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### Goal Realization Path Model of Local Malaysian Franchisees: The Mediating Role of Attitude and Subjective Norm

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**Abstract:** This empirical study examines the goal realization path model comprising of direct effects of plan enactment, subjective norm and attitudes on the goal realization and the indirect effects of goal desire, goal intention, implementation desire, implementation intention on goal realization. It also investigates the mediating effects of attitude and subjective norms on certain linkages. By employing the quantitative research design, this study uses the samples comprising of 400 local food franchise outlets in eight states in Malaysia (Johore Bharu, Klang Valley, Ipoh, Penang, Kota Bharu, Kuala Trengganu, Kucing and Kota Kinabalu). Data were obtained through self-administrated questionnaires. Out of the total 400 responses, only 122 data were usable for further analysis (31% response rate). This study analyses the data using Partial Least Square (PLS-SEM). The study found three direct predictors of goal realization, six significant paths and two significant mediating roles of attitude and subjective norm. This study is a new empirical findings for the franchising business sector. This empirical study on the determinants of goal realization of franchisee using the survey method to contribute towards a better understanding of the owners' motivation for realizing their organization's goal. Manager of a franchise can now comprehend better desire implementation factors that influence their company goal realization

**Keywords:** goal realization, subjective norm, attitudes, franchise, goal desire

#### I. INTRODUCTION

Malaysia has projected the franchise industry to make up 9.4% of the country's gross domestic products (GDP) by 2020 from 2.2% in 2010, to be supported by four strategic thrusts identified in the National Franchise Development Blueprint (NFDB), 2012-2016. The franchise industry generated a total revenue of RM25.6 billion in 2015, contributed by more than 400 local franchise companies. Despite the importance of franchising business in transforming Malaysian economy, there is still low goal realization among local franchisees which is evidenced from the less than 10% company value of local franchisees as compared to

about 23% company value by international counterparts. Top five Malaysian franchisors operating in Malaysia as at 31 August 2014 are Marrybrown, Secret Recipe, Old town white coffee, Papparich, and The chicken rice shop. The top five international franchisors are KFC, McDonald's, Pizza Hut, Dominos and Subway (KPDNKK, 2015). Hence this study intends to examine the factors that could lead to a better goal realization of local franchisees by borrowing from the goal realization theory developed by [1].

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### (A) Goal Realization

Goal realization (GR) is defined as the attainment of goal previously chosen by the decision maker [2]. While past studies had tested this model in personal goal realization, very limited studies have explored this model in franchising setting [3][4][5]. This study utilizes a combination of two underpinning theories: the goal realization underpinning theory developed by [1] hereafter called DBG Model (Figure 1) and theory of planned behavior [6] (Figure 2). According to DBG model, achieving goal realization is a seven step process whereby it commences with goal desire and perceived self-efficacy, which leads to goal intention, after which it leads to implementation desire, which then leads to implementation intention. From here, the potential decision maker proceeds to plan completeness and plan enactment after which goal realization will be achieved (Figure 1).

### (B) Plan enactment and Goal realization

Plan Enactment (PE) is “the degree of successful enactment of the chosen plan” [2]. There are several studies that have empirically examined the direct relationships between plan enactment and goal realization.

