

Examining Knowledge Transfer Using Seci Model as Lenses: A Study of Interaction among Local Malaysian Entrepreneurs and Indonesian Cross-Border Entrepreneurs in Cross-Border Serikin Weekend Market

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Abstract

Purpose: Little attention has been given to the study on the impact of local Bidayuh entrepreneurs in Serikin weekend market despite the tremendous presence of cross-border Indonesian entrepreneurs. The objective of this study is to examine the knowledge transfer that may have happened between the entrepreneurs between two countries during their interaction every weekend by using SECI Model as lenses.

Design/methodology/approach: Qualitative phenomenological study was conducted to answer the research questions. A total of thirty local/Bidayuh entrepreneurs were purposively selected to participate in this study in order to get rich data. Participants were interviewed using semi-structured interview questions and the data were analyzed using content analysis approach.

Findings: This study concluded that the presence of Indonesian-cross border entrepreneur helps to improve the economy of the villagers, open the opportunities for business partner, provide role model in doing business, and bring revenue to the government. However, although the business-activities in Serikin market have been going on for decades, the transfer of knowledge among fellow entrepreneurs (between Indonesian cross-border entrepreneurs and Bidayuh-entrepreneurs) is still very minimal. This is due to the very limited time and space for them to have interaction.

Research limitations/implications: Recommendations to improve this situation are provided at the end of this paper.

Practical implications: This study calls for Government, head of villagers and Educational Institutions attention to work together to help the local/Bidayuh capabilities to improve skills toward entrepreneurship readiness.

Originality/value: This study has complemented the lack of research about the interaction between Indonesian-cross border entrepreneurs with the local/Bidayuh entrepreneurs even though the existence of the market as a place of interaction has long existed.

Keywords: Entrepreneur, Local/Bidayuh, SECI Model, Knowledge Transfer, Qualitative

Background of the Study

The existence of Serikin weekend market has been increasingly recognized amongst local (Kuching) people and those from peninsular Malaysia and even foreign tourists who come to Sarawak due to the uniqueness of goods sold and the price is reasonably cheap as compared to other markets. It is located at the Malaysia-side at the border between Sarawak, Malaysia and Kalimantan, Indonesia in a place named Serikin. Serikin is a small village with the majority of population is Dayak Bidayuh, in Kuching Division, Sarawak, Malaysia. This village is transformed into a market place that will be flocked by a lot of proactive and high spirited entrepreneurs from Indonesia who regularly cross the border to trade their merchandise every Saturday and Sunday, from 7 am to 2 pm. On the contrary, the local/Bidayuh-entrepreneurs are running their business in a simple way mostly due to the opportunities arising from the circumstances. They do simple business with very limited knowledge, skill and capital. They sell food/drinks, rent kiosks/stores/rooms/parking space simply due the opportunities that occur in front of their eyes.

Actually, the growing Serikin Weekend Market has shown that it has a promising economic potential and should provide a large business opportunities for local residents. Although the business-activities in Serikin market have been going on for decades, surprisingly the numbers of local/Bidayuh entrepreneurs who run business in this market are very limited. Every weekend around three hundreds entrepreneurs come from various regions of Indonesia crossing the border to sell their merchandise in the Malaysia-side. Meanwhile the Bidayuh-entrepreneurs are involved in a smaller number only (100 out of total of 400). These local entrepreneurs also have lesser items in terms of the quantity and variation of the merchandise to sell, as well as in term of the knowledge, skills and abilities (KSA) required in becoming good entrepreneurs. As native of Serikin village, the local/Bidayuh should have promising opportunities to enhance their business in this market. Unfortunately, due to the lack of entrepreneurial knowledge, skills and abilities as well as limited business capital to embark on more significant role in this business arena, their role in this market are not significant yet (Awang, Sulehan, Abu Bakar, Abdullah & Liu, 2013).

The Malaysian government has set the goal to become a high-income country by 2020. Malaysian government has seen entrepreneurial activities as one of the engines to develop the economic growth (Ooi & Ahmad, 2012). Entrepreneurship is believed able to foster self-employment for Malaysian so that people no longer rely on the job opportunities. The growth of entrepreneurial activity is expected to become one of the career choice and at the same time as solutions to the increase number of unemployment. Entrepreneurship has become among the critical agenda in Malaysia (Ooi & Ahmad, 2012).