THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND COLLABORATIVE BEHAVIOR WITH LEADERSHIP STYLES AMONG THE KADAZANDUSUN GRASSROOTS LEADERS IN SABAH.

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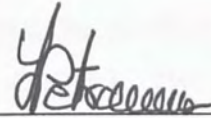## SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH 2013

DECLARATION

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

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ABSTRACT

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND COLLABORATIVE BEHAVIOR WITH LEADERSHIP STYLES AMONG THE KADAZANDUSUN GRASSROOTS LEADERS IN SABAH

This study aims to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership style and also the relationship between collaborative behavior and leadership styles among the Kadazandusun grassroots leaders in Sabah. A cross-sectional study was conducted randomly among the Chairman of JKKK and Village Head of the Kadazandusun from five identified districts and three suburban villages in the West Coast of Sabah. Self-administered questionnaires were used to collect data. The main interest is to examine the leadership styles among the Kadazandusun grassroots leaders, the biggest community in the state of Sabah, Malaysia. Model of the study was based on the proposition that emotional intelligence and collaborative behavior influences decisions and actions, which in turn determine leadership styles. Data analysis included descriptive statistics, factor analysis, reliability test, and multiple regression analysis. A total of 211 sets of completed questionnaires were used for data analysis. Most of the respondents (64%) came from the Chairman of JKKK and the other (36%) came from the Village Head. It was found out that there was a significant relationship between collaborative behavior and leadership styles. All dimensions of EI attribute variable although being group into few components after the factor analysis was conducted like self-awareness-empathy, self-awareness-managing emotions-empathy, motivating oneself-managing emotions, social-skills and motivating oneself were found to have significant relationship with leadership styles of authoritarian-democratic, democratic and laissez-faire-authoritarian leadership styles. In conclusion, there are three combined main factor and two single factor that encourage the Kadazandusun grassroots leaders to exhibit their leadership styles.

ABSTRAK

Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk mengkaji hubungan antara atribusi kepintaran emosi dan gaya kepimpinan serta hubungan antara tingkahlaku kolaboratif dengan gaya kepimpinan di kalangan pemimpin akar umbi kaum Kadazandusun di Sabah. Kajian keratan-rentas ini telah dijalankan ke atas Pengerusi JKKK dan Ketua Kampung dari kalangan Kadazandusun daripada lima daerah yang telah dikenalpasti dan tiga perkampungan separa bandar di kawasan pantai Barat Sabah. Soal-selidik yang dikendali sendiri telah digunakan untuk mengumpul data. Tujuan utama adalah untuk mengenalpasti gaya kepimpinan di kalangan pemimpin akar umbi Kadazandusun, penduduk yang paling ramai di negeri Sabah, Malaysia. Model kajian ini adalah berdasarkan kepada proposisi bahawa kepintaran emosi dan tingkahlaku kolaboratif mempengaruhi keputusan-keputusan dan tindakan-tindakan, yang akhirnya akan menentukan gaya kepimpinan seseorang pemimpin. Penganalisaan data termasuklah statistik deskriptif, analisis faktor, ujian keboleharapan, dan analisis pelbagai regresi. Sejumlah 211 set soal-selidik yang lengkap telah digunakan untuk penganalisaan data. Kebanyakan responden (64%) adalah di kalangan Pengerusi JKKK dan (36%) adalah di kalangan Ketua Kampung. Analisis regresi mendapati bahawa terdapat hubungan yang signifikan di antara kepintaran emosi dan tingkahlaku kolaboratif dengan gaya kepimpinan. Kesemua dimensi atribusi EI walaupun ada yang digabungkan selepas analisa faktor digunakan telah menunjukkan hubungan signifikan yang positif dengan gaya kepimpinan authoritarian- demokratik, demokratik dan laissez-faire-authoritarian. Kesimpulannya, terdapat tiga gabungan faktor utama dan dua faktor yang berasingan telah mendorong pemimpin akar umbi Kadazandusun untuk memilih gaya kepimpinan.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EI	Emotional Intelligence
JKKK	Rural Development and Security Committee
	Jawatankuasa Keselamatan dan Kemajuan Kampung
CB	Collaborative Behavior
SN	Self-Awareness
AUT	Authoritarian
DEM	Democratic
LAS	Laissez-Faire
AUTDEM	Authoritarian-Democratic
LASAUT	Laissez-faire-Authoritarian
EMP	Empathy
MO	Motivating Oneself
ME	Managing Emotions
SOCS	Social – skills
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