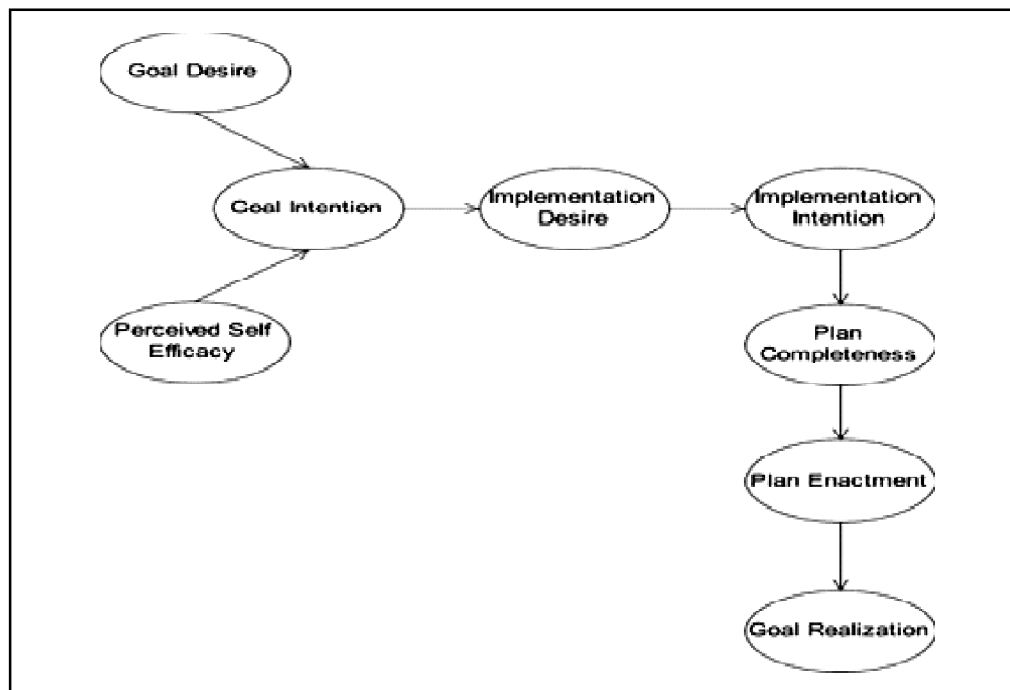


Figure 1: DBG Model

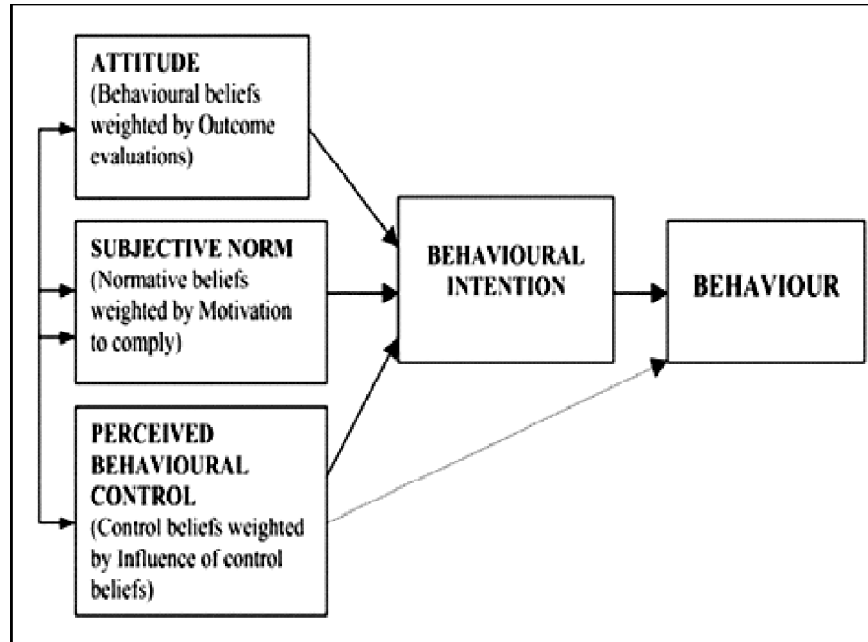


Figure 2: Theory Planned Behavior

However, the goals being observed are in non-franchise setting such as health: smoking cessation [7], personal goals [2], snacking behavior [8], volitionally chosen personal goals [1] and assigned goals [2]. Although the results were found to be consistently significant and positive, however, there are severe shortages of such study in franchise goal achievement [3]. Hence, the hypothesis proposed is H1: Plan enactment positively influences goal realization.

