were as follows: 13.4% were 20-29 years old, 31.8% were 30-39 years old, 37.7% were 39-49 years old, 15.1% were 49-59 years old and the remaining 2% were 60 years old and above. The age group distribution shows the relative experience of respondents, with 86.6% being older than 30. Ethnicity indicated a relatively balanced distribution, as 52.1% of entrepreneurs were Malays and 46.2% Chinese. The results also indicate that 84% of the sample respondents were from the services sector, 12% from manufacturing, 1.3% from construction, 1.9% from agriculture and the remaining 0.8% from the mining and quarrying sector.

4. Measurement

4.1 Entrepreneurial Passion

Entrepreneurial passion was measured on a 12-item scale adopted from Vallerand et al.'s (2003) passion scale. Accordingly, entrepreneurial passion was ranked on a 7-point Likert scale from "not at all agree" to "strongly agree."

4.2 Achievement Motivation Goals

Achievement motivation goals were measured through 12 items adapted from Elliot and Church (1997). The participants were asked to indicate the extent to which each item was true for them on a 7-point Likert scale, from "not at all true for me" to "very true for me."

4.3 Creativity

Creativity was measured through 4 items adapted from H.-F. Lin and Lee's (2005) individual entrepreneurial orientation (IEO) scale. The participants were asked to indicate the extent to which each item was true for them on a 7-point Likert scale, where 1 = "not at all true for me" and 7 = "very true for me."

4.4 Independence

Independence was measured through 3 items adapted from Shane, Kolvereid, and Westhead's (1991) 14-item scale. The participants were asked to indicate the extent to which each item was true for them on a 7-point Likert scale (from 1 = "not at all true for me" and 7 = "very true for me.")

4.5 Daring

Daring was measured through 4 items adapted from the ambition scale developed by Duckworth, Peterson, Matthews, and Kelly (2007). The participants were asked to indicate the extent to which each item was true for them on a 7-point Likert scale from "not at all true for me" to "very true for me."

5. Analysis and Results

The skewness and kurtosis results for all constructs were deemed reliable since all items had values below ± 3.0 , which is a cut-off condition proposed by Lei and Lomax (2005), and Tabachnick and Fidell (2001). The item-total correlation value establishes the initial reliability since all items exceeded 0.3, which is the cut-off point proposed by Flynn et al. (1997).

5.1 Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

Exploratory factor analysis was used to extract underlying factors and to examine the unidimensionality of constructs. In this regard, a principal component factor analysis with promax rotation and maximum likelihood

estimation was employed. The values were sorted by size and small coefficients were suppressed up to the value of 0.3. The EFA result in 9 factors had an Eigen value above 1.0, explaining 69.337% of cumulative variance. The Eigen values for the extracted factors ranged from 10.066 to 1.024 while factor loading ranged from 0.972 to 0.587. Obsessive passion was identified as the strongest factor explaining 26.81% of variance. No other factor explained more than 10% of variance, indicating there was not one or general factor present. The sample was considered adequate owing to the KMO value of 0.875. The value for Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was also significant, representing a strong relationship among the items. Communalities for all items were fairly high ranging from 0.351 to 0.931, indicating that the variables are adequately distinct from each other. Moreover, the factors correlation matrix shows that the correlations among factors are less than 0.7 -- a cut-off point proposed by Hair et al. (2010) (see Table 1). Hence, factorability of the correlation matrix was achieved.

5.2 Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

The measurement model provided a reasonable fit to the data ($\chi^2 = 647.120$, $NC = 1.257$, $GFI = 0.897$, $AGFI = 0.874$, $RMSEA = 0.029$, $NFI = 0.920$, $CFI = 0.982$, $TLI = 0.980$). In order to further improve the goodness-of-fit indices, modification indices (MI) were examined. Internal consistency of the research constructs was achieved through reliability coefficients (e.g., Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability). The values for Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranged from 0.777 to 0.943 and composite reliability ranged from 0.779 to 0.939 were significantly higher (Bagozzi & Yi, 1988; Hair et al., 2010).

