

# Positioning Bank Managers for Entrepreneurship: The Importance of Personal and Job Attributes

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**Abstract:** *The entrepreneurial nature of a bank determines its survivability. Thus, bank managers' entrepreneurial behaviour plays an important role. Research on the predictors of managers' entrepreneurial behaviour, particularly in the Malaysian service industries, are essential, yet they are scarcely available. Results of a survey of 271 managers in this study indicate that self-esteem, proactive personality, and job autonomy had a positive relationship with entrepreneurial behaviour. Interestingly, in relative terms, job autonomy holds a larger effect compared to personal attributes, such as self-esteem, and a proactive personality. Overall, this study is useful for aiding policymakers and practitioners in their efforts to understand the concept of entrepreneurial behaviour, which relies on the potential of personal, and job attributes, of managers in the banking sector. Finally, the study provides practical implications for human capital and organizational behaviour.*

**Keywords:** Entrepreneurial behaviour; Self-esteem; Job autonomy; Structural equation modelling; Managers

**JEL Classification:** D23, L26, M12

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## 1. Introduction

In recent decades, western scholars have focused their discussion on entrepreneurial behaviour. Entrepreneurial behaviour promotes service quality, and it becomes more critical and controversial during challenging times and in a competitive environment. Therefore, in service-related industries, such as the banking sector, promoting entrepreneurial behaviour that is proactive, change-oriented, and visionary, is critical (Kuratko & Morris, 2018). The identification, appraisal, and exploitation of entrepreneurial opportunities are related to entrepreneurial behaviour. Financial innovation is required to demonstrate the impact of organizational entrepreneurial opportunities through improving banking service quality and market efficiency (Toms et al., 2020).

The Malaysian banking sector should adopt divergent strategies to provide greater quality financial goods and services. According to the Governor of Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM), the banking sector is a key contributor to Malaysia's economic survival and stability (BNM, 2019). The Malaysian commercial banking sector possesses total assets of RM1.713 trillion (BNM, 2019). This represents the largest segment of the Malaysian banking sector (Boateng et al., 2019; Tarus et al., 2012). Nevertheless, the sector is under intense competition given the limited space for expansion of projects. Creativity, risk-taking, and other entrepreneurial behaviour are essential to survive and to retain competitiveness in the market. However, the state of entrepreneurial behaviour among managers is well known, particularly in the Malaysian banking sector. In addition, as stated by the former Governor of BNM, Muhammad Ibrahim (New Strait Times, August 15, 2017), financial institutions should learn and adapt to the fast-changing economic environment arising from global challenges, technological advancement, and necessary demographic shifts.

In fact, the financial industry is required to investigate the causes of unpredictable environmental challenges, especially considering the constant need to develop new products and services. To satisfy the demands brought on by the turbulent and uncertain environment in which financial institutions operate (Wong, 2014; Wang et al., 2020), it is crucial to encourage entrepreneurial behaviour among managers. The banking sector needs to make strategic decisions in favour of innovation and developing new products amid this environment. If these decisions are not made, the

performance of the banking sector will drop rapidly. Ignoring the most recent information and failing to adapt to market changes will also cause the banking sector to lose its competitive edge. Hence, research on the drivers of entrepreneurial behaviour amongst managers is critical, especially in Malaysia's still-underdeveloped banking sector. In view of these problems, it is crucial for bank managers that play a significant role in the banking sector to reform and enhance their capabilities in cultivating the sector. This can be done by examining the predictors of entrepreneurial behaviour.

Despite the importance of entrepreneurial behaviour in the services sector, there is a lack of research examining issues within the banking sector. The focus on bank managers is crucial since they are essential to the institution. Zampetakis (2011) elucidated that managers should be able to synthesise and share information to inspire their subordinates. Similarly, other research has illustrated the vital role played by an individual's entrepreneurial behaviour in cultivating competitive advantage for organizations (Kuratko & Morris, 2018). The area of banking is knowledge-intensive, and skill-based, and it necessitates creative and innovative thinking. Moreover, qualities in energising the working environment and crafting a strategic vision are required to ensure the organizations' long-term viability and progress (Gartner & Teague, 2020; Pearce et al., 1997). Correspondingly, Sheedy et al. (2017) asserted that the banking sector needs to improve the behaviour of human capital to match strategic interventions in enhancing a bank's performance.