### (C) Attitude and Goal realization

Attitude (ATT) is defined as “a latent disposition or tendency to respond with some degree of favorableness or unfavorableness to a psychological object” [9]. Unlike previous study that links attitude with goal intention as postulated by [10] [11] [12] [13] and equating the intention in Theory of Planned Behavior as equal to goal intention in his Model of action phases [14] [2] links attitude as antecedent of implementation intention. The underlying reason for this relationship is image theory proposed by Beach & Mitchell (1987) that treats intention construct in Theory of Planned Behavior as implementation intention and not as goal intention. Consistent with this argument, then, the elements of TPB such as attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control or self-efficacy [9], then should be treated as antecedent of implementation intention and not to goal intention as proposed by [14]. The study shows positive and significant result. The higher the attitude towards performing a behavior, the higher the implementation intention would be. This means that it is promising to test the relationship between the two constructs. Thus, the proposed hypothesis is H2: Attitude is related positively to goal realization.

### (D) Subjective norm and Goal realization

[15] found out that subjective norm significantly moderate the relationship between perceived behavior control and buying intention. Subjective norm (SN) can be explained by perceived social pressure from

others to engage or not to engage in a behaviour [16][17]. In other word, it can be relating as individual's perception from others who are important to them such as family, friend, colleagues and others. Subjective norm emphasizes how the individuals would be viewed by refer the different groups if they perform any behaviour. Previous studies achieved that there is significant relationship between subjective norm to goal realization [16][18]. However, [2] found that the insignificant result between subjective norm and goal realization relationship. Hence, the hypothesis formulated for this study is H3: Subjective norm is related positively to goal realization.

#### **(E) Implementation intention and Plan Enactment**

Implementation intention (II) refers to the behavior that needs to be performed in order to achieve goal attainment [12]. Previous studies have shown inconsistent finding explaining the linkage between implementation and goal realization. Furthermore, most of the significant positive results were conducted in non-franchise setting such as entrepreneurship, health, education, social psychology, personal goal and self-management [19] [20][21][22] while [1] found insignificant result. Very limited studies were conducted in franchising. Past studies examining the relationship between implementation intention and plan enactment are scarce and unrelated to franchising setting. Although previous finding shows that there is consistent significant positive relationship between implementation intention and plan enactment, very little study can justify a similar finding in franchising [2][8]. Furthermore, most studies only used students as respondents. Hence, the utilization of implementation intention as antecedent of plan enactment is therefore promising. Thus, the proposed hypothesis is H4: Implementation intention is related positively to plan enactment.

#### **(F) Implementation desire, implementation intention, attitude and subjective norm**

Implementation desire (ID) measures how much an individual is willing to implement certain steps in achieving their desired goals [23]. Several studies that have studied the relationship between implementation desire and implementation intention have found significant positive linkage, but in no-franchise setting [2][1][24]. However, the existing study of this relationship is still limited to personal goal [2][1] health goal [19](Vries, et al., 2013) and patient blood glucose [24]. Furthermore, all studies were conducted in Western setting. Realizing that cultural differences may influence different result across different cultural setting [18], thus, revisiting this relationship in eastern culture is timely. Thus, three hypotheses are derived: H5: Implementation desire is related positively to implementation intention, H6: Implementation desire is related positively to attitude and H7: Implementation desire is related positively to subjective norm.

