Women's Leadership

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Abstract
An organization will not be successful if there is no leader to lead the organization towards excellence. There has been a tendency of differentiation in the leadership between man and woman because of their nature. But to be an effective leader in order to achieve the goal of the organization, the nature of femininity is simply not enough for a woman leader. On the other hand, there are other factors that also affect the effective leader.
Keywords: Women, leader, leadership, management

1 Introduction

What do **Tan Sri Dato' Sri Dr. Zeti Akhtar Aziz,** governor of Malaysian Central Bank (BNM), Zainah Anwar, the founder and the former head of Sisters in Islam (SIS), Datin Paduka Marina Mahathir, a well-known leader in many non-government organizations, and Dato' Jamelah Jamaluddin, the former chief executive officer of Kuwait Finance House (M) Bhd. have in common? They are all woman who brought their personal passions, convictions, energies, and strengths to their innovative efforts and exercise of leadership. Although quite different in their respective accomplishments, they share the common characteristics that placed them in counter-cultural leadership roles.

The involvement of women as leaders in an organization today shows that women now have taken steps towards a distinct change which are different with the women in the past. Their achievements today have made many parties proud for their involvement in the organization until it could reach its goals and objectives. The contributions of woman to Malaysia over the years to now are undeniable. Their services are not only at the local level, but beyond the international standard.

2 Women's roles in Malaysia

In traditional society, the role of women was limited to the role as assistant to the men. This can be seen from the type of work that they do such as their role in managing household and farming such as sowing and harvesting paddy to help their husband.

In politics and government, the status of woman has improved. The development of their status now can be seen at the same level as man. According to Abdul Hamid (1994), the same status of woman and man can be seen when woman are given the right to vote as early as the age of the establishment of our country.

In Malaysia, economics is an area that has been explored by woman in which men are quite liberal in opening the entry door and participation of woman. In the past, the role and function of woman in this field is very limited. But now, their number that working in the government and private sector is increasing as well as their distribution income. Although the number of woman workers more than man, but the number of people who involved in the decision-making level is still low compared to the man.

3 Women and leadership

Education is a factor that has opened up the opportunities for women to participate in national development. The involvement of woman can be seen almost in all sectors which once before only monopolized by men. In Malaysia, although the women as well as men have the opportunity to get the same education, but when they enter the work force, opportunities for women to reach decision-making positions is much lower when compared with men. According to Datuk Seri Rohani Abdul Karim, Minister of Women, Family and Community Development in her speech for Retreat Council of Women Entrepreneurs of the World Islamic Economic Forum, 68 percent of the new admission to higher education institution for the 2013/2014 session are women. However, a study on the labor force by the Department of Statistics shows that only 3.2 percent are woman managers and 14.8 percent are professional woman in our country (Berita Harian, 8 May 2014).

For the government, the woman is not only serving to strengthen the institution of the family, but also help to generate our economic growth (Arof, 2012). The commitment and determination by the Malaysia to the advancement of woman can be seen clearly through programs and policies that have been implemented until now. Among them, in 2004, the government has set a policy of 30 percent of woman in decision-making positions in the public sector. According to Datuk Seri Rohani Abdul Karim in her speech in conjunction with the launch of International Women's Day Celebration 2014, the development of this policy saw the number of woman holding the main positions in public sector (JUSA) increased from 18.8 percent in 2004 to 25.2 percent in 2006 and continues to soar to 31.7 percent at the end of 2012. The latest, their number has increased to 33.7 percent in 2013. Yet, according to Arof (2012), the number of woman in positions of senior management level

within the statutory body showed a decrease from 17.8 percent in 2004 to 13.6 percent in August 2012. Accordingly he said, to increase the participation of women in decision-making, the Ministry of Woman, Family and Community Development have implemented the *Women Directors' Programme beginning in 2012. The program was designed to increase the knowledge and the critical skills of high-potential women candidates to perform the role as a member of the board of directors for the company.*

In addition, each year the government also held the National Women's Day aims to give recognition to women for their contributions to the development and progress of the country. The celebration also provides information and knowledge to the community, especially to the woman about their role that are more challenging in the economic, social, and political field to bring honor to Malaysia.

According to Zakaria (2008), in Malaysia, the responsibility was given to the Ministry of Woman, Family, and Community Development to highlight women's issues in the country where the government has allocated RM1.8 million (US$ 0.5 million) for starts in 2001 to RM30.5 million (US$ 8.6 million) in 2005. The provision for this ministry have been increased over the years and in 2014, according to Dato' Sri Mohd Najib Tun Haji Abdul Razak, Malaysia Prime Minister in his speech for Budget Year 2014, the amount of RM 2.2 billion has been allocated to the Ministry of Woman, Family and Community Development to continue the development programs aimed at woman and family institution. Of the total, the ministry has allocated RM 4.5 million in Budget 2014 for Woman Directors' Programme.

