

# ASSESSING BUSINESS SUCCESS PERCEPTIONS THROUGH A GENDER LENS IN THE CULINARY BUSINESS SECTOR

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**Abstract.** According to the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM, 2017), the success rate of entrepreneurs in Indonesia has shown a fluctuating downward trend. The Established Business Ownership index, which stood at 21.20 in 2013, declined to 10.38 by 2017. GEM defines a successful entrepreneur as an individual who owns and manages a business for more than 42 months. Furthermore, Catharina (2017) reported that male groups in Indonesia tend to perceive themselves as having greater opportunities and capabilities in entrepreneurship compared to their female counterparts. This study focuses on Lengkong Village in Bandung Regency, a location near the Telkom University campus. As a world-class institution, Telkom University is expected to contribute to the development of knowledge, particularly within its surrounding community. The aim of this study is to examine the extent of the difference in entrepreneurial success between male and female entrepreneurs engaged in the culinary sector in Lengkong Village, Bandung Regency, West Java Province. Using the T-Test analysis, the findings indicate that there is a significant difference in the success levels between male and female entrepreneurs.

**Keywords:** Business Sustainability; Entrepreneurial Success; Gender Differences.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

According to the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM), a business is considered successful if the owner has managed and operated it for more than 42 months (3.5 years), including the ability to pay salaries, wages, or other forms of compensation. However, this benchmark should not be seen as a universal standard of success, as in practice, the criteria for entrepreneurial success vary widely across different types of businesses.

Sarwoko (2008) posits that business success can be achieved through optimal performance. Performance, in this context, refers to the level of achievement or accomplishment a business attains within a certain period. A company's performance is a crucial determinant of its growth; with strong performance, a business can sustain itself, generate profit, and expand.

Several scholars, including Anna et al. (1999), Dahmen and Rodríguez (2014), and Gadenne (1998), as cited in Kirkwood (2016), argue that business success is often measured in terms of financial achievement. However, Dyke and Murphy (2006), also cited in Kirkwood (2016), suggest that some notions of success are closely tied to masculinity. Gupta (2009) further explains that when masculine standards are used to measure success, women-led businesses often appear less successful than those run by men (Fairlie & Robb, 2009; Dyke & Murphy, 2006, in Kirkwood, 2016). This is because women entrepreneurs typically do not share the same values or success metrics as their male counterparts. According to Powell and Eddleston (2008), and Dyke and Murphy (2006), men and women often have different preferences and aspirations for their business goals (Fairlie & Robb, 2009; Dyke & Murphy, 2006).

Based on GEM's 2017 findings, women entrepreneurs in Indonesia accounted for 14 percent of the total population. This indicates that 14 out of every 100 individuals started new ventures that lasted up to 3.5 years as of 2016. Catharina Nawangpalupi, the

Chairperson of GEM Indonesia (2013–2016), stated that women were considered more willing to initiate new businesses than men. GEM utilizes the Total Early-stage Entrepreneurial Activity (TEA) indicator to measure the percentage of individuals aged 18–64 engaged in starting new businesses within a 3.5-year period. Indonesia's 14 percent TEA rate placed the country 20th out of 65 nations. Furthermore, the data showed that more women than men were involved in starting new ventures.

Catharina (2017) emphasized the significance of building a supportive ecosystem for female entrepreneurs to ensure they can scale their businesses and generate greater impact for their communities. Globally, the number of women entrepreneurs is also increasing, with an estimated 126 million women launching new ventures and 98 million managing established ones (Kelley et al., 2013). Nevertheless, female participation in entrepreneurship remains lower than that of men in most parts of the world (Kelley et al., 2013; Marlow et al., 2009; Singer et al., 2015).

While the average size of women-owned businesses in this study was significantly smaller than those owned by men, women performed comparably in terms of extrinsic factors, such as aligning inputs (assets and working hours) with outputs (profits). Moreover, female SME owners appeared more satisfied with their business achievements and lifestyle compared to their male counterparts (Paull & Louis, 2014).

The objective of this study is to examine the extent of the success gap between male and female entrepreneurs operating in the culinary sector in Lengkong Village, Bandung Regency. The research problem is based on previous findings that suggest a gender-based disparity in entrepreneurial success. This study employs a quantitative research approach, with data collected through questionnaires distributed to respondents. The respondents were identified through records held by the local government of Lengkong Village.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

The conceptual framework of this study begins with the definition of entrepreneurship as proposed by Fahmi (2014), who describes it as a discipline that explores the development and cultivation of creativity, along with the courage to take risks in order to realize a particular creation or business venture.