The Malaysian banking sector employs a total of 166,360 (or 16%) employees to ensure that the bank's performance is always in a superior condition. Therefore, efficient, and highly skilled employees with the ability to innovate are required for the banking system to function successfully, to increase growth, and to keep up with the latest development (Financial Sector Blueprint, 2022-2026). Besides that, this concurs with the emphasis made by the BNM on the need to invest in the optimisation of human capital to ensure sustainable development and growth for the banking sector in the country. Similarly, bank managers that are in the middle of the management structure and hierarchy are typically entrusted with achieving two key performance indicators (KPIs): (1) financial capital (which includes credit asset quality index, profitability, and cost management); and (2) business processes (which includes operational risk function, productivity initiatives, and strategic cost management). Consequently, managers with a higher level

of entrepreneurial behaviour will be able to achieve higher KPI targets, eventually resulting in greater service performance.

Malaysian bank managers should engage in entrepreneurial behaviour by: (1) boosting target sales, (2) raising profits and revenues, (3) delivering loan approvals for their clients, (4) offering products that are appropriate for their customer's income level, and (5) participating in a variety of community engagement programmes that benefit communities over time and improve their bank's image. Therefore, to project entrepreneurial behaviour, change-oriented managers will be able to discover innovative ways to accelerate their clients' over-the-counter transactions, in turn, boosting bank efficiencies, and eventually, delivering service excellence to their customers.

The focus of this research therefore is to determine how personal attributes (such as self-esteem and proactive personality), and job attributes (such as job autonomy and job complexity) influence a manager's entrepreneurial behaviour in Malaysian commercial banks. The existing but limited studies within the services sectors only examined personality (individual) related factors and ignored the organization (job) related dimensions (Kreiser et al., 2013). This study, therefore, fills the gap by combining both the dimensions via an integrated framework. The study makes the following contributions. This study aims to broaden our understanding of entrepreneurial behaviour by evaluating two main categories of independent variables as determinants. To ensure that branch managers in the banking sector have sufficient autonomy in carrying out their job responsibilities, job attributes (particularly job autonomy) are considered critical in prompting entrepreneurial behaviour. In turn, the top-level bank management is likely to concentrate on the recruitment and selection of branch managers by evaluating high-level personality attributes to develop positive attitudes and behaviours.

The layout of the paper is as follows. Section two reviews the related literature on the main concepts of entrepreneurial behaviour, personality, and job-related dimensions. It illustrates the theoretical justification in informing the study framework and the hypotheses of the study. The methodology is described in Section three. The study's analysis and findings are discussed in Section four. Finally, Section five summarizes the findings, and discusses the implications, and limitations of the study.

## **2. Relationship between Personal Attributes, Job Attributes and Entrepreneurial Behaviour**

Kuratko (2016) determined that entrepreneurial behaviour consists of any activity involving exploration, assessment, and utilisation of entrepreneurial opportunities conducted by the members of an organization. This type of behaviour involves taking deliberate action on something determined or planned to put into practice (Wang et al., 2021). Indeed, entrepreneurial behaviour serves as an essential mechanism for organizational survival in a competitive environment. This is due to the probability that the success of an organization in a competition is lower when they fail to effectively utilise entrepreneurial actions. Hence, entrepreneurial behaviour is crucial in an organization as it relates to various activities, including autonomous and cooperative conduct. As shown by Kuratko (2016), entrepreneurial behaviour reflects an action related to innovativeness, risk-taking, and proactiveness taken by members of an organization. In the same vein, Kreiser et al. (2013) argued that the comprehensive features of entrepreneurial behaviour include customer value-added services, critical renewal, organization transformation, and development.

Kuratko and Morris (2018) argued that it is the responsibility of leaders, particularly middle-level managers, to foster entrepreneurial behaviour in their employees. In previous studies, Zampetakis et al. (2009) have shown that there is a substantial association between entrepreneurial behaviour and characteristics within the organization that correlates with the individual, job, and the organization itself. As stated by Hornsby et al. (2009), an individual's personality trait would encourage entrepreneurial activities by promoting, enhancing, and guiding entrepreneurial opportunities. For organisations, personal attributes play a significant role in shaping the organization's performance. Entrepreneurial behaviour is exemplified by the entrepreneurial mindset, which is a disposal and opportunity-based strategy for forming beliefs about the values of autonomy, proactivity, creativity, competitiveness, and risk-taking, and situation-specific opportunity beliefs (Pidduck et al., 2021). In other words, entrepreneurial behaviour – which includes acts of innovation, initiative, and risk-taking – influences an individual's entrepreneurial processes by boosting their confidence in pursuing entrepreneurial opportunities and minimizing their risk of future losses. Therefore, managers should exhibit entrepreneurial behaviour to

boost their organization's performance, especially in the banking context.