Despite a substantial amount of research on leadership, there is still much uncertainty about what is required to be an effective leaders (Kets de Vries, 1993; Higgs and Rowland, 2000; Higgs, 2003). Questions still remain around why intelligent and experienced leaders are not always successful in dealing with environmental demands and life in general. Perhaps what leaders need is emotional intelligence (EI) rather than cognitive intelligence or specific personality traits?

However, there has been little research investigating this possibility. The few studies that have been published have tended to focus on leadership effectiveness from the view point of Bass and Avolio's (1990, 1994) transformational/transactional leadership model (Gardner and Stough, 2002). This research has been valuable in understanding the link between EI and leadership styles, but it has yet to examine the indices of leadership styles.

Previous studies on emotional intelligence and leadership styles are consistent to suggest that it is the emotional intelligence that makes an individual superb leader but its contribution and effect are often ignored, undervalued and often do not get its due (Goleman, 1998b).

Studies have also found that emotional intelligence contributes more to leadership effectiveness than cognitive intelligence (IQ). These findings propel for more studies to enlighten further the subject of emotional intelligence and its relationship to leadership styles as Goleman (1998b) puts it:

"It would be foolish to assert that good-old fashioned IQ and technical ability are not important ingredients in strong leadership. But the recipe would not be complete without emotional intelligence. It was one thought that the components of emotional intelligence were 'nice to have' in business leaders. But

now we know that for the sake of performance, these are ingredients that leaders 'need to have' ". Goleman (1998b:102).

The 21st Century has awakened a call for "new" leaders to cope with the demands of the rapidly changing world of work which emphasizes flatter structures, and a more democratic style of leadership. In research conducted by Coetzee and Schaap, it is cited by Lewis, Goodman and Fandt (1998:14) that we are faced with " A conditioned of rapid, dramatic, complex and unpredictable change that has a significant effect on the ways in which organizations are managed." When looking at the changing competencies of the "new" leader, Coetzee and Schaap postulate that leadership takes into consideration the emotional attributes as well as the rational aspects of the individual. From this it becomes evident that the leaders of the 21st century would have to be emotionally intelligent to motivate employees to achieve organizational goals.

Literature review seems to suggest that emotional intelligence (EI) is one of the most important aspects that determine leadership styles. Burkham (2010) characterizes emotional intelligence concept is one of the breakthrough in leadership effectiveness and styles.

Empirical studies findings suggest that to succeed in life we need high level of emotional intelligence. This quantitative leadership study among the Kadazandusun grassroots leaders in Sabah attempts to investigate how emotional intelligence and collaborative behavior of an individual leader positively related to his or her leadership styles.

Grassroots leaders can be defined as members of a formal organization who engage in bottom-up activities (Kezar, 2011). Grassroots leaders work with like-minded others by acting collectively to bring about some type of qualitative improvement or social change to their community.

The term grassroots leaders is also used interchangeably with the term community leaders, where these leaders are normally volunteers, known within the local community, who work with others on an issue of common interest for improvement and change (Creyton and Ehrich, 2009).

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In this study, grassroots leaders of the Kadazandusun refers to the Chairman of JKKK and Village Head of the Kadazandusun, the biggest community in Sabah.

1.2 Problem Statement

There is always a leader in every successful organization and in fact an institution is the lengthened shadow of one man (Sonnenfeld, 1995). But on the other hand, ineffective leadership can be disastrous and can lead to failure. Sabah in particular is not an exemption especially among the Kadazandusun grassroots leaders . In this information age era, it is obvious that the Kadazandusun grassroots leaders are not able to build genuine understanding among their followers or community. Apart from not able to influence their followers or community, most of them lack the ability to sense how their followers or community begin to feel discouraged or dissatisfied. They are not able to prevent their followers or community from feeling dissatisfied with their decisions.