Table 1. Constructs correlation matrix

Construct	Mean	Standard Deviation	Correlation Matrix									
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
1. Obsessive passion	4.27	.526	1									
2. Harmonious Passion	5.62	.571	.351	1								
3. Ambition	5.71	.697	.265	.377	1							
4. Performance Avoidance Goals	4.86	.602	.568	.234	.200	1						
5. Creativity	5.59	.850	.067	.041	.086	-.086	1					
6. Daring	5.38	1.220	-.014	.076	-.046	.075	-.179	1				
7. Mastery Goals	6.12	.633	.497	.535	.262	.358	.107	-.054	1			
8. Independence	5.75	.617	.284	.438	.399	.123	.070	.021	.388	1		
9. Performance Approach Goals	5.59	.437	.596	.403	.248	.660	-.040	.017	.493	.312	1	

Table 2. Confirmatory factor analysis and reliability analysis

Item Description	Standardized loading	Reliability
Harmonious passion Vallerand et al. (2003)		SCR = 0.905, AVE= 0.614, α = 0.908
1. This activity is in harmony with the other activities in my life.	0.814	
2. The new things that I discover with this activity allow me to appreciate it even more.	0.731	
3. This activity reflects the qualities I like about myself.	0.774	
4. This activity allows me to live a variety of experiences.	0.856	
5. My activity is well integrated in my life.	0.882	
6. My activity is in harmony with other things that are part of me.	0.677	
Obsessive Passion Vallerand et al. (2003)		SCR = 0.939, AVE= 0.722, α = 0.943
1. I have difficulties controlling my urge to do my activity.	0.806	
2. I have almost an obsessive feeling for this activity.	0.880	
3. This activity is the only thing that really turns me on.	0.914	
4. If I could, I would only do my activity.	0.932	
5. This activity is so exciting that I sometimes lose control over it.	0.829	
6. I have the impression that my activity controls me.	0.758	
Mastery Goals Elliot and Church, (1997)		SCR = 0.893, AVE= 0.735, α = 0.890
1. I want to learn as much as possible in this business.	0.873	
2. It is important for me to understand the market conditions as thoroughly as possible.	0.887	

3. I desire to completely master the market scenarios.	0.811	
Performance Approach Goals Elliot and Church, (1997)		SCR = 0.836, AVE= 0.630, α = 0.832
1. It is important for me to do better than other entrepreneurs.	0.845	
2. It is important for me to do well compare to others entrepreneurs.	0.779	
3. My goal is to get a better profit than most of the other entrepreneurs.	0.754	
Performance- Avoidance Goals Elliot and Church, (1997)		SCR = 0.888, AVE= 0.726, α = 0.883
1. My goal in this business is to avoid performing poorly.	0.884	
2. I just want to avoid doing poorly in this business.	0.913	
3. My fear of performing poorly in this business is often what motivates me.	0.751	
Creativity Bolton and Lane (2012)		SCR = 0.862, AVE= 0.615, α = 0.858
1. I often like to try new and unusual activities that are not typical but not necessarily risky.	0.579	
2. In general, I prefer a strong emphasis in projects on unique, one-of-a-kind approaches rather than revisiting tried and true approaches used before.	0.848	
3. I prefer to try my own unique way when learning new things rather than doing it like everyone else does.	0.805	
4. I favor experimentation and original approaches to problem solving rather than using methods others generally use for solving their problems.	0.870	
Independence Shane, et al. (1991)		SCR = 0.779, AVE= 0.541, α = 0.777
1. I control my own time.	0.727	
2. I have greater flexibility for my personal and family life.	0.786	
3. I have considerable freedom to adapt my own approach to work.	0.692	
Ambition Duckworth et al. (2007)		SCR = 0.927, AVE= 0.762, α = 0.929
1. I aim to be the best in the world at what I do.	0.859	
2. I am ambitious.	0.913	
3. Achieving something of lasting importance is the highest goal in life.	0.879	
4. I think achievement is overrated.	0.864	
Daring Bolton and Lane (2012)		SCR = 0.914, AVE= 0.783, α = 0.906
1. I like to take bold action by venturing into the unknown.	0.728	
2. I am willing to invest a lot of time and/or money on something that might yield a high return.	0.957	
3. I tend to act 'boldly' in situations where risk is involved.	0.951	

SCR = Scale Critical Ratio; AVE= Average Variance Extracted

Furthermore, all the estimation parameters significantly loaded on their posited constructs (see Table) and were more than twice their respective standard error, indicating that convergent validity was achieved (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). The discriminant validity was assessed through two different procedures. First, the correlations between the pairs of research constructs were less than 1.0 and more than twice their standard errors, as suggested by Bagozzi and Warshaw (1990). Secondly, the square root of the AVEs for a particular construct was compared with its correlations with the other constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The results of these two tests provide strong evidence for discriminant validity.