According to Bandura (1986), the social cognitive theory focuses on connotations among “*the environment, the person including the cognition, and the focal behaviour. These reciprocally interact to explain individual actions*” (p. 98). The idea is closely connected with human attitudes and behaviours, in reference to Boudreaux et al. (2019) and Liguori et al. (2018), which influence performance gains. The impact of a scenario (in the form of an environment) on a person's optimisation lays accountability on the person to grow inside, according to the Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986). This theory suggests that anyone who is provided opportunities and support to develop their abilities are more self-efficient and proactive. The factors that influence individual behaviour are job autonomy and job complexity, particularly when bank managers exhibit entrepreneurial behaviour. From this perspective, managers should be capable of utilising any opportunities that involve challenges that can enhance productivity and efficiency. Previous scholars (Gartner & Teague, 2020; Liguori et al., 2018) proved that Bandura's social cognitive theory offers an integral research model in the comprehension of the entrepreneurial process.

### ***2.1 Personal attributes (self-esteem and proactive personality) and entrepreneurial behaviour***

Personal attributes in the form of self-esteem refers to: “to the extent of which people believe themselves to be capable, reflecting a personal judgement of worthiness” (Pierce et al., 1989). People who have a higher sense of self-worth are more willing to take on new challenges and opportunities in the future. Conversely, those who have low self-esteem will likely avoid risky options or tasks. Earlier studies showed that someone with a higher self-esteem demonstrates higher determination when encountering problems and unforeseen events (Johnson & Mathew, 2017). Self-esteem, as claimed by Laguna (2013), is an important component in influencing job performance, satisfaction, and motivation. Ferris, Lian et al. (2015) discovered a robust link between self-esteem and job performance. Kirkley (2016) confirmed that individuals who have stronger values of self-esteem are more confident in their chances to succeed. Thus, managers with high self-esteem tend to be more conscientious, agreeable, extroverted, open to experience, and emotionally stable, which will make them more likely to

engage in greater social relationships, such as entrepreneurial behaviour. This makes self-esteem the most fundamental element in employees' job satisfaction and performance.

Other personal attributes that are investigated in this study include proactive personalities, which are related to individuals who are generally, unrestricted by situational factors, influence environmental shifts, seeks opportunities, acts, and perseveres (Bateman & Crant, 1993). This remains continuous until the individual attains the transition of the setting, whereby the current condition is closed, and a new environment is opened (Prabhu et al., 2012). In short, a proactive person is someone who takes the initiative to participate in various activities. Similarly, Li et al. (2010) underlined the relevance of proactive personality in affecting job performances. A proactive person can easily pursue opportunities, and they are able to establish a conducive environment, which will eventually result in effective performance (McCormick et al., 2019; Zhao et al., 2013). Proactive personalities are critical predictors of entrepreneurial behaviour, particularly among bank managers, who are seen as having a part to perform by taking action on opportunities that have been identified (Neneh, 2019; Zampetakis, 2011). Since a proactive personality can display initiative and commitment towards seeking possibilities for change, it is projected that they have a beneficial impact on entrepreneurial behaviour. As a result, the following hypotheses are postulated:

*Hypothesis 1:* Self-esteem has a positive relationship with entrepreneurial behaviour.

*Hypothesis 2:* Proactive personality has a positive relationship with entrepreneurial behaviour.

## **2.2 Job attributes (job autonomy and job complexity) and entrepreneurial behaviour**

Apart from personal attributes, job attributes can also have an impact on individual entrepreneurial behaviour. According to Hackman and Oldham (1980), job autonomy is one of the many important job attributes to increase job performance, such as an individual's behaviour in carrying out his formal duties. High levels of job autonomy encourage greater entrepreneurial

behaviour in individuals. Based on Deci and Ryan (2000), job autonomy is a fundamental component of job characteristics in the Job Characteristics Model (JCM) that promotes self-determination and empowerment. In fact, job autonomy boosts confidence and allows for independent decision-making, which promotes feelings of mastery and self-efficacy at the workplace (Parker, 1998). Bakker and Demerouti (2007), in their empirical research, also revealed that autonomy is an elementary job resource that satisfies necessities in the workplace, including self-improvement, learning, and advancement. By the same token, Schenkel et al. (2019) claimed that job autonomy has a significant impact on individual work behaviour, this is because employees with high job autonomy are more flexible and ready to adapt their routines to attempt an advancement towards the most efficient solution for carrying out daily operations. Hence, the potential of employees to participate in entrepreneurial behaviour should enhance job autonomy.

