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LEADERSHIP IN TOURISM AGENCY IN SELANGOR

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LEADERSHIP IN TOURISM AGENCY IN SELANGOR

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This project is submitted
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for a
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The project entitled 'Leadership In Tourism Agency In Selangor' was prepared by Nur Hayatun Syamila Binti Mohd Nizam and submitted to the Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Bachelor of Science with (Honours) Human Resource Development.

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ABSTRACT

LEADERSHIP IN TOURISM AGENCY IN SELANGOR

This paper is focus to explore the leadership among the employees at the private tourism agency in Selangor which is Al-Balad. This paper used qualitative approach in exploring and dig more about leadership in tourism agency in Selangor. The population used was three employees which were two females and one male. There were three main points or aspects identified in the research which are the importance of leadership towards work performance from the perspective of employees, the challenges of the current leadership in the tourism agency and the strategies to overcome the challenges. It was found that leadership is really important in the tourism agency and characters of a leader also play an important role especially in influencing their subordinates in performing their tasks. Hence, this research also found that the characters of a leader can influence how their subordinates response toward the challenges happened in the tourism agency. On the other hand, the research also contributes to the P-B Theory, employee, HR practitioner and to the tourism agency itself.

Keywords: Leadership, importance of leadership, challenges, strategies, characters of a leader, P-B Theory.

ABSTRAK

KEPIMPINAN DI AGENSI PELANCONGAN DI SELANGOR

Kajian ini berfokus pada penerokaan mengenai kepimpinan di kalangan pekerja di agensi pelancongan peribadi di Selangor iaitu Al-Balad. Kertas ini menggunakan pendekatan kaulitatif dalam meneroka dan menggali lebih mengenai kepimpinan di agensi pelancongan dalam di Selangor. Populasi yang digunakan adalah seramai tiga orang pekerja terdiri daripada dua perempuan dan seorang lelaki. Terdapat tiga isi penting atau aspek yang dikenalpasti dalam kajian ini iaitu kepentingan kepimpinan terhadap prestasi kerja dari perspektif pekerja, cabaran mengenai kepimpinan dalam agensi pelancongan dan rancangan-rancangan untuk mengatasi cabaran. Terbukti bahawa kepimpinan sangat penting dalam agensi pelancongan dan keperibadian ketua jua memainkan peranan penting terutama dalam mempengaruhi orang bawahan mereka dalam melakukan tugas mereka. Selain itu, kajian ini juga mendapati bahawa keperibadian seorang ketua boleh mempengaruhi tindak balas orang bawahan terhadap cabaran yang timbul di dalam agensi pelancongan. Sementelahan itu, kajian ini juga menyumbang kepada Teori P-B, pekerja, praktikum HR dan juga kepada agensi pelancongan itu sendiri.

Kata kunci: Kepimpinan, kepentingan kepimpinan, cabaran, rancangan, keperibadian ketua, Teori P-B

CHAPTER 1

Overview of Study

1.0 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview about the study. This chapter begins with background of study, problem statements, research objective, research questions and research framework. The researcher also will discuss the significance of study, limitation of the study and the definition of terms.

1.1 Background of study

As we know, every organization in this world have their own leadership style and leaders that will lead the organization to achieve their goals. This also including organization in Malaysia no matter whether it is small or big organization. Organizations always have to attempt to improve and increase their employees' performance (Fitrianingrum, 2019). Therefore, based on Selvarajah and Meyer (2008) stated that Malaysian leader maintain their personality, characteristic, attitudes based on ethnic lines and the image of Malaysian leadership is still in its beginner stage. This statement was supported with in this era, organization need effective leaders that can identify and understand the complexities about the rapidly changes happened in global environment (Nanjundeswaraswam & Swam, 2014).

Based on what Chun-Hs iung Fang said leadership style in organization can give impact towards organizational commitment and work satisfaction among the employees. Not only that, Podsakoff said that the behaviour of leadership also can give affect towards the employees' trust and satisfaction to the organization. While, according to Naile and Selesho (2014), leadership enables the supervisors or managers to impact the performance of employee in an organization. Leadership style also can influence the culture in the organization and can affect the organization's performance. (Nanjundeswaraswam & Swam, 2014)

In this millennial era, people can travel around the world and tourism agency is one of medium that play important roles in handling the tourists. According to Spector (2020), the tourism and hospitality industry are a fast-paced and high-pressure environment that can influence employees' physical and mental issues. The pressure can lead the employees towards poor performance and indirectly will affect the communication in guiding the tourist thus, it will make the tourist unhappy and unsatisfied with the service. This can bring negative image that the tourists got from travelling in Malaysia.