Minniti and Nardone (2007), as cited in Paull (2014), emphasize that perception plays a significant role in shaping individual goals, and that these perceptions may vary across genders.

Paull (2014) found that although, on average, women-owned businesses in the study were significantly smaller than those owned by men, they demonstrated comparable performance in terms of extrinsic outcomes—specifically, how inputs (such as assets and working hours) translated into outputs (such as profits). Furthermore, female SME owners appeared to be more satisfied with their business achievements and lifestyle compared to their male counterparts.

In Kirkwood's (2016) study, four key dimensions were identified for measuring entrepreneurial success: financial success, personal satisfaction, work-life or work-family balance, and stakeholder satisfaction.

According to Arman Hakim (2007), as cited in Yuyus and Kartib (2010), an entrepreneur should possess 13 essential characteristics: (1) Achievement orientation, (2) Impact and influence, (3) Analytical thinking, (4) Conceptual thinking, (5) Initiative, (6) Self-confidence, (7) Interpersonal understanding, (8) Concern for order, (9) Information seeking, (10) Team cooperation, (11) Expertise, (12) Customer service orientation, and (13) Developing others.

## **3. RESEARCH METHODS**

Building upon this theoretical foundation, the researcher conducted a comparative analysis (difference test) on two variables—entrepreneurial characteristics and entrepreneurial success—between male and female entrepreneurs. The subsequent

analysis of both gender groups aims to provide insights that are not only academically valuable but also beneficial for relevant government stakeholders.

## **4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **4.1 Entrepreneurial Characteristics**

The findings of this study indicate a significant difference in entrepreneurial characteristics between male and female entrepreneurs. This is supported by the results of a t-test which yielded a significance probability value of 0.010 ( $< 0.05$ ). The mean score of entrepreneurial characteristics for male entrepreneurs was 104.167, whereas for female entrepreneurs it was 96.

These results align with the argument presented by Minniti and Nardone (2007), as cited in Paull (2014), who assert that perception plays a crucial role in determining goals, and that these perceptions vary across genders. In this study, male and female respondents demonstrated different perceptions regarding entrepreneurial characteristics. These characteristics are based on the framework proposed by Arman Hakim (2007), as cited in Yuyus and Kartib (2010), and include: achievement orientation, impact and influence, analytical thinking, conceptual thinking, initiative, self-confidence, interpersonal understanding, concern for order, information seeking, team cooperation, expertise, customer service orientation, and developing others.

This finding is consistent with previous studies, including research by Catharina (2017), which concluded that men in Indonesia tend to perceive themselves as having higher entrepreneurial capabilities than women. It also supports the findings of Abdul Wahab (2016), who found that men are generally more inclined to take risks and make decisions more easily than women. Similarly, this study aligns with findings by Kelley et al. (2013), Marlow et al. (2009), and Singer et al. (2015), as cited in Pines (2010), which showed that women participate less in entrepreneurship compared to men. Pines (2010) also found that women's entrepreneurial activity tends to be lower than that of men.

### **4.2 Entrepreneurial Success**

The study further concludes that there is a significant difference in entrepreneurial success between male and female entrepreneurs. The t-test analysis showed a significance probability of 0.009 ( $< 0.05$ ). The average success score for male entrepreneurs was 77.83, while for female entrepreneurs it was 71.31. These differences in entrepreneurial success were assessed based on the dimensions proposed by Kirkwood (2016), which include: financial success, personal satisfaction, work-life or work-family balance, and stakeholder satisfaction.

These findings support the theory proposed by Gupta (2009), as cited in Kirkwood (2016), which suggests that when success is measured using masculine benchmarks, women-led businesses often appear less successful than those owned by men. The results also resonate with the findings of Paull, Weber, and Geneste (2014), who found that female SME owners tend to express greater satisfaction with their business success and lifestyle compared to their male counterparts.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the research conducted, the following conclusions can be drawn in response to the study's research questions:

From the analysis of data collected from 31 SME respondents in Lengkong Village, Bandung Regency, it was found that male entrepreneurs achieved a total success score of 1401, with an average score of 77.83.

In contrast, female entrepreneurs in the same village recorded a total success score of 907, with an average of 71.31. The t-test results showed a t-value of 2.807 and a significance level of 0.009. Since the significance value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is rejected and the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) is accepted. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a statistically significant difference in the level of

entrepreneurial success between male and female entrepreneurs in Lengkong Village, Bandung Regency.

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