Managers with a high degree of autonomy set and manage their own goals, create actions, and make decisions without involving the Director of the company (Cromie, 2000). As a result, they tend to act entrepreneurially. In line with a previous study conducted by a consulting company using a sample of 179 employees, the results demonstrated a significant association between job autonomy and entrepreneurial behaviour (De Jong et al., 2015). In an earlier study conducted on 344 employees of Greek banks and credit institutions, Belias et al. (2015) concluded that these employees require enough autonomy or freedom to express their thoughts and act in their workplace. Hence, job autonomy in the Malaysian banking sector is expected to have a positive impact on top managers' entrepreneurial behaviour.

Job complexity is a significant job characteristic that promotes high levels of motivation to participate in entrepreneurial behaviour. As specified by Soose and Zempel (1996), job complexity is considered as a task that demands the employee to completely make use of their knowledge and competency because complicated jobs are psychologically challenging. Similarly, Wang et al. (2014) argued that employees will have higher intrinsic motivation if their jobs are complex enough to stimulate creativity, as opposed to those who work routinely and simply. In other words, managers who have complex jobs use their own creativity and motivation to exhibit entrepreneurial behaviour within their organization. De Andres and Vallelado (2018) claimed that top management provides managers with access to impartial and supportive guidance to run the bank, which illustrates



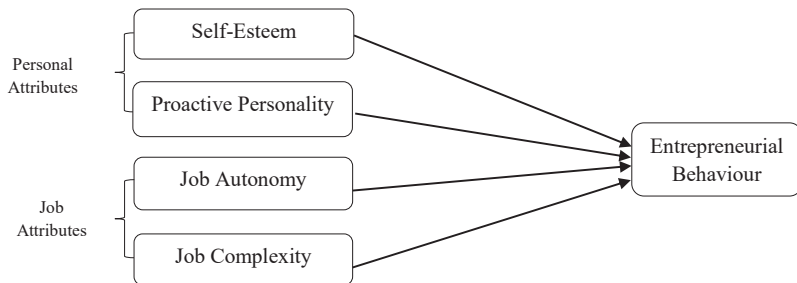
the high level of job complexity that managers should handle. Then, managers decide on issues including the bank's competitive strategy, staffing and product development. The job complexity increases when they make numerous and frequently unrelated decisions. This necessitates skills beyond what they already possess, which encourages entrepreneurial behaviour (Allinson et al., 2000). A meta-analysis by Humphrey et al. (2007) engaging in 259 studies advocated that complexity in jobs is associated with a variety of behavioural outcomes, including affective commitment, work satisfaction, and performance. Therefore, bank managers that oversee complicated jobs are more likely to encourage more entrepreneurial behaviour. Consequently, this study suggested that high job complexity is strongly associated with entrepreneurial behaviour. Hence, the following hypotheses are posited:

*Hypothesis 3:* Job autonomy has a positive relationship with entrepreneurial behaviour.

*Hypothesis 4:* Job complexity has a positive relationship with entrepreneurial behaviour.

The study model depicted in Figure 1 is constructed as an outcome of the literature review.

**Figure 1:** Research Model



Note: Solid lines indicate significant direct effects.

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1 Participants**

This study had 974 participants in total, involving bank managers from six Malaysian commercial banks. The method of selection used in this study was purposive sampling, only those with the authority to provide the required information, i.e., commercial bank managers, were given questionnaires. As a result, 271 completed questionnaires were received after the designated time, yielding a response rate of 27.8%. This response rate is regarded as acceptable, given that the minimum sample size was 103, a relatively low response rate for this type of correlational study in Malaysia. Therefore, in line with the aforesaid that refers to individuals as the unit of analysis, a self-rating report was applied in the research. Organ (1988) stated that a self-report or supervisory report would both accurately reflect an individual's evaluation of their entrepreneurial behaviour (in this study, bank managers).

The sample size for this study was determined using the G\*power sampling size determination method. A minimum of 103 respondents is suggested as a sample size. The sample size of 271 respondents in this study is regarded appropriate as it provides a power greater than 0.5, the minimum power required for management research. In addition, the current study evaluated the aspect of multivariate normality using an online tool called Web Power to calculate Mardia's multivariate skewness, kurtosis coefficients, and p-values. The p-value of Mardia's multivariate skewness and kurtosis was less than 0.5, which indicated that multivariate non-normality was confirmed. Therefore, we continued using the non-parametric analysis programme named SmartPLS.