Nowadays, a learning organization will always try to adapt current era in handling the organization. So, it is a must for the leaders to adapt to the current and modern era in leading the organization to develop the employees that majority of them are millennials. This is because the millennials are the future asset and they are involving in the current workforce. According to Moorthy (2014), the millennials are occupying the workforce and it is important for the leaders to understand the millennials' characteristics and preference in order to increased their contribution to the organization. This also supported by Fitrianingrum (2019), leadership focuses on the leader and the process in motivating the subordinates in achieving the organizations' goals.

According to MD Asadul etc al (2018), transformational leadership style gave a great impact towards the retail industry in Malaysia. This study also supported by Hoxha (2019) with his study which transformational leadership also influenced the employees' performance in the telecommunication company in Malaysia. Transformational leadership is also one of the leadership styles and most of researchers found that leadership styles can affect employees' performance in organization. This shows that most of the researcher doing their study in a different sector of organization in Malaysia and most of them used quantitative methods when conducted their studies.

According to Keqekolla, S. (2014), both men and women have different characteristics in leaderships in order to be a competent as a leader in the organization. The stereotype of gender that usually happen can impact the chances of the leaders to show their abilities in leading a team in the organization. While, this study also supported by Erin et al (2017), where in their study mentioned about the leaders that fulfil an expectation in terms of gender and sex are more effective. According to Azwin Aksan (2020), in the study, gender is not a factor for entrepreneurial action and organizational effectiveness within the context of SMEs in the country but female entrepreneurs tend to express similar perceptions about leadership orientation of leaders, entrepreneurial action, and organizational effectiveness.

1.2 Statement of Problems

In problem statement, there are three types of gaps which are knowledge empirical and practical gaps. The gaps used to outline the problem statement in this research.

According to Rusli Ahmad, in his class, empirical gaps is a study conducted in different methods and different platforms and locations. As previous studies conducted by scholars, most of it used quantitative data analysis where it included more than 100 employees in various organization. This make it less research in qualitative methods to explore more about leadership and employees' performance. Majority of the studies conducted by the previous researchers, they are more focused on the leadership in public and private sector where the result of the studies shows that transformational leadership influence retail and telecommunication industry in Malaysia. As we know, tourism is also one of the sectors exist in Malaysia and they also have their own leadership style in the organization. According to Fitrianingrum (2019), the organization maintain their good performance where the management need to considers several aspects and one of it is leadership style. This study attempts to explore the leadership in tourism agency in Malaysia. Hence, tourism and hospitality industry also categorized as one of the high-pressure working environments. This also supported by Spector (2020), employees that work in tourism and hospitality faced with physical and mental issue such as stress, fatigue, burn out and increase in the use of alcohol. Thus, leaders can play their role in motivating, influencing and supporting their subordinates to face with all the pressure in the workplace. With all the pressure and challenges, leaders need an extraordinary leadership ability to ensure their subordinates are satisfied or happy with their jobs, (Spector,2020).

Knowledge gap is a gap where it is desired research findings do not exist (Ruzlaini Ghoni,2021). Therefore, previous scholars conducted the study based on gender and leadership where it more focused on leaders. There was study from Eagly and Carli (2003) explained

about the female leadership advantage. The study provides a meta-analysis of 45 studies comparing leadership behaviours between male and female managers where they concluded that female leaders tend to show more transformational leadership attributes than male leaders. Though, the study also conclude that transactional leadership and laissez-faire leadership are attributes that frequently associated with male than female leaders. In this study, employees' perspective about the leadership in the organization will be explore in more detail. Employees also a part of the organization and their perspective about leadership and their work performance need to be consider. According to Fitrianingrum (2019), in any organization, the employees' work performance determines the success of the goal accomplishment. Hence, the researcher mentioned that leadership and compensation are important factors that influencing the employees' performance.

Hence, according to Rusli Ahmad in his class, he mentioned that practical gap is a gap that present issues, events or phenomenon that happens in the area of study and it represent the importance or seriousness of the issue. A study by Mbokazi (2015) where the researchers studied about four dimensions that contribute to the successful of leadership. The dimensions are strategic, regulatory, pedagogic and compensatory. It shows that less study focuses on the other aspects that can contribute to the successful leadership. The researchers explore about the strategies used in school and four dimensions represent the results of successful school principals in three different schools. In the research, strategic dimension consists of goal setting, an organizational climate of high expectations and building capacity and it signified the ways principals set school goals through the vision and values of the school. Then, in pedagogic dimension, it consists of managing and monitoring the learner progress. Hence, the researcher also provides an analysis of regulatory dimension where it represents the way principals regulated the environment in ensuring the safety place for teachers and students. As for the compensatory dimensions, it is about culture of concern where it involves parental

involvement to the success of the school. Study by Mbokazi also concludes that the success of leadership was not fully due to the principal and other aspects also can contribute to the success.