Leadership involves influence, intention, change, personal responsibility, shared purpose and followers or community (Mohd Shah Hosseini, Abu Daud Silong, Ismi Arif Ismail, 2013). However, it is noted lately that most of the Chairman of JKKK and Village Heads who is framed in this study as the Kadazandusun grassroots leaders lacks initiative in dealing with social challenges and they are not able to boost their performance as a team.

Some of the Kadazandusun grassroots leaders are reluctant to work collaboratively, not able to share their successes, not able to behave in ways that enhance relationship and the worst thing is that not able to prioritize the giving and receiving of feedback as a way of developing their social performance (Ongkili, 2000).

The leadership reality among the Kadazandusun grassroots leaders today is a bit alarming. They are not able to develop a capacity to step into someone else's shoes and they will not stay open to new opportunities and majority of them manage change negatively.

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What realities do the Kadazandusun grassroots leaders face? How do they manage the challenge of multigenerational community? Are they able to understand and overcome generational gap in their community? When are they going to minimize the communication problems encountered in managing and understanding the four generations of Traditionalist (Born 1925-1945), Baby Boomers (Born 1946-1964), GenX (Born 1965-1980) and GenY (Born 1981 and after) within their community.

This study aims to investigate the relationship between emotional intelligence and the leadership styles of the Kadazandusun grassroots leaders based on their self-awareness, managing emotions, motivating oneself, empathy and social skills which is the main attributes of emotional intelligence in this study.

Model of study is based on proposition that there is a positive relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership styles which in turn determine leadership styles. At the same time, this study will also look into the relationship between collaborative behavior and leadership styles within the Kadazandusun grassroots leaders.

1.3 Research Questions

The research question of this study are used to examine:

a) What are the key factors that contribute to leadership styles among the kadazandusun grassroots leaders in Sabah?

b) Does the perception of the Emotional Intelligence attributes have a positive effect on leadership styles among the Kadazandusun grassroots leaders?

c) Does the perception of Collaborative Behavior have a positive effect on leadership styles among the Kadazandusun grassroots leaders?

1.4   Research Objectives

The research objectives of this study are as follows:

a)   To examine and to investigate if there is a relationship between EI attributes of self-awareness, managing emotions, motivating oneself, empathy, and social skills with leadership styles among the Kadazandusun grassroots leaders.

b)   To examine and to investigate if there is a relationship between Collaborative Behavior and leadership styles among the Kadazandusun grassroots leaders.

1.5   Significance of the Study

The significance of this study can be categorized as follows:

1.5.1 Academic Contribution

The result of this study will helps to add more existing literature on this area, especially on the relationship between emotional intelligence and collaborative behavior with leadership styles among the Kadazandusun grassroots leaders in Sabah.

1.5.2 Managing Differences In Opinion and Attitude

The information and result of this study will be useful for any individual leader to manage differences in opinion and attitude among their communities. Thus it may lead to productivity, teamwork, innovation and efficiency.

1.5.3 Teamwork Improvement

The result of this study will helps anyone who wishes to harness the power of emotional intelligence and collaborative behavior for teamwork improvement. Those who wish to help individuals and groups to become more emotionally intelligent and can easily get along with other people can use the findings of this research as a starting point.

1.5.4 Government Policy

The result and information of this study will supplement and support the government effort of "*Rakyat Didahulukan, Pencapaian Diutamakan*". In this respect, the lower level of leadership within the grassroots level will be able to perform their task effectively through formal training interventions or human resource policies by incorporating emotional intelligence and collaborative behavior to improvise relationship in any groups or communities within our multi-racial country.

1.6   Scope of Study

The scope of this research is focused on the following areas:

1.6.1 Grassroots leaders within the Kadazandusun community

Kadazandusun grassroots leaders who are totally involved with the social and economic problems of their respective villages: the Chairman of Rural Development and Security Committee (JKKK) (*Pengerusi Jawatankuasa Keselamatan dan Kemajuan kampung)* and Village Head *(Ketua Kampung).*

1.6.2 Chairman of Rural Development and Security Committee (JKKK)

Chairman of JKKK or *Pengerusi Jawatankuasa Keselamatan dan Kemajuan Kampung* is elected by the people of the respective village. He is a leader who commands the voice of the people of that particular village. Normally the chairman of JKKK will chair a monthly meeting to discuss current issues especially on the security and development of their respective village.

