

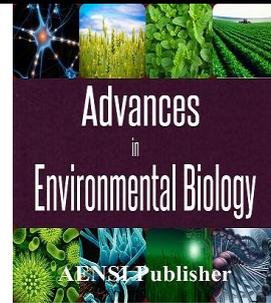


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The Role of Family on Gender Development of Women Construction Entrepreneurs

Mastura Jaafar, Raihanah Othman and Nur 'Izzati Hidzir

Quantity Surveying Department, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Malaysia.

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the role of family in gender development of women construction entrepreneurs (WCEs) in the construction industry. Cluster sampling method was adopted and 34 results were obtained from WCE in Northern Region of Peninsular Malaysia. By gender identification through Bem Sex Role Inventory Analysis, the gender of WCE is masculine. Cross-tabulation analysis revealed that most of these WCEs who with masculine gender grown up in a large family, have been raised under authoritarian and permissive parenting style, are the first-born children and having more than two siblings. This study provides an exploratory study in understanding the role of family in constructing gender of WCEs in Malaysia.

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INTRODUCTION

There are numerous issues on entrepreneurship among women raised in the 1980s warrant further investigation. One of the issue is looking into gender development of women entrepreneur. The important role of environmental in determine gender development has been acknowledged by [1]. Children will develop their conception through the things that they see and have around them [2], Social cognitive theory highlights the significant role of evolutionary factors in human adaptation, acknowledging the important role of parents or families in shaping their physical and social environments from the very beginning.

These days, women are no longer excluded from certain jobs that are deemed "too dangerous" or otherwise "unsuitable" for women. However, sex segregation still exists [3]. Women had been identified to be underrepresented in the construction industry worldwide [4]. This might happen because of influenced by the gendering and its sexual division of labour [5]. There is statement refers construction industry as only suited for men and this perception greatly influenced society about the industry, hence, women are not generally encouraged to make professional careers in it [6]. Indeed, the industry is characterized by a masculine work culture with long and rigid work schedules. It is interesting to study on the gender issues of minority group in the construction. Thus, the main objective of the study is to examine the role of family in developing gender of WCE in Malaysia.

Literature Review:

It should be noted that family practices reflect the values of the culture as a whole. Children are likely to listen to advice from their own parents and friends [7]. For most children, families are responsible for the initial socialization process. Families have a major and long lasting effect on children's lives. The home and the family is the first environment of learning for the child where the acquisition of knowledge, competencies, attitudes and values first begins [8]. Parents, siblings and extended family members can have an individual influence on children, but that influence is more than an individual one because it occurs in the context of the family [9].

Children's growing competence and development is largely influenced by family relationships. Children in larger families have the advantage of having relationships with siblings. The positive interactions that occur between siblings contribute to perspective taking, moral maturity, and competence in relating to other children [8]. Children in large families may have more resources to draw on for company, playmates, and emotional security [9].

Corresponding Author: Mastura Jaafar, Quantity Surveying Department, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Malaysia.
E-mail: masturaj@usm.my

Hatfield mentioned that children development is affected by the family size, children from small families received more individual attention and to relate better to an adults [10]. Children from large families are easily develop their interdependency skills compared to small families.

Parenting styles describe how a parent communicates with his/her child [11]. Four parenting styles have been defined: authoritarian (demand obedience), authoritative (demanding and responsive), permissive (acquiesce to child's demands), and uninvolved (low on both demanding and responsive) [12]. These varying parenting styles greatly influence not only how a child develops and socializes but also how they learn. The different styles dictate how children adapt to teaching approaches and methods in schools and how they interact in the classroom [13]. Sibling relationships play an important role not only in the family life, but by influencing the way that the family functions within society [14]. In particular, siblings play an important role in the development of children's understanding of others' minds, namely their understanding of emotions, thoughts, intentions and beliefs [15]. Siblings seem to demonstrate an understanding of others' minds during real-life interactions long before they show this understanding on more formal assessments [15]. Sibling research are interested in status effects, such as birth order, gender, age spacing and number of sibling.

Research Method:

Our population covers Construction firms from grade 7, 6 and 5 registered with Construction Industry Development Board (CIBD) in Northern Region of Peninsular Malaysia. Based on 194 number of women construction entrepreneur, cluster sampling method was used to distribute the questionnaire form. In total, we received 34 positive feed back from the respondents, representing an overall participation rate of 18%. In measuring gender of women construction entrepreneur (WCE), the masculinity and femininity classification of BEM has been adopted [16]. The median scores are based on the masculinity and femininity characteristics of the respondent and women entrepreneurs are divided into four classification: androgyny (high femininity- high masculinity), feminine (high femininity- low masculinity), masculine (low femininity- high masculinity) and undifferentiated (low femininity- low masculinity).