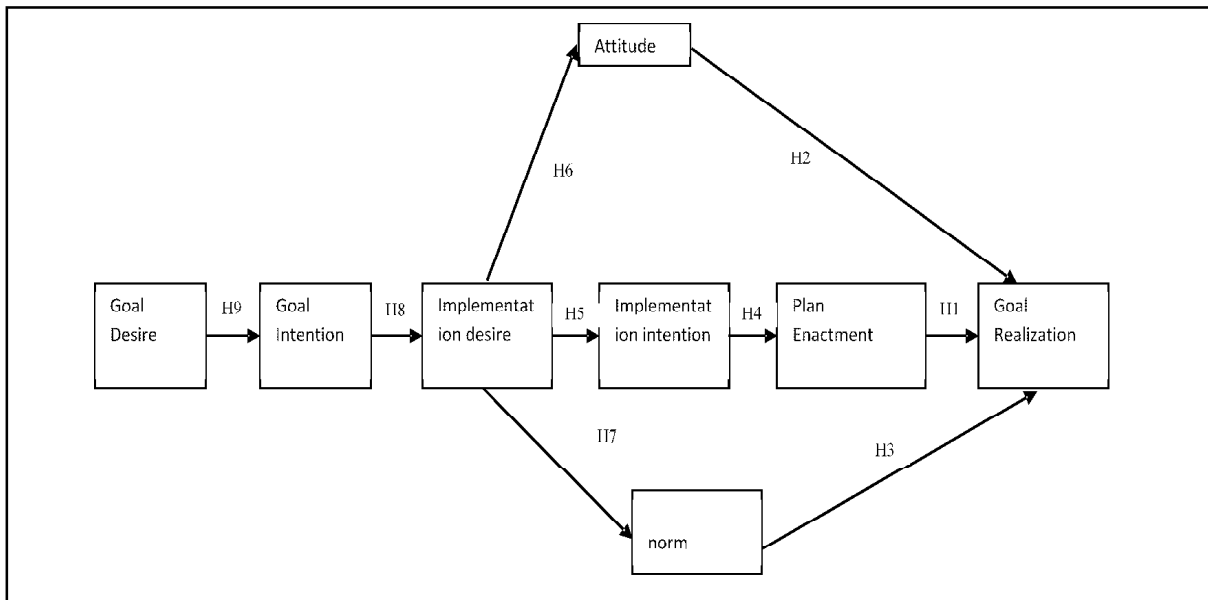
#### **(G) Goal intention and Implementation desire**

Goal Intention (GI) is the intention to perform a specific behavior or a series of behavior [25]. Numerous studies have mostly studied goal intention as antecedents of behavior while only a few studies that uses goal intention as direct antecedent of goal realization [3][1][2]. Previous examination on this linkage has found inconsistent findings [19][26]. Goal intention had been used in very large body of researches and had been proven as a significant and positive direct antecedent of implementation intention. A meta-analysis by [25] showed that goal intention is indeed the direct antecedent of implementation intention in very diverse field such as collecting coupon [27], eating low fat diet (Armitage, 2004), public transportation use [28], initiation of vocational training [29], prospective memory task [30] ,new year resolution [31] ,

exercise [32], testicular self-examination [33] and persistence to boring task [33]. Goal intention has consistently predicted implementation intention significantly and positively [34][2][28]. Previous finding shows the tendency of positive and significant relationship between goal intention and implementation desire [34][24][2][1]. Hence, the hypothesis proposed is H8: Goal intention is related positively to implementation desire.

**(H) Goal desire and goal intention**

Goal desire (GD) is defined as the motivational state of mind of the decision maker [2]. There are very limited studies investigating goal desire and goal realization in the past. The nearest construct name similar to goal desire that have been examined is ‘need for achievement’ [35] and goal frame [36]. Their findings show equivocal results in which ‘need of achievement’ significantly predict goal realization while goal frame do not. Goal desire is also related to goal intention. Previous studies have evaluated the relationship between perceived desirability or goal desire and goal intention show positive and significant result [37][2][1]. Also, the majority of the existing studies only used students as respondent [37][2][1] mostly focus on personal goal [2][1] the study stop at intention level [37][2], and in the Western setting. Thus, this study that deploy real entrepreneur is timely [38] and the different cultural setting of eastern country such as Malaysia might deliver a different result [18]. Thus, the proposed hypothesis is H9: Goal desire is related positively to goal intention.