#### **3.2 Instrument**

All the instruments used in this study were translated into Malay using the back translation technique (Brislin, 1970), unless otherwise stated. The first translator translated the original English phrase into Malay. After it was completed, the second translator, who had not read the original English version, translated the Malay version back into English. Both translators are Malaysians with backgrounds in business and management, and they are both fluent in the Malay and English languages. The measurement items

in this research were adopted and adapted to fit the research context. Two experts in human resource management and public administration pre-tested the items, while the other two actual responders evaluated the proposed questionnaire.

*Self-esteem* was measured using four-items from Pierce et al. (1989). These items assess the respondent's perceptions of their own ability, indicating a personal assessment of their competency. Sample items are: "*I count around here*" and "*I am trusted in this bank*" using a five-point Likert scale. The Cronbach's alpha for self-esteem is 0.816.

*Proactive personality* was evaluated using three-items from Parker et al. (2006). These items are designed to evaluate the managers' ability to go above and beyond the responsibilities that have been delegated to them, establish their own objectives, and think strategically to avoid problems. The examples of items are: "*I am excellent at identifying opportunities*" and "*I love being champion for my ideas, even against others' opposition*". A five-point Likert scale with response options ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" is used to score these items. The Cronbach's alpha for proactive personality is 0.806.

*Job autonomy* was assessed using a four-item scale developed by Hackman and Oldham (1980), which measured the degree of how managers perceived their jobs as allowing them to schedule work with freedom, independence, and discretion, as well as their ability to make judgments and choose the methods to do so. All items are rated on a seven-point Likert scale, with responses ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." The items include "*I have significant autonomy in determining how I do my job*" and "*I can decide on my own how to go about doing my work*". The Cronbach's alpha for this variable is 0.829.

*Job complexity* was evaluated using a four-item scale from the Work Design Questionnaire (Frese et al., 1996). All questions are graded on a seven-point Likert scale, with responses ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." The sample items include "*I received tasks that are extraordinary and particularly difficult*" and "*I make complicated decisions in my work*". The Cronbach's alpha for job complexity is 0.826.

*Entrepreneurial behaviour* used a positively worded six-item scale from Pearce et al. (1997). This is the scale that was picked for its usefulness in measuring entrepreneurial behaviour, particularly from the perspectives of managers in the banking sector. The items were graded on a seven-point

Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). An example of a scale item is “I display an enthusiasm for acquiring skills” and “I quickly change course of actions when results aren’t being achieved”. The Cronbach alpha for this construct is 0.887. Additionally, in this study, demographic variables, such as level of education, organizational tenure, and job tenure, are included as control variables to determine if differences in the level of entrepreneurial behaviour can contribute to the predictors (personal and job attributes).

### **3.3 *Statistical analysis***

The research model developed in this study was examined using the Partial Least Square (PLS) analysis (Ringle et al., 2015). The PLS structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) was used since it could examine small sample sizes. First, the measurement model was tested following a structural model evaluation based on recommendations in the literature (see Anderson & Gerbing, 1988).

## **4. Results**

### **4.1 *Descriptive statistics***

A combination of 271 respondents were engaged in this study. Gender allocation was slightly greater for males; 156 managers, which represent 57.6% of the respondents. The remaining 42.4% (or 115) respondents were 115 female managers. The average age of the respondents was 45.7 years, with the minimum age being 31 years old, and the ceiling age being 56 years old. In terms of academic level, many respondents (41.7%) own a bachelor’s degree and a diploma (25.5%), and roughly 12% have postgraduate qualifications. Most of them have at least 11 years to 15 years of work experience (15.9%), 16 years to 20 years (23.6%), and the remaining 56.1% had work experience of 21 years and above.

### **4.2 *Common method variance***

The Common Method Variance (CMV) was employed to assess the data since both the independent and dependent variables were accumulated

concurrently from similar respondents (Podsakoff et al., 2012). This decision was based on Kock's (2015) approach to screening for full collinearity. This study utilized the cognitive rigidity by Oreg (2003) as a marker variable to create a method factor. Firstly, three marker indicators were gathered in the same survey questionnaire but were not incorporated in the model being evaluated. For instance, "Once I've come to a conclusion, I'm not likely to change my mind", "I don't change my mind easily", and "My views are very consistent over time" (Oreg, 2003). Furthermore, a method factor was created using the marker indicators as an exogenous variable, anticipating each endogenous construct in the proposed model. Lastly, the method factor model was compared with the baseline model. In this approach, all the variables were regressed against a common variable. A Variance Inflation Factor or  $VIF \leq 3.3$  indicates that there is no bias from the single source data. In this study, the CMV resulted in a VIF of less than 3.3 (0.465 to 0.494), thus demonstrating that the data obtained were not flawed by CMV problems.

