THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEADERSHIP STYLES OF ESTATE MANAGERS AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF OIL PALM ESTATES IN TAWAU SABAH

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the material in this study is my own except for quotations, excerpts, equations, summaries and references, which have been duly acknowledged.

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ABSTRACT

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEADERSHIP STYLES OF ESTATE MANAGERS AND ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF OIL PALM ESTATES IN TAWAU SABAH

The relationship between leadership styles of estate managers and organizational performance of oil palm estates in Tawau, Sabah has conducted in this study. This study also has identify the leadership style of estate managers that implemented in area conducted and the effect with the organizational performance measured by employees performance in terms of executive and non executive levels. During this studied, two hundred five (205) respondents has participated to answer the questionnaire that distributed. The respondents answer was collected from eleven (11) estates and with different background of demographic. Majority of the respondent's gender is male with 92.2% from the total percentage of the respondents. In the other hands, the respondents aged within 21 years old to 30 years with experience majority range within 2 years to 5 years working experience. The data collected analyses with SPSS 20 version to find the statistical results. From the result analyses, it found that in performance factor one (1) the leadership style that has accepted in oil palm estate is laissez-faire dimension from Passive/Avoidant Leadership style (p=0.047, β =0.144) and for performance factor two (2) dimension accepted is idealized influence (p=0.033, β =0.163) from Transformational Leadership and management by exception - active (p=0.033, β =0.177) from Transactional Leadership style. Besides that, suitable leadership style in order to achieve work performance, t value is the very best to explain the level to gain in the long term success.



ABSTRAK

Hubungan di antara cara kepimpinan pengurus ladang dan prestasi organisasi di perladangan kelapa sawit, kawasan perladangan Tawau, Sabah telah dikaji dalam kes ini. Kajian ini juga telah mengenal pasti jenis – jenis kepimpinan pengurus ladang yang telah diaplikasikan dan kesan kepada prestasi organisasi yang diukur melalui prestasi golongan eksekutif dan bukan eksekutif. Untuk kajian ini, sebanyak dua ratus lima (205) responden telah mengambil bahagian untuk memberi respon terhadap borang soal selidik yang diberikan. Jawapan respon tersebut di ambil daripada sebelas (11) ladang meliputi latar belakang yang pelbagai. Majoriti responden adalah daripada kalangan lelaki dengan purata 92.2% daripada jumlah keseluruhan. Selain itu, responden yang berusia di antara 21 tahun hingga 30 tahun berserta pengalaman kerja 2 hingga 5 tahun merupakan reponden yang tertinggi. Data yang telah dikumpul di analisis menggunakan SPSS versi 20 untuk mengkaji keputusan statistik nya. Daripada data statistic, prestasi factor satu (1) dengan cara kepimpinan telah menerima dimensi "laissez-faire" daripada cara kepimpinan "Passive/Avoidant" (p=0.047, β=0.144) dan prestasi factor Kedua (2) telah menerima dimensi "idealized influence" (p=0.033, β=0.163) daripada "transformational leadership style" dan "management by exception – active" (p=0.033, β =0.177) daripada "transactional leadership style". Selain itu, cara kempimpinanyang terbaik untuk mencapai prestasi kerja adalah melalui nilai t yang di kaji dalam data statistic yang boleh diambil kira perlaksanaan nya dalam jangka panjang.



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

MPOPC - Malaysian Palm Oil Promotional Council

CPO - Crude Palm Oil

FFB - Fresh Fruit Bunch



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview

This chapter is an overview of the research conducted, the problem statement, purposes of the study, research questions, objective and the scope of the study. This study started with the introduction of the leadership situation in Malaysian workplace.

1.1 Introduction

According to the author, Mohamad, (2009), "Community leaders in Malaysia performed various roles such as leading a multi-racial team, change agent, problem-solver, negotiator, planning and conducting community programs, communicator, resource-linker and manager. In approaching those leadership roles, empirical evidences indicated that the leaders often have to use participative leadership approach in order to be effective". From the author finding we found that the dominant leadership in Malaysia is participative leadership style. Therefore this study has elaborated the leadership style other than participative in Malaysian context and in order to understand other second dominant leadership style besides participative style. The leadership styles in this study focus in the oil palm plantation industry, focus area in Tawau, Sabah, Malaysia.



In the oil palm organization of estate, Estate Manager hold responsible as leader and in managing daily estate operation. The leadership styles by the Estate Manager solving problems raised, and gains better understanding and improvement of performances of his subordinates. This is due to the Estate Managers are the one who authorized operation in the workplace and responsible for any cost incurred. The Estate Manager in the daily operation deal with the assistant manager, supervisor and admin officer in the workplace. Therefore, the style of estate manager deal with his employees has investigates, in order to understand if the styles has influence with performance in terms of quality and quantity presented.