**Figure 3: Research Framework**

**(I) Mediating roles of attitude between implementation desire and goal realization**

This study also proposes the role of attitude as a mediator on the relationship between implementation desire and goal realization. Positive attitude of respondents will improve the linkages between implementation desire and goal realization. Previous studies has examined this mediating role [39][40]. Hence, the proposed hypothesis is H10: Attitude mediates the relationship between implementation desire and goal realization

### **(J) Mediating role of subjective norm between implementation desire and goal realization**

Finally, this study also examines the mediating role of subjective norm on the relationship between implementation desire and goal realization. The influence of subjective norm is enormous on people [41][42]. Hence, this study proposes H11: Subjective norm will enhance the relationship between implementation desire and goal realization.

## **III. METHODOLOGY**

This study employs the quantitative approach research design, aimed at collecting actual data and consolidating new information and relationships between variables about the local food franchisees in Malaysia. Based on the literature discussed, this study develops a research framework as in Figure 3.

### **(A) Questionnaire design**

The study develops a structured questionnaire measuring the seven constructs depicted in the research framework measuring goal realization (5 items); plan enactment (5 items); implementation intention (6 items); implementation desire (5 items); goal intention (7 items); goal desire (7 items), attitude (8) and subjective norm (18 items). All questions utilize the 7-point Likert scale (Table 2).

### **(B) Sampling Method**

The population of local food franchisees is 6000 outlets in Malaysia in 2013 [43]. Based on this population frame, a sample size of 400 franchisees were selected [44]. The location includes main cities in Malaysia stratified according to eight regions (Johore Bharu, Klang Valley, Ipoh, Penang, Kota Bharu, Kuala Trengganu, Kucing and Kota Kinabalu). The respondents were local owners of food franchisers. The questionnaires were self administered by research assistants at these locations between July to December 2014. A total of 122 questionnaires were returned and analyzed representing 31 percent response rate. This is expected because the franchisees are quite reluctant respondents, probably due to the interruption of their business activities. Furthermore, the respondents are owners of franchisers and expected to be very busy people.

Analysis methods: This study utilizes partial least square (PLS-SEM) analysis method.

## **IV. FINDINGS**

### **(A) Demographic Profile**

The demographic profile of the respondents shows a higher percentage of male franchisees (60%) as compared to females (40%). Their education consists of 68 percent of the franchisees having diploma or high school education while 32 percent have degrees or post graduate education. The majority (80%) of the local franchisees are the Malays located in urban regions (51%). The brands involve in this study are the top five brands: Marry Brown, Old town white coffee, Secret Recipe, Cool Blog and Chicken Rice Shop.

### **(B) Construct Validation**

The validation of constructs are conducted through Cronbach alpha reliability, composite reliability, factor loadings, discriminant validity using average variance extracted (AVE) and multi collinearity. The constructs

are consistently reliable exhibiting scores of composite reliability between .884 and .930 and Cronbach alpha reliability of between .685 and .913 (Table 1). The low measurement loadings of items in each construct are deleted to increase the average variance extracted (AVE) and to reduce multi collinearity (Table 2). Hence, the discriminant validity is upheld for all constructs when square root of AVE is larger than the correlation coefficients (Fornell & Larker, 1981) (Table 3).

**Table 1**  
**Descriptive Statistics of Variables**

<i>Variable Name</i>	<i>No. of Items</i>	<i>Mean (Std.Dev)</i>	<i>Cronbach Alpha</i>	<i>Composite Reliability</i>
Goal Realization	5	5.54	0.906	0.93
Plan Enactment	5	5.34	0.899	0.925
Attitude	8	5.05	0.847	0.884
Subjective norm	18	5.35	0.913	0.908
Implementation Intention	6	5.35	0.882	0.914
Implementation Desire	5	5.80	0.876	0.94
Goal Intention	7	5.03	0.811	0.855
Goal Desire Total	761	5.35	0.685	0.884