### ***4.3 Measurement model***

As per the requirements set forth by other scholars (Ramayah et al., 2018; Hair et al., 2019), the first step in analysing a measurement model is to determine its correctness (i.e., validity and reliability). The structural model was then evaluated to examine the research hypotheses established for this study. The indicator loadings, average variance extracted (AVE), and composite reliability (CR) were investigated in terms of the measurement model. The indicator loadings must be greater than 0.05, the CR must be larger than 0.7, and each construct's AVE should be above the 0.5 cut-off number. The AVEs and CRs in Table 1 were more than 0.5 and 0.7, respectively. Only five of the indicator loadings were less than 0.708, which was acceptable (Hair et al., 2019).

**Table 1:** Measurement Model

Model Constructs	Items	Loadings	AVE	CR
Self-Esteem	ES1	0.765	0.528	0.817
	ES2	0.668		
	ES3	0.682		
	ES4	0.784		
Proactive Personality	PP1	0.757	0.581	0.806
	PP2	0.785		
	PP3	0.745		
Job Autonomy	JA1	0.698	0.548	0.829
	JA2	0.756		
	JA3	0.770		
	JA4	0.735		
Job Complexity	JC1	0.682	0.543	0.826
	JC2	0.729		
	JC3	0.741		
	JC4	0.791		
Entrepreneurial Behaviour	EB1	0.726	0.512	0.863
	EB2	0.699		
	EB3	0.762		
	EB4	0.700		
	EB5	0.706		
	EB6	0.697		

The next step in the outer model evaluation is to analyse discriminant validity using the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio of Correlations (HTMT) criterion (Henseler et al., 2015). The value of HTMT must be  $\leq 0.85$ , the stricter criterion, and the more lenient criterion should be  $\leq 0.90$ . As shown in Table 2, the HTMT values are all below the stricter criterion of  $\leq 0.85$ , thus indicating that the respondents have realised that all the five constructs used in this study were distinct. The measurement items were therefore validated and found to be reliable.

**Table 2:** Discriminant Validity (HTMT)

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Entrepreneurial Behaviour					
2. Job Autonomy	0.740				
3. Job Complexity	0.408	0.737			
4. Proactive Personality	0.406	0.315	0.762		
5. Self-esteem	0.299	0.223	0.347	0.727	

#### 4.4 Structural model

In assessing the structural model, the relationship between exogenous and endogenous variables was examined further. For this study, along with Hair et al. (2019), the importance of the path model relationship between constructs was examined using a nonparametric bootstrap procedure throughout 1,000 re-samples, including monitoring the related  $R^2$  values, beta values, and t-values. Essentially, the findings of this study indicate that personal attributes (such as self-esteem [ $\beta = 0.129$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ] and proactive personality [ $\beta = 0.112$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ]) have significant effects on managers' entrepreneurial behaviour. Thereby, H1 and H2 are both supported. Likewise, H3 is supported given the positive correlation between job autonomy and managers' entrepreneurial behaviour ( $\beta = 0.181$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Job autonomy was disclosed to be the highest predictor of entrepreneurial behaviour among managers throughout the three measuring categories. Conversely, job complexity does not have any impact on managers' entrepreneurial behaviour ( $\beta = 0.018$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Thus, the finding does not support H4. Table 3 reports the detailed result of the path coefficients.

**Table 3:** Hypothesis Testing - Direct Effects

Hypothesis	Relationship	Std Beta	Std Error	t-values	BCI LL	BCI UL	$f^2$	VIF
H1	Self-Esteem → Entrepreneurial Behaviour	0.129	0.041	3.112	0.093	0.216	0.021	2.315
H2	Proactive Personality → Entrepreneurial Behaviour	0.112	0.052	2.172	0.067	0.152	0.011	2.108

Hypothesis	Relationship	Std Beta	Std Error	t-values	BCI LL	BCI UL	$f^2$	VIF
H3	Job Autonomy → Entrepreneurial Behaviour	0.181	0.055	3.312	0.045	0.169	0.012	2.043
H4	Job Complexity → Entrepreneurial Behaviour	0.018	0.051	0.351	-0.014	0.112	0.002	2.551

Note: The study applied 95% confidence interval with a bootstrapping of 5,000.