3.1 Challenge and issue as a leader

Women leader often considered as an emotional, aggressive attitude on his subordinate and equally irrational in decision making due to the influence of emotions encountered when they held high positions in the organization. Other than that, the gender difference where the leadership talents within an organization often associated with men than woman are often also an issue and still plagues the dominance of woman in the main areas. According to the Malaysia Women's policy 2009, one of the important factors that influence the culture of an organization is the leader. As the founder and the leader is the man then logically the organizational culture is more likely to their value. This view is supported by Still (1994), in which according to him, at present there is insufficient evidence to suggest that organizational culture is a major obstacle for women to get to the level of leader. However, based on the Federal Constitution, the Pillars of National's Principle, and the National Social Policy, the National Women's policy in 2009 was support the ambition to achieve gender equity and balanced development and gender equality efforts to cultivate among all walks of life in all sectors, ensuring that the views and voices of woman received adopted in decision making at all levels and provide a conducive environment, including the formulation of women-friendly policies and legislation, in order to enhance the dignity and well-being of woman in all aspects including physical, economic, social, political, health, psychology and spirituality.

In addition, many of the challenges faced by woman leaders in the rapidly growing organization nowadays which requires competence and commitment. This challenge gave rise to a career-conscious dilemma because they need to work harder, productive, and professional. This sometimes causes them to deal with pressure and stress in the management, they need to work overtime and the dilemma of balancing housework and career.

A women also often associated with their caring nature which is does not matter at workplace or home. Woman with a career are facing a conflict to make it balance between career and family. The responsibility to make it balance between both career and family is one of the obstacles for women to be a leader.

3.2 Value practiced by woman leader

The values and ethics practiced by woman in top management in performing their duties are honesty, trust, sincerity, fairness, diligence, and showing a good appearance. Honest means parallel between the acts with what being pronounced. It is a noble nature of a true heart that leads towards goodness and salvation in this world and in the hereafter with deliver on promises and avoiding from lying.

Trust means something is entrusted in carrying out the responsibility given and responsible in terms of managing and maintaining the property and interests of the organization to ensure that no distortion in duties either in terms of time, power, money, equipment resources and manpower.

Sincerity means a clean heart, honest and pure. Individuals who are sincere in carrying out the work will be thoroughly and continuously improve the quality of work in addition to contribute to the welfare of society, although not being awarded to the execution of a task within the specified period of time regardless of whether during or after office hours.

Fair means stands in favor of the right in the division of tasks on the staff without any double standards by simply choosing a particular person in carrying out the assignment. While diligence means performing a task with focus and not prioritize the self-interest to ensure a smooth work and achieve goals according to what is planned that they are willing to sacrifice time and energy for the sake of the service and development of the

country and can improve the efficiency and productivity to new heights of excellence.

Showing a good appearance ethical means dressing in which always dressed accordingly set by the organization. With the dress code, women will not encounter or reduce sexual harassment in the workplace.

3.3 Factors that contribute to success woman leaders

According to Sahib (2011), in a debate titled Women Better Being Leader held in conjunction with the Women's Summit 2011, Dr. Lee who was one of the panels has stated that men and women have the characteristics of leadership. What makes woman stand out is their passion to work even if the man is said to have a dominant and dynamic nature, but when there is a crisis, they tend to run away from it. Unlike a women, they do not give up easily and be a good listener as well as innovative in all things. Statement by Dr. Lee also supported by Kanter (1976), where there are four factors that influence the leadership of the woman where the first is 'The Mother' which means maternal where women leaders tend to be such a mother with a sympathetic nature, a good listener, and easy to be a place to share the problem. The second is 'The Pet' where women leaders tend to be loved and nurtured by his subordinate staff as they assume a woman leader is not a stranger. Third, 'The Sex' which means women leaders considered as a factor motivating subordinates to work harder, not because they are forced, but due to their own desires. Fourth, 'The Iron Maiden' in which women leaders tends to be decisive in leading subordinates.

4 Conclusion

The change of Malaysian women especially in terms of status, role and welfare has made them as an important asset in the development of the country. However, the main challenge faced by woman now is to undertake a variety of roles in the household, at work or in society. Their active involvement outside of the family circle has claimed the women to deal with it wisely so as not to effect the development of the family.

Women leaders must be able to show the style and the tradition of the professional leadership, superior and dynamic that will expand their influence within and outside of the country. They must consist of high integrity and trust, have the knowledge and intensive skill, decorated with outstanding character and personality while having humility. According to Siraj (2000), women leaders must be held to the paradigm 'Great leaders produce other leaders' and not 'great leaders produce massive followers', so there will be a dynamic process in which the leaders of the new and energized continuously produced to fill the leadership spaces available. The opinions and the actions taken by the women leaders must reflect the maturity, fertility, sharpness and the sense of their mind to the extent of their charisma been respected and recognized by everyone in the organization and the community.

Women leaders have to be open mind to accept any criticism and reasonable from anyone to improve the quality of their leadership. In addition, they also must have a high communication skill with members and the public. A true leader has the confident to stand alone, the courage to make tough decisions and the compassion to listen to the needs of others. She does not set out to be a leader, but becomes one by the quality of her actions and the integrity of her intent. In the end, leaders are very much like eagles, they don't flock, you find them one at a time' (Siraj, 2000).

There are weaknesses for every advantage, the same situation occurred in the leadership of men and women. Although the men leadership are more held in this country, the greatness of women as leaders also determine the fate of the country. Thus, the space should be opened up to women to have the opportunity to improve their status of life by contribute to a group or organization as a leader because is not easy for women to forge the success.

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