6. Hypothesis Testing

The hypothesis results are based on the T-test interpretation. The overall harmonious passion items had a mean score of 5.82 for Chinese compared to 5.45 for Malay entrepreneurs, indicating that Chinese entrepreneurs harbour greater harmonious passion than their counterparts. However, the mean score for obsessive passion items indicates that Malaysian entrepreneurs harbour a moderate perception of obsessive passion. The assessment coefficients indicate that Chinese and Malay Malaysian entrepreneurs significantly differ in their perception of harmonious ($p = 0.006$) and obsessive ($p = 0.002$) passion, providing support for hypothesis 1. The mean scores for the achievement motivation dimensions imply that Chinese entrepreneurs perceive a strong relationship with the dimensions of mastery (6.36), performance goals (5.84), and performance avoidance (5.20) goals. On the other hand, Malay entrepreneurs have high perception of mastery (5.90) and performance goals (5.34), but moderate perception of performance avoidance goals (4.52).

Hypothesis 2, which hypothesized that Malaysian entrepreneurs differ regarding their perceptions of achievement motivation goals, was supported. The coefficients indicate that Chinese and Malay entrepreneurs significantly differ in their perception of mastery goals ($p = 0.000$), performance approach goals ($p = 0.021$) and performance avoidance goals ($p = 0.002$). The mean score for the behavioural engagement variable indicates that Malaysian entrepreneurs perceive a strong relationship with their need for independence, ambition, daring and creativity. Furthermore, hypothesis 3 remains significant with respect to the relationship between Malaysian entrepreneurs and their difference in the need for ambition ($p = 0.000$), daring ($p = 0.002$), and creativity ($p = 0.019$), but it remained insignificant regarding the need for independence ($p = 0.110$).

7. Discussion and Future Work

The importance of entrepreneurship to the world's economies cannot be undervalued. Governments are increasingly interested in this field in an attempt to save their deteriorating economies (Lin & Kuo, 2007), and besides, individuals are also becoming progressively more circumspect about the choices they make regarding their careers (Spoonley, Du Puis, & De Bruin, 2004). The Malaysian government has attempted to stimulate Malaysian business growth via government agencies and independent advocacy groups, yet the overall rate of business ownership has remained sluggish over the past years. It is proposed in this study that this situation may be due to the differences in passion, achievement motivation goals and behavioural engagement.

The findings from the questionnaire validate that Malaysian Chinese and Malay significantly differ with regards to entrepreneurial passion, achievement motivation goals and behavioural engagement. Compared to Malays, the Malaysian Chinese have a high perception of harmonious passion that leads them to seek higher levels of independence, to freely accept activities and integrate them into their identity, which is evident from their high mean score on the independence scale. Their elevated level of autonomy generates positive affects, excitement and positive energy. The exhibition of positive affect during activity engagement due to autonomous activity internationalization enables people to develop connections between diverse ideas, optimally use resources and experiment with original designs, which results in using creativity (Isen, 2000). The Chinese high mean score on creativity compared to the Malay Malaysians was clear. Similarly, the Malaysian Chinese scored high on the ambition scale compared to their counterparts. One plausible explanation is that over time the Malaysian Chinese have become more confident in their judgment and evaluation, something that propels a message to everyone else around to identify and recognize where they are heading, encouraging them to attain their goals. Furthermore, the moderate perception of obsessive passion by the Malay Malaysians compared to the Chinese Malaysians leads them to take less risk and become closely attached to business customs.

The high perception of harmonious passion among Malaysian Chinese results in the setting of high mastery goals. Such high mastery goals help self-improvement on the task and not to beat others or trying to avoid failure relative to their counterparts. This high perception of mastery goals further leads to independence, as the adoption of mastery goals with independence results in greater effort levels (Cho, Weinstein, & Wicker, 2011). The mastery goals additionally instigates creativity because the adoption of mastery goals tends toward more challenging tasks with moderate risk taking propensity (Bandura & Dweck, 1981) and the urge to go beyond conventional boundaries in order to understand the subject. One other possible outcome is a great level of ambition since mastery-oriented entrepreneurs are similar to individuals with a high need for achievement, sensation and those oriented towards personal control. This may further help Malaysian Chinese perform better than Malay Malaysians.

This study was limited to applying the cross sectional research design, consequently limiting the causal inferences among the study constructs. Although the cross sectional research design is suitable for deriving relationships among variables, it does not capture the transformation that might influence the relationships. For example, there might be a possibility that a person harbouring obsessive passion may transform the activity to become in harmony with other activities and change to harbour harmonious passion. Thus, future research should employ a longitudinal research design, as it may be more appropriate to observed variables in a study. In this regard, researchers can adopt the panel strategy, where the same sets of variables are observed over an extended time frame. This design may allow researchers to analyze the continuity of responses and observe transformation patterns that occur over time.

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