1.3 Research Objective

There are two types of objectives which are general objective and specific objective.

1.3.1 General objective:

For this study, the general objective is to examine the perception of leadership among employees in selected tourism company in Selangor, Malaysia.

1.3.2 Specific objectives:

The specific objectives are:

RO1: To explore the importance of leadership towards work performance from the perspective of employees.

RO2: To understand the challenges that are faced by employees towards the current leadership system.

RO3: To understand the strategies used to overcome the challenges faced by the employees.

1.4 Research Questions:

RQ1: What is the importance of leadership towards work performance from the perspective of employees?

RQ2: What are the challenges that will be faced by employees towards the current leadership style?

RQ3: What are the strategies used to overcome the challenges faced by the employees?

1.5 Research Framework

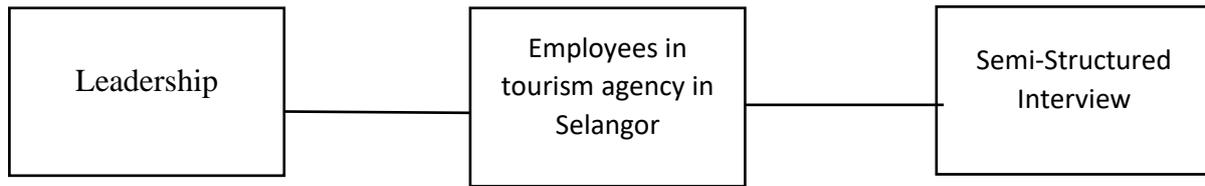


Figure 1: Research Framework of the study

1.6 Significant of the Study

This study is done to give more choices for future researcher that going to study more in this topic. This is due to the less research that touches on leadership in tourism agency in Malaysia.

The significant of this study is the tourism organization can know whether leadership will bring a lot of impacts to the organization. In this respect, this study expected to explore about the leadership challenges inside the organization due to the employees' answer during the interview session. Thus, the organization will know how to tackle the challenges when their employees working in a team. The organization can apply new norms to overcome and faced the challenges happened inside the organization.

Hence, the tourism organization will be more aware in appointed a leader for handling project. The organization also will know more how to make leadership be more effective and apply it in the organization.

1.7 Limitations of study

There are a few limitations during conducting this research. Although there are a lot of studies about leadership in Malaysia but still there is less research about leadership that only focus on one group in tourism agency in the Malaysia context. As the researcher become more competitive in conducting the research, the researcher still curious to know about the leadership

norms in the tourism agency in Malaysia. Then, this research will be conducted in one tourism agency in Selangor where it does not represent all employees in tourism agencies in Selangor. Thus, other tourism agencies might have different perceptions about the leadership in their organization. Hence, the research is nonrepresentative data since this is qualitative research.

1.8 Definition of terms

1.8.1 Leadership

Conceptual Definition:

Every organization has its own leadership styles. According to Fitrianingrum (2019) leadership is a process where the leader influences and models towards their subordinates in order to achieve the organization's goals.

Operational Definition:

Leadership is a set of characteristics that an individual has in order to lead the group of people in performing their task and achieving their target.

1.8.2 Gender

Conceptual Definition:

Gender is a multivariate construct that refers to the many roles, responsibilities, restrictions, and experiences that people have based on their presenting sex and/or gender. (Erin, 2017)

Operational Definition:

Gender is the difference of an employee in terms of appearance, dress, nature, behaviour, ability, emotions and opinions given about particular issues.

1.8.3 Tourism Agency

Conceptual Definition:

According to Brunt (2017), tourism agency is focus on people's movement to a destination, the activities which they undertake whilst away from home and people are the customers where each person have different expectation to the next and their satisfaction level and aspiration differ.

Operational Definition:

Tourism agency is an organization that provide service to guide the tourist or people that travel into the country where it involves high communication skill between two parties. Hence, not only guiding the tourists, tourism agency also will handle all aspects for tourist such as accommodation, flights, food and beverage, visa management, activities and tentative for the tourists.

1.8.4 Employee

Conceptual Definition:

According to Heathfield (2019), employee is an individual who was employed by an employer that go through the recruitment and selection process to do a specific job.

Operational Definition:

Employee is an individual who has different duties, tasks, commitments, responsibilities depending on the position held in the organization. Hence, employee also is an individual that involve in all aspects, activities and events conduct in the organization.