1.6.3 Village Heads

Village Heads or *Ketua Kampung* is elected by the people of the respective village. Previously, the appointment of a village head is traditionally inherited from their ancestors. The village heads will report problems, complaints, and appeal from the people of their respective village to the District Officer.

1.7 Definition of Terms

1.7.1 Emotional Intelligence (EI)

Emotional intelligence (EI) is defined as the ability to understand and manage both our own emotions, and those of the people around us. People with a high degree of emotional intelligence usually know what they are feeling, what this means, and how their emotions can affect other people. For example, for leaders, having emotional intelligence is essential for success (Mayer *et al.,* 2004). Emotional intelligence is the ability to monitor one's own and other's feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions. In this study, emotional intelligence is postulated as the subset of social intelligence that refers to the ability of an individual to perceive, to process, to understand, and to manage emotions in self and others, and this emotional information guide's one's thinking and actions and this will be used as the operational definitions of the studied variables in this study.

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1.7.2 Self-Awareness

Self-awareness is defined as the ability to recognize and understand our own moods, emotions, strengths, weaknesses, needs and drive as well as its impact on others – knowing our emotions (Goleman, 1998). Self-awareness is the first attribute of emotional intelligence model developed by Daniel Goleman. According to (Goleman, 1998b), self-awareness is the keystone of emotional intelligence as well as the foundation of personal growth and success.

1.7.3 Managing Emotions

Managing emotions in this study is defined as the ability to control or redirect disruptive impulses and moods, flexibility in handling change, the ability to innovate and managing our own emotions. Individual with high level of ability in managing emotions are capable of channeling them in useful ways. Individuals who are capable to control their feelings and impulses are able to create an environment of trust, fairness, and enhance integrity which is important in effective leadership (Goleman, 1998b).

1.7.4 Motivating Oneself

Motivating oneself can be defined as the individual's ability to work consistently towards their goals. They have extremely high standards for the quality of their work. Motivated individuals are usually optimistic, no matter what they face. In other words, motivating oneself will makes us hopeful and find something good. It helps us to know where we stand and at the same time we are able to understand why we are doing something or why we wanted a particular task or job. Motivating oneself is the third attribute of emotional intelligence model developed by Daniel Goleman.

1.7.5 Empathy

Empathy is defined as the ability to understand and recognize the emotional makeup of other people and the skill to treat people according to their emotional reactions. Empathy is the most easily recognized dimension of emotional intelligence and it is important as a component of leadership because of the increasing use of teams, rapid pace of globalization and the growing need to train talent. (Goleman, 1998b). Leaders with empathy not only empathize with people around them but they used their knowledge to improve their companies in subtle but important ways (Goleman, 1998b).   Empathy is the fourth attribute of emotional intelligence model developed by Daniel Goleman.

1.7.6 Social-Skills

Social-skills is defined as the individuals' proficiency in managing and handling relationship, building networks, and the ability to find common ground and build relationship – for instance persuasiveness, conflict management, and leadership skills (Cadman *et al.*, 2001: Goleman, 1998b). Social skills is friendliness with a purpose that is moving people in the direction we desire (Goleman, 1998b). Individuals with high emotional component of social skills tend to have a wide circle of acquaintances and have the ability to build rapport. Social skill is the outcome of other components of emotional intelligence. Social skill is considered as a key effective leadership capability because it contributes to the quality of leader member exchange, which in turn determines effective leadership (Goleman, 1998b). Social skills or relationship management is the fifth attribute of emotional intelligence model developed by Daniel Goleman.

1.7.7 Authoritarian Leadership Style

Authoritarian leadership styles can be defined as a leadership which gives due emphasis on rewarding and punishing followers or subordinates. Normally, authoritarian leadership perceive followers or subordinates as needing direction. The authoritarian leader needs to control followers or subordinates and what they

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