**Table 2**  
**Measurement Items**

<i>Code</i>	<i>Items</i>	<i>Loadings</i>
ATT1	Compare to creating an independent business, franchising offers more job satisfaction (involvement in a successful business)	0.712
ATT2	Compare to creating an independent business, franchising offers training (especially marketing and finance)	0.775
ATT4	Compare to creating an independent business, risk in franchising is lower	0.610
ATT5	Compare to creating an independent business, franchise business with its brand offers more chance to be successful.	0.867
ATT6	Compared to creating an independent business, franchise business offers more family time	0.363
ATT7	Compared to creating an independent business, joint advertisement that franchise business offer gives more advantages in building a brand	0.758
ATT8	Compared to creating an independent business, joining a franchise offers more job satisfaction (involvement in a successful business)	0.479
GD3	Running a business with an established brand had been my lifetime passion	0.605
GD4	I am only interested in running a bullet proven business	0.801
GD5	Franchising business offers promising profit	0.819
GD6	I have strong desire to become a franchisee	0.796
GD7	My passion is to become a part of successful business network	0.846
GI1	Before becoming a franchisee, I always want to become a franchisee	0.861

*contd. table 2*

<i>Code</i>	<i>Items</i>	<i>Loadings</i>
GI2	Prior to buying a franchise, I could imagine myself doing franchisebusiness	0.813
GI3	I always think that the best way to start a business is by becoming a franchisee	0.765
GI4	Prior to becoming a franchisee, instead of creating an independentbusiness, I always think of becoming a franchisee	0.653
GI6	I always imagine myself to be a part of an established network ofentrepreneurs	0.600
GI7	I think 12 months are enough time to buy a franchise	0.502
GR1	I was able to achieve my goal of purchasing a franchise	0.831
GR2	I was successful in reaching my decision to become a franchisee	0.876
GR3	I was successful in reaching my decision of purchasing a franchise	0.863
GR4	My ultimate goal to become an owner of a low risk culinary businesshave come true	0.863
GR5	I have succeed in realizing my goal of owning a low risk business, that is by using a brand that have been proven to be successful	0.830
ID1	Prior to purchasing a franchise, I am planning some necessaryactions to purchase a franchise (e.g saving money, searching for location)	0.894
ID2	My overall desire to do necessary actions to purchase a franchise is strong	0.883
ID3	I always want to take necessary actions to purchase a franchise	0.823
ID4	I think it is important to do every necessary steps that is needed to purchase a franchise	0.877
ID5	In purchasing a franchise, I always wanted to implement all the steps that I have planned	0.872
II1	I set the time (eg, within 6 months, 2 months, etc.) to complete the purchase of a franchise	0.723
II2	I am committed / planned to buy a franchise in certain situations (such as when retired or when the children graduated from college)	0.681
II3	In purchasing a franchise, I make planning when I will finish the process (for example at August 4. 2014)	0.734
II4	I planned where I would buy the franchise (e.g at franchise exhibition, at franchisor's office)	0.897
II5	I planned the way of purchasing the franchise (e.g by paying cash or instalment etc)	0.868
II6	I make planning in of where, when and how I would purchase the franchise	0.880
PE1	I was able to do exactly as I had planned when purchasing a franchise' (e.g by installment or cash)	0.884
PE2	I achieved my goal of purchasing a franchise exactly where I had planned (e.g at franchise exposition or at franchisor's office)	0.871
PE3	I achieved my goal of purchasing a franchise exactly how long I had planned (le.g in one year, two years etc)	0.902
PE4	I achieved my goal of purchasing a franchise exactly how situation I had planned (e.g when I start my pension or when my children have graduated)	0.799
PE5	I was able to do exactly as I had planned when purchasing a franchise	0.757
SN1	I felt that people whose opinion I value (such as parents or teacher) agree of my decision to become a franchisee	0.759
SN10	Management consultant do influence me to buy a franchise	0.606
SN11	Franchise association do influence me to buy a franchise	0.603
SN12	Existing franchisee do influence me to buy a franchise	0.68