1.9 Conclusion

This chapter provides readers the background of the study and the significant for this study should be conducted. This chapter also provides objectives and was represented into research questions that guide researcher in developing the study. Hence, this chapter also provides the definitions of terms to ensure readers understand the terms used in this study.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

This literature review section provides details explanation on all aspects and issues that related with this study. As accordance to this study, this section will look at leadership, employees' performance, gender, tourism and theories that have been used in past research. This will aid the researcher and the readers to gain extensive knowledge on the aspects related.

2.1 Related Issues to Topic

There are three related issues to topic which are leadership and employee performance, leadership and gender, and leadership and tourism agency.

2.1.1 Leadership and Employee Performance

Leadership definition is a process where the leaders provide the influences and modelling toward the subordinates or team members in order to achieve the organization's goals. (Fitrianingrum, 2019). This statement supported by Choi (2007) where the researcher mentioned from the beginning to the current timeline, leadership is one of the important roles in developing the groups, ethnicity and countries. According to Maqsood et al (2013), the styles of leadership is one of the contributions towards the company in achieving their goals.

According to Kumar Pradhan (2017), performance that specifically in task performance comprise the job explicit behaviour that include the fundamental job responsibilities assigned as a part of job description. Based on Mahmudi (2010), personal or individual, leadership, team, and contextual factors were able to influence employees' performance. It also supported by Fitrianingrum (2019), where the employees' performance can be enhanced by modelling provided by the companies' leaders that can motivate and take notice from their works.

According to Hoxha (2019), the inspirational motivation refers to a leader that can give meanings to a different type of challenges at the workplace. This can make the employees regard themselves as an important asset for the organization.

According to Donnelly et al., (1992) cited by Schuetz (2016), there are six major variables impacting leadership efficacy, including the cognitive accuracy of the leader, the context of the leader, knowledge and personality, expectations and styles of the superior, the background of the follower, maturity and personality, mission comprehension, and expectation of peers. There must be a way to measure the leadership effectiveness although the leadership is something that is hidden and most of the organization cannot find whether their leadership is effective or not. Other than that, the way leaders communicate with their subordinate also being one of the factors for effective leadership. Based on Lowenhaupt (2014), the researcher emphasizes on the importance of language of the leadership. The way leaders communicate with their subordinates is always vital and important in achieving the goals especially when facing the critical situation. (Lowenhaupt, 2014, pp. 447–449). Other than communication, the principle of personal contract is also significant in affecting the efficacy of leadership. Based on Wellin (2013), the researcher emphasizes on personal contact for leadership effectiveness since it leads to the direct attention of issues of what for both sides which is leader and teammates need and want to give to each other.

2.1.2 Leadership and Gender

Studies about gender and leadership still not produced definite findings. According to Callahan (2016) cited by Erin et al (2017), social psychologist which is Kurt Lewin and his students started to research and discern group dynamics between several authoritarian, egalitarian, and laissez-faire types of leadership classes. Most of the discussions are about leaders and leadership from the great civilization until the 1970s that more focus on men while less focused on women. According to Erin et al (2017), over the past 50 years, the researchers

already agree that men and women can be good and effective in leadership. As in this era, the number between men and women that being a leader are equal. Based on Erin et al (2017), in their study, it is important to go beyond biological sex consideration and generalize what makes a male leader competitive against a female leader.

According to Callahan (2016) cited by Erin et al (2017), the researchers introduced the FourCe-PITO Framework in recognized four areas for leadership in order to capture the main components of all sorts of leadership styles which are Character, Competence, Context, and Communication. This four C's occur through four different type of psychological levels which are Personal, Interpersonal, Team, and Organizational that also known as (PITO). According to KEQEKOLLA, S. (2014), the best leader among male and female will use all their skills and rational knowledge by their surroundings, professions, work, environment and situation. Both men and women have their own special characteristics and try to adopt each other's styles in leadership to make sure they can be competent as a leader.

According to Schein and Mueller (1992) cited by Erin et al (2017), effective managers are viewed by individuals as having traits that rely more frequently on men than women, and male characteristics that are higher in men than women are expected to be successful managers. Based on KEQEKOLLA, S. (2014), it is clear that the leadership among men are more dominant over the leadership by women.

Another study that relate with this gender and leadership issue is a study from Azwin Aksan (2020), where the researcher study about the effect of gender on leadership, entrepreneurial orientation and organizational performance. In the study, the researcher used the quantitative approach where they conclude that gender is not a factor towards leadership orientation of leaders, gender is not a factor of entrepreneurial action and gender is not related to organisational effectiveness. On the other hand, the researchers found that female leaders of