Another essential criterion for evaluating the structural model’s results is the  $R^2$  value of the endogenous variable of the path coefficients. The reason for assessing  $R^2$  is to identify the amount of explained variances of the endogenous construct, that is entrepreneurial behaviour. The dependent variable in this study has an  $R^2$  value of 0.451, indicating a high level of variance as described by Cohen (1988). This study reveals that four independent variables (i.e., self-esteem, proactive personality, job autonomy and job complexity) explain 45.1% of the variance in entrepreneurial behaviour.

### 5. Discussion

The research seeks to discover the impact of personal attributes (self-esteem and proactive personality) and job attributes (job autonomy and job complexity) on the entrepreneurial behaviour of managers in Malaysian commercial banks. As hypothesised, the empirical findings reveal that self-esteem has a significant and strong association with the managers’ entrepreneurial behaviour ( $\beta = 0.129, p < 0.01$ ). Therefore, these findings demonstrate that compared to managers with low self-esteem, managers with high self-esteem will naturally display higher persistence when presented with issues. In line with Kirkley (2016), managers that engage in these behaviours are likely to be more extroverted, competent, agreeable, open to new experiences, and emotionally stable. Managers with these traits strengthen the social relationship through entrepreneurial behaviour. Hence, they tend to take up challenges and risky ventures, are more likely to view the environment positively, and seek to exploit opportunities that eventually



result in a higher level of entrepreneurial behaviour (Johnson & Mathew, 2017; Kirkley, 2016).

In addition, the results from this research show that proactive personality influences entrepreneurial behaviour significantly and positively ( $\beta = 0.112$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). The findings provide evidence that managers with proactive personalities are better equipped to search for bigger opportunities and to foster entrepreneurial behaviour at work. This result is in tandem with Zampetakis (2011), who showed that a strong association exists between proactive personality and entrepreneurial intentions. Other researchers also discovered that entrepreneurial behaviour is highly influenced by personal attributes, particularly proactive personality (McCormick et al., 2019; Prabhu et al., 2012).

The sample in this study create an integrated vision, thus enabling to explore opportunities, and develop vigorous working conditions for their subordinates, all of which represent entrepreneurial behaviour. Such behaviour ultimately leads to an increase in performance and high service quality for their banks, as these managers serve as role models for their subordinates. The argument was supported by Mohd Kamil et al. (2021), as they observed that managers play an essential role in driving an organization's success by seizing chances and making the most use of available resources. In order to maximise their comparative strength and resurrect superior service quality, it is crucial to enhance the exercise of entrepreneurial behaviour, particularly across the managerial levels.

Additionally, the findings in this study demonstrate the strong and positive relationship between job attributes, particularly job autonomy with entrepreneurial behaviour ( $\beta = 0.181$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). These findings imply that bank managers should have a higher tendency to engage in entrepreneurial behaviour when they have a high job autonomy, as it facilitates self-determination and empowerment. Job autonomy is also regarded as an elementary job resource that can satisfy an individual's basic needs in the workplace (personal growth, learning, and development). The findings are in accordance with previous studies (De Jong et al., 2015; Hornsby et al., 2009), which established a favourable and substantial link between job autonomy and entrepreneurial behaviour among managers. In a work setting, where the job holders are given the freedom to use their own discretion in handling tasks, they will more likely feel empowered, motivated, and be able to perform more effectively (Schenkel et al., 2019). Bank managers with

high job autonomy in Malaysian commercial banks are more flexible and adaptable to adjusting their regular routine to determine the most efficient ways to accomplish duties. The research findings indicate that such managers will have a higher tendency to possess entrepreneurial behaviour, especially when they have freedom and autonomy in organising and scheduling their work activities.

In contrast to the hypotheses presented, the relationship between job complexity and manager entrepreneurial behaviour was found to be negative ( $\beta = 0.018, p < 0.01$ ). The findings contrasted with those of Humphrey et al. (2007), who discovered a correlation between job complexity and work performance, satisfaction, and task involvement. A plausible explanation for the finding may be ascribed to the sample of this study. The average organizational tenure ( $M = 19.7$  years,  $SD = 7.0$ ) and job tenure ( $M = 6.4$  years,  $SD = 3.6$ ) indicate that the sampled managers are experienced people who can cope well and handle their job. With their high experience, the managers are more likely to view the complexities and intricacies of their job as part of their work routine, which may not stimulate them to make significant changes and seek new opportunities, as reflected in entrepreneurial behaviour. Hence, job complexity may not trigger entrepreneurial behaviour for bank managers.