*contd. table 2*



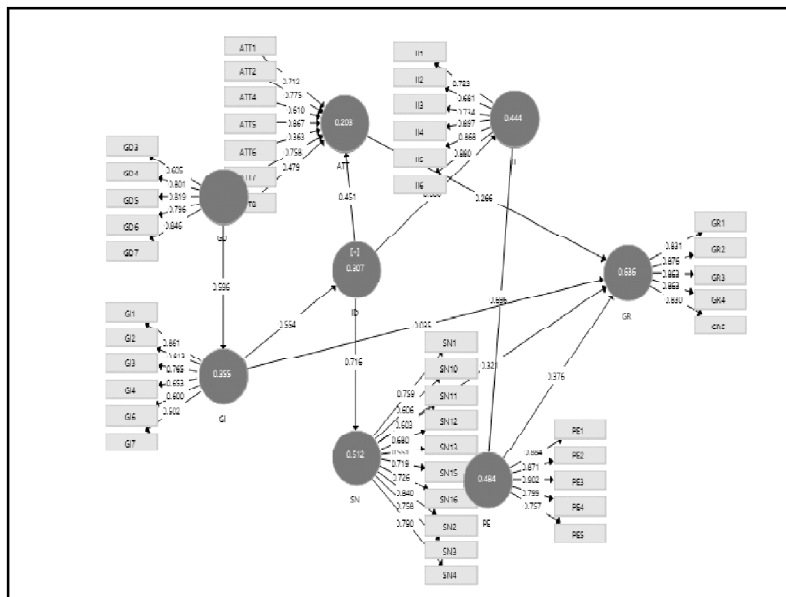
Code	Items	Loadings
SN13	Chamber of commerce do influence me to buy a franchise	0.551
SN15	Family (spouse) do influence me to buy a franchise	0.719
SN16	Family (parents) do influence me to buy a franchise	0.726
SN2	I felt that people whose opinion I value (such as parents or teacher) support my decision to become a franchisee	0.840
SN3	I felt that people whose opinion I love (such as spouse, family, and friends) agree of my decision to become a franchisee.	0.758
SN4	I felt that people that I love (such as spouse, family, and friends) support my decision to become a franchisee	0.79

**Table 3**  
**Discriminant Validity**

	ATT	GD	GI	GR	ID	II	PE	SN
Attitude (ATT)	0.725							
Goal Desire (GD)	0.457	0.778						
Goal Intention (GI)	0.506	0.586	0.71					
Goal Realization (GR)	0.563	0.49	0.51	0.853				
Implementation Desire (ID)	0.424	0.457	0.555	0.695	0.87			
Implementation Intention (II)	0.621	0.347	0.528	0.669	0.666	0.802		
Plan Enactment (PE)	0.525	0.333	0.441	0.672	0.596	0.696	0.844	
Subjective Norm (SN)	0.462	0.534	0.578	0.64	0.716	0.557	0.482	0.709

Notes: The diagonal is the square root of AVE > correlation coefficients, hence discriminant validity is upheld [44]

Figure 4 illustrates structural model as proposed in the research framework. It shows that the model consists of eight constructs and 52 items (after deletion of 9 items due to model fitting).



**Figure 4: Structural Model (PLS-SEM-after bootstrapping)**

**(C) Hypothesis Testing Result**

The results of standardized regression beta estimates and t-values are presented in Table 4. The results show that plan enactment positively influence goal realization ( $\beta = .375$ ;  $t=4.916$ ;  $p<0.001$ ), thus supporting hypothesis H1. Similar finding was supported in previous researches [7]; [3]; [8]; [2]. Similarly, attitude positively influence goal realization ( $\beta = .266$ ;  $t=3.415$ ;  $p<0.015$ ), supporting hypothesis H2. Likewise, subjective norm positively effects goal realization ( $\beta = .321$ ;  $t=3.957$ ;  $p<.001$ ). Hence, H3 is supported. Equally strong, implementation intention positively effects plan enactment ( $\beta = .696$ ;  $t=12.4$ ;  $p<.001$ ), thus, H4 is supported.