Result:

Descriptive analysis revealed that from the total 34 respondents, 19 respondents identified themselves as director while another 15 person identified them as an owner. It is interesting to note that the majority of respondents comes from the large family types (26 person) and only one person coming from only child in the family type and single parents' family type. Others are having medium size family which is in the middle of single and large family. The highest birth order for the respondents is first child in the family (12 person), followed by third child as same as last child (6 person), second child (4 person), fourth child (3 person), fifth child (2 person) and eight child (1 person). Regarding to the number of sibling relationship, the highest rate of respondents have more than two siblings (30 person), followed by two sibling (3 person) and just one person of respondents is the only one child in the family. In addition the result shows that all respondents have the high relationship with their sisters (are ranked 3 and above).

The gender of WCE in construction industry:

All the items measuring gender of WCEs have been tested with Bem Sex Role Inventory Analysis Score Sheet (BSRIASS). WCEs score for masculinity scale is (3.94) which is higher compared to femininity scale (3.14). The reflection of this results clarified by Fig. 1, women construction entrepreneurs' classification of gender identity classified as Masculine.

Cross tabulation between gender identity and family types and parenting style shows 26 respondents (76%) were from large family. The majority of masculine and androgynous (11 and 9 respondents respectively) which is 60% were from this family group. It has been identified that 47% or 16 respondents have been grown up by authoritarian parenting style with masculine and androgynous respondents form the largest number that are 8 and 4 respectively. However 7 respondents from masculine also have been threatened by permissive parenting style while 4 of androgynous respondents have been grown up based on both parenting style. Based on the cross tabulation analysis between gender identity and birth order, it was found that only 12 respondents (35%) are the first child in the family followed by forth and last child with 6 respondents respectively for each category. Having masculine respondents are from first, second and last child (5, 3 and 5 respectively) thus there is unclear relationship for these two variables. In terms of age spacing between siblings, 29 or 85% of the respondents have 1-4 years. 15 respondents from masculine and 7 respondents from androgynous were in the category. It indicates 30 or 88% of the respondents having more than two siblings.

Discussion:

The above analysis has come out with identification of women gender in the construction industry and the result on different family factors in determining their gender. Cross tabulation analysis helps to show the relationship between gender and associated family background. This could provide useful information in

exploring on gender and family as socially construct agent for WCE in Malaysia. The most important result revealed that the gender of WCE in Malaysia construction industry can be classified as masculine. This result supported a study done by Neergaard and Ulhoi, who mentioned that the words describing masculinity and entrepreneurs are very similar where the femininity words are mostly their direct opposites [17]. Some of the femininity words such as affectionate, sympathetic, understanding and warm which described in the study done by Bem et al., do not seem to be present in the entrepreneurship study at all. The argument of masculinity gender of WCE in the construction industry could be also applied in any construction industry elsewhere. Working in a male dominated industry is a good justification of WCE need to act and adapted their selves in to the industry. Interestingly, in developing countries, the ratio of women entrepreneur very much lower compared to other industry and in many cases, women are involve in clerical works compared to entrepreneur and technical.

		Femininity greater than 3.5	Femininity less than 3.5
		Androgynous	Masculine Masculine scale= 3.94 Feminine scale = 3.14
Masculinity score	Masculinity greater than 3.5	Androgynous	Masculine Masculine scale= 3.94 Feminine scale = 3.14
	Masculinity less than 3.5	Feminine	Undifferentiated

Fig. 1 Classification of Gender Identity Based On the Four-Quadrant Classification Scheme

Result indicates that 64.7% of respondents of masculine gender identity are from large family. Children in larger families have the advantage of having relationships with siblings. Some of masculinity words such as responsibility, independent, competence are similar with the characteristic of children who grows up in a large family [18]. Children in larger families often experience degrees of rivalry and may need to fight for parent's attention, which increase the masculinity characteristics such as competitive, independent [8] and responsibility [9]. On the other hand, the result of this study shows that most of entrepreneurs with masculine characteristics had authoritarian parents rather than permissive parents. Authoritarian Parents display little warmth and are highly controlling [9].

Conclusion:

The result implies that parents as an important social construct gender of WCE in Malaysia. Having masculine type of gender, the cross tabulation analysis showed that majority of WCE has been raised in a large family and grown up under authoritarian parenting style and having more than 2 siblings. It had been highlighted in findings of this research study that family roles may restrict women to certain gender according to their treatment itself in family organization.

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