Leadership in the organization which determined the performance of Estate Manager plays the important role to enhance the contribution of field workers due to Estate Manager Leadership style directly connected to the Estate Supervisor to field workers. Therefore, leadership style from Estate Manager to his subordinates and to field workers is interrelated. According to the author, Men, (2010), "leaders play an important role in the achievement of the organizational goals with creating climate that influence the employees". She also add the statement by the supporting form the other author said that effective leadership acts through improve the work outcomes. The managing and supervising by the Manager must be open in right way in order the involved party can understand what need to be done.

According to the author, Men, (2010), "good reputation reinforces the commitment to company's value, beliefs, mission, and objectives. By building



identification with the company, having the reputations as a good employer can fuel employee loyalty, motivation, and engagement, which is turn generate superior work performance and contribute to organizational effectiveness". Therefore, the Estate Manager may become the indicative to the organizational if they are also support with the relationship among his subordinates to be mutual understanding. Moreover in the oil palm industry, it is little complicated compared to other industries such as the manufacturing industry, due to different culture in the workplace and merging with the local culture. Therefore, it is need more understanding with the problems that arises in work progress such as delaying of work completeness and the low quality of work presented.

As shown in the figure 1.1.1, the Integrative Framework of Leadership where the framework shows that leadership style influences the performance in task doing in the organization. Leadership style shows the capabilities of performance in workplace can improve daily work operation. Therefore, the management must ensure that the leadership style in the workplace of oil palm industry must suitable when practicing it. Through the leadership, tasks can complete with quality and on time as instructed. Therefore, manager and his subordinates must encourage keeping in touch to discuss especially when there is a problem arise in the workplace in order to reduce the late completion and quality of the work done as requested and contribute to the high of company production.



Subordinates
Characteristics 1
AETK,NIND,INDIFF,PROF

Task
Characteristics 2
TASKFDB,ROUT,INSAT

Organizational
Characteristics 3
FORM,INFLEX,ADVSTF,
COHES,NOCTRL,SPAT

Performance, Organizational

commitment, role conflict, stress

Figure 1.1.1 Integrative Framework of Leadership

Sources: Wan Khairuzzaman, Ghulam and Muhammad Amir (2011)

Leadership

Style

- 1. "AETK" = Ability, experience, training, and knowledge, "NIND" = Need for independence, "INDIFF" = Indifference toward organizational rewards, "PROF" = Professional Orientation.
- 2. TASKFDB = Task provided feedback concerning accomplishment, "ROUT" = Unambiguous, routine, methodologically invariant tasks, "INSAT" = Intrinsically satisfying tasks.
- 3. "FORM" = Organizational formalization, "INFLEX" = Organizational inflexibility, "ADVSTF" = Advisory and staff support, "COHES" = Closely knit, cohesive, interdependent work groups, "NOCTRL" = Organizational rewards not within the leader's control, "SPAT" = Spatial distance between leader and followers.



1.2 Background of the study

According to the author, Arif, (2004), "Oil palm is the most important crop in Malaysia and the country is one of the world's leading producers of crude palm oil (CPO). Currently, Malaysia accounts for nearly 51 percent of the world's palm oil production (or 8 percent of the world's total oils and fats production) and 62 percent of the world's exports (or 22 percent of world exports of oil and fats) (Malaysian Palm Oil Promotional Council (MPOPC), 2003)". In contrast, the productions of oil palm in estate operation assist by the executive and non executive level to run daily task in oil palm. Therefore, it is important to understand the leadership style presented by the Estate Manager as leader in estate operation with the organizational performance in the oil palm industry in order to achieve high contribution of oil palm CPO.

To connecting the oil palm performance and leadership style, because it is important to the Malaysian economy, this study developed and choose works by Bass (1985), seeks to address the relationship between the independent variables, namely the leadership styles, contingent reward, management-by-exception (active), management-by-exception (passive), laissez faire, idealized influence (attributed), idealized influence (behavior), inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualized consideration, and the dependent outcome variables of effectiveness, extra effort and satisfaction (Rudiman, 2007).



In the other hand, according to the author, Shafie, Baghersalimi and Barghi, (2013), "Leaders take the necessary measures and establish human relationships to provide optimal use of human resources in their organization that among these measures we can refer to take correct leadership style". The author supports that the leadership style is important in order to provide necessary human relationship. This study will be elaborating the leadership style of Estate Manager in oil palm industry with organizational performance in Tawau, Sabah.

Moreover, to understand deeply about leadership style in the organization, figure 1.2.1 the five Meta leadership frameworks have presented. This framework show leadership style is connected with organizational performance and leaders are connected to lead up the organization. This answer the question of the topic discussed. Leadership styles by Estate Manager with regards as leader in the estate organization is important to measure with the organizational performance to ensure work run as planned. Besides other matters in the workplace rises that can interrupt the work process, the leadership capabilities of Estate Manager as leader in the organization can solve the problem rises with suitable leadership style performed. According to the author, Shafie, Baghersaliml and Barghi, (2013), "Use of the best style of leadership will lead to increased organizational effectiveness and efficiency. This research is therefore necessary to take steps to improve performance, because the performance is a valuable pre-requisite to organizational effectiveness". Therefore, the Estate Manager style and the organizational performance measure by the employee's performance, important because they are valuable asset to ensure the performance of the whole



organization. It is also to understand that the leadership in the oil palm industry comes in variable styles; therefore the management needs to have the ability to perform with suitable leadership style in the organization.