Correspondingly, implementation desire effects positively implementation intention ( $\beta = .666$ ;  $t=12.82$ ;  $p<.001$ ), hence supporting H5. Similarly, H6 and H7 are supported when implementation desire is both related positively to attitude ( $\beta = .451$ ;  $t=5.978$ ;  $p<.001$ ), and positively to subjective norm ( $\beta = .716$ ;  $t=15.112$ ;  $p<.001$ ). Consequently, goal intention is related positively to implementation desire ( $B=.554$ ;  $t=8.997$ ;  $p<.001$ ), hence H8 is supported. Finally, goal desire influence goal intention positively and significantly, thus, H9 is supported ( $\beta = .596$ ;  $t=10.526$ ;  $p<.001$ ).

Additionally, both attitude and subjective norm mediate the relationship between implementation intention and positively influence plan enactment, supporting H5 and H6. Implementation desire and self-efficacy also show a significant positive influence on implementation intention, hence H7 and H9 are supported. Goal desire however, do not influence implementation intention, indicating a non-support for H8.

To summarize, nine direct linkages and two mediating linkages are supported. The squared multiple correlation or regression squared explained 63.7 percent variance in goal realization. Hence the model is quite robust in explaining goal realization of franchise industry.

**Table 4**  
**Hypotheses Testing Direct Path Coefficient**

<i>Hypothesis</i>	<i>Path coefficient (β)</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>p-value</i>	<i>Significant level</i>
H1: Plan enactment → Goal Realization	0.376	4.915	0.000	Sig
H2: Attitude → Goal Realization	0.266	3.415	0.015	Sig
H3: Subjective norm → Goal realization	0.321	3.957	0.000	Sig
H4: Implementation intention → Plan Enactment	0.696	12.4	0.000	Sig
H5: Implementation desire → Implementation intention	0.666	12.819	0.000	Sig
H6: Implementation desire → Attitude	0.451	5.979	0.000	Sig
H7: Implementation desire → Subjective norm	0.716	15.117	0.000	Sig
H8: Goal Intention → Implementation Desire	0.554	8.997	0.000	Sig
H9: Goal Desire → Goal Intention	0.596	10.526	0.000	Sig

Notes: R<sup>2</sup> of GR= 0.637

**Table 5**  
**Mediating Effect Results**

<i>Hypothesis</i>	<i>Std. Beta</i>	<i>Std. error</i>	<i>t-value</i>	<i>95% LL</i>	<i>95% UL</i>	<i>Decision</i>
H10: Implementation desire → Attitude → goal realization	0.120	0.047	2.552	0.028	0.212	Sig
H11: Implementation desire → Subjective norm → goal realization	0.230	0.065	3.536	0.102	0.357	Sig

## V. DISCUSSION

The findings show that all hypotheses are supported indicating the robustness of the goal realization model when applied to the franchisees behavior in Malaysia. It seems that the franchisees abide to the path indicated in the model. In other words, there is no short cuts to be a successful franchisee. The franchisees perceived in order to achieve their goals, it is very important to follow the suggested paths starting with goal desire, followed by goal intention, implementation desire, implementation intention and plan enactment. This model has been proven in entrepreneurial setting using the PLS-SEM [26][37][20][46][47][48]. Hence, the theoretical implication indicates that this study adds new inputs to the existing body of knowledge in business which previously this model has been studied predominantly in health and medical field. Additionally, attitude and subjective norm play their roles significantly as full mediators between implementation desire and goal realization. The practical implication of the findings may suggest that it could possibly imply that franchisees need to have positive attitude as well as support from family and peers to achieve their desired goals especially when the implementation stage is in place [47].

## VI. CONCLUSION

This study has achieved its objective in investigating the factors that influence the goal realization of incumbent franchisees. It was found that to achieve success in franchising, the players need to follow the specified stages in the path model from goal desire to goal realization. All factors play important roles in achieving the goals. Goals of becoming a successful franchise can be realized as proven by the increased of local Malaysian franchisors going abroad into the international arena (KPDNKK, 2015).

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