### ***5.1 Theoretical and practical implications***

The banking sector is expected to continue providing higher-quality services and more value-added products, particularly for Asian businesses, considering harder operating conditions caused by economic instability, worldwide competition, and changing laws. The findings offer theoretical implications, as stated in the integrated research framework. The results of this research have the support the role of social cognition theory (Bandura, 1986) in determining the relationship between the variables in this study. Furthermore, the theory validates the impact of the environment on human development while also holding individuals accountable to self-improvement. This is founded on the principle of social cognitive theory, which states that every human is capable of revolutionising themselves into proactive and innovative individuals, only if they can gain appropriate skills. From this perspective, commercial bank executives have a predisposition for acquiring entrepreneurial traits, including change-oriented thinking

and foresight. Therefore, in order to foster a vibrant environment for entrepreneurial operations, managers with entrepreneurial behaviour will embrace any opportunities to increase organizational performance. This study explains how two predictor factors (personal and job) help in facilitating a manager's entrepreneurial behaviour in Malaysia.

The study provides practical recommendations for the banking sector, particularly for the top-level management to cultivate and enhance their entrepreneurial behaviour among bank managers. Based on the statistical analysis of this study, personal attributes (self-esteem and proactive personality) were found to be significant in intensifying entrepreneurial behaviour. The natural characteristics of bank managers determine the preferences of their behaviour; these are aspects that top-level management should consider during recruitment and selection process. Thus, there is a need to conduct formal personality tests, such as the proactive personality test, to examine the personality traits of potential bank managers. Furthermore, this study also revealed the importance of self-esteem in promoting entrepreneurial behaviour. Hence, top-level managers should also provide training for bank managers that focuses on developing self-esteem, to further increase their competencies. This training may boost their confidence levels, as during the sessions, they would be receiving support and encouragement from their colleagues and superiors. Accordingly, by increasing their self-esteem, the bank managers will be able to perform and with confidence, which will further lead to a functional impact, particularly in nurturing entrepreneurial behaviour.

By the same token, job autonomy also plays a vital role in stimulating entrepreneurial behaviour. Based on the findings of this study, other than escalating entrepreneurial behaviour, job autonomy can also increase the bank managers' level of organizational commitment. When bank managers are given the needed autonomy, there is a positive impact on their performance. For instance, bank managers can ensure the receipt of sale profits with better coordination, strategy alignment, and resources use, without any interference from the top management (Burcharth et al., 2017). Therefore, bank managers who have more autonomy in performing their daily tasks will show greater commitment to their work, resulting in increases of entrepreneurial behaviour. The reason being, a manager that acquires a high level of entrepreneurial behaviour may attain a higher KPI, which results in positive service delivery. Change-oriented managers will

be able to devise creative techniques of expediting at-the-counter customer transactions, which further promote the bank's efficiency, resulting in service excellence. Thus, the bank's KPIs (in terms of business operations) will be achieved. Similarly, managers who can generate a strategic vision for their banks will be able to come up with novel ways to attract future, and current, customers using various incentives.

## **5.2 *Limitations and future research needs***

The empirical data for this study comes from self-reporting, and a Harman's single-factor test is utilised to analyse any potential risks to the results analysis. Therefore, to tackle this limitation, future research should concentrate on collecting data from multifarious sources or levels, that regards the supervisory rating, as a precautionary step. Likewise, the study only examined a few categories of personal attributes and job attributes. Other dimensions of personal attributes (i.e., psychological empowerment, big-five personality) and job attributes (job crafting, job demand) should be utilized. Finally, this study only focuses on managers in the banking sector. Future research should consider the levels of various organizational hierarchies, such as the top and bottom levels of management.

## **6. Conclusion**

To recapitulate, the banking sector should be capable of achieving critical quality within the organization, particularly among managers, in order to provide high-quality service to clients. Managers that foster entrepreneurial behaviour become father figures for their employees. Managers can also stimulate their employees to engage in entrepreneurial behaviour, especially while carrying out their regular obligations. As a response, bank executives can influence their colleagues' behaviour, resulting in outstanding service deliveries. Overall, the empirical data collected provided additional knowledge to equip authorities (such as legislators) in articulating and optimising human capital strategies that can nurture managers' capacity to reinforce value.

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