Adapted From: IAAP (2009)

Figure 1.2.1 Five Dimension of Meta Leadership Framework

1.3 Problem Statement

The main objective of this study is to find the relationship of leadership styles (estate manger) and the organizational performance. Leadership style by the estate manager need to investigate in order to link it with organizational performance, as found that poor organizational performance namely high of loosed fruit and uncollected FFB can lead to decrease of CPO revenue. As support by the Sime Darby plantation newsletter in 2008 said that, "loose fruit was not given much attention in the daily estate operation. Hence the collection of loose fruit was never taken seriously. Many of the



fruit was left to rot and when compared to a whole FFB whose oil to weight ratio is between 20% and 25%, loose fruit would have an oil-to-weight ratio of about 40%. This basically means that if the weight of one loose fruit is about 10 grams, four grams of it would be the weight of the oil".

Therefore, in the organization of palm oil industry, Estate Managers as leader are in the management level to determine the performance of organization because they are leader in estates and ability of Estate Manager to influence his subordinates doing excellence work can increase the CPO of oil palm. According to the author, Gonos and Gallo, (2013), "Management and the ability to lead are often equated. Leadership is a dynamic process of influencing people which, in certain organizational conditions, can have an effect on other members, with the aim of meeting the objectives of the group". In order to achieve the goals, performance of subordinates really demanded. Failure to perform in organization means failure to achieve the goals and completeness. Therefore, Estate Manager needs to assess the performance of his people in the workplace. Failure of work completed with satisfactory by the management, is one of the symptom of failure in the leadership lines. In the oil palm industry, the task complete efficiency determined the achievement of work such as the completeness of piece rate work. Failure of achieving the work targeted lead to delay of other work as program. It is valued to the Estate Manager if he can detect any problem that arises before it affects to other works be delayed.



1.4 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between leadership style of the Estate Manager and organizational performance in the oil palm estate in Tawau, Sabah.

1.5 Research Question

- a) Does the Transactional leadership have a relationship with organizational performance in Oil Palm estate?
- b) Does the Transformational leadership have a relationship with organizational performance in Oil Palm estate?
- c) Does the Passive/Avoidant leadership have a relationship with organizational performance in Oil Palm estate?

1.6 Objectives of the study

d) To examine the relationship between Transformational leadership, Transactional leadership, Passive/Avoidant leadership with organizational performance in Oil Palm estate.

1.7 Scope of the study

This study concentrated on the palm oil estate in Tawau, Sabah focusing the Estate Manager Leadership style and the relationship with organizational performance. It is



cover the executive and non executive staff perceptions of the leadership style of Estate Manager and the organizational performance in the oil palm industry. The investigation the relationship of Estate Manager Leadership style with performance is taken from Assistant Manager, Estate Supervisor, Assistant Admin Officer, and Admin Executive from various backgrounds of profiles such age, gender, marital status, salary and their level of education.

1.8 Significance of the study

This study is significant as a reference to all executives and non-executives in the organization of the oil palm industry. In order to understand the leadership styles of the Estate Manager and the relationship with the performance in the organization, this study useful to organization in the oil palm industry. Besides that, it is hoped that this findings will give benefit to the organization to gain more excellent performance in CPO contributions. The inspiration of conducting this study is from the awareness to reduce the "uncollected of FFB" and "loose Fruit" in order to increase the achievement of oil palm CPO to Malaysian economy, to improve the qualities of work done by Estate Manager and his subordinates in the oil palm industry. Therefore, this study helping the estates organization by giving different types of solutions of leadership styles in the oil palm industry for their performance in future.

Furthermore, it is also hoped that this study helpful to the top management of the oil palm industry namely the Managers, Senior Managers, General Manager, CEO even the Chairman by using the relevant findings to improve and deal with the Estate



Manager, especially in regards to the relationship with performance. This study will also be useful to the future researchers, students and academics who are investigating to get more understanding of estate leadership style and relationship with the performance.

1.9 Definition of key variable

1.9.1 Leadership

This leadership concept from past researcher (Rudiman, 2007) used to develop the relationship between leadership styles and organizational performance. Besides that, the leadership style will be used as guidance for the manager to lead the organization on the right track. According to the author, Yukl, (2013), "various leadership functions maybe carried out by different people who influence what the group does, how it done, and the way people in the group relate to each other". Due to importance of the leader in the organization, it is valuable for the leader to perform and manage their resources in the right ways.

1.9.2 Leadership Style

The independent variable for this study is Transactional leadership, Transformational leadership and Passive/Avoidant leadership. According to the author, D.D Warrick, (1981), "the leadership style defined as their style characteristic, and implicit leadership philosophy, and set of management skill typical of each style". Therefore, the leadership styles elaborate the leader's places on performance and people.



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