THE ACCEPTANCE OF WOMEN LEADERSHIP IN INDONESIA IN CORRELATION WITH ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to define the development of women leaders as well as the impact of women leadership style towards the goals of the company under their supervision. The study will mainly observe of how women leaders both empower themselves and their subordinate in several companies in Indonesia. In this research, the main questions that will be defined are how women leader struggle for their position and how they empower subordinates towards the company’s strategic goals. Further variable that will be reviewed also includes the organizational performances under their management. Proven achievements mentioned may be used as a measurement whether these leaders have had shown efficacy leadership styles towards the initial target of the company. It may also illustrate how well employees affected by the leadership style in accordance with their work performances. The method used in this paper is literature studies. This is a conceptual paper built from literature review of women leadership. This research is expected to be a scientific suggestion for further research in leadership area, especially for the empowerment of women as leaders.

Keywords: Women Leaders, Organizational Performance, Efficacy Leadership, Employees Empowerment.

1. INTRODUCTION

It may be seen that research about leadership studies has shown a substantial increase, many researchers keen to conduct research in this field since it is a very broad subject. The linking unit in most of previous researches was to obtain an explicit understanding of leadership in correlation with how to motivate workers in increasing their work performance. In other words, company need to give specific consideration about the importance of leadership development in order to maximize their company’s profit.

Consequently, one of the highlighted indicators are how the leaders able to accentuate the company’s vision and how they able to directing their employees towards these goals. As we all notice, leadership held a very important role in order to enhance the performance of their workers. With a proper leadership quality and exact leadership style, the organization can be brought into a better and clearer path in order to achieve the organization goals.

Women leadership, too, has already taken into account by people in Indonesia. The soaring numbers of talented female workers has already put women in a certain bargaining position in their company. They were even appointed to contribute in the boardrooms. The constellation of women studies has reached another phase. Each millennia has been remarked by certain traits and behavior which being manifested into new theories within this area. Women-equality movement already broke through orthodox rigidities. It shows that women are not merely seen as homogenous groups (Jackie, Jackson: 1998) they also viewed women as a unitary potential (Brah: 1991).

There are few things that considered motivating equality nowadays; most of the phenomenon that occurs is the increasing of the awareness of women towards their rights. Most of these women felt the necessity to be considered as equal with men, not
only in a company, but also in daily life. Gender equality are one of the ongoing phenomenon which both controversial and debatable. In Indonesia, this phenomenon is rising steadily. Oppose to it, many people see it as an effort to challenging men for a better position and presentation of women, which is not in-line with the cultural and certain religious movement in Indonesia. The cultural and religion should not be seen as a barrier, it should be seen as a guidance. But this missing link is notions, which used by certain groups to mute women. This movement of women found another means of balancing between their womanhood and also their needs for self-actualization, not to mention women whom also working in order to help the family income. Women actually help and empower others, but in reality, their act still considered unimportant to the community.

There are many researches within leadership and organizational performances area, but the number whom focusing on characteristics of women leaders, which perceived as ideal in order to convey workers in achieving organizational goals is still limited. In Indonesia, only few research which focusing on gender and or women, none were made regarding influence towards organizational performance by also empowering their followers. This research may be used as a profound measurement for further academic research and be used as literature in conducting research for organizational performances. Correlated with the movement of women, there is still little research that has been conducted about the correlation between the women leadership towards organizational performance, specifically in Indonesia. Therefore, deliberate studies need to be conducted in order to gain deeper knowledge in this area.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In this research proposal, the one that will be defined are the variables correlated with women leadership. The research itself will be explained systematically in few topics, which considered being the variables, which are:

Leadership

Leadership researches, even not many, have been conducted all over the world to given definite understanding about the importance of leaders whom able to help their subordinate to achieve the company’s target effectively. Herzog (2007) stressed that the main obstacles for a company to grow and solving problems are due to lack of effective leadership. Correlated highly with the organizational performance, Bass (2009) also stressed that Leadership are the ability of the leaders to inspire and motivate their subordinates in order to contribute more to the organization or company they work under.

Leadership can be categorized as independent variable, because a study by Jago (1982) defined that there are an implicit assumption which showing that the outcomes of an organization were highly influenced by the behavior of both leader and leadership process, the outcomes mentioned were follower satisfaction and their performances. It can be associated with the question analysis of this paper, where women leader have an obligation to empower their subordinate to be able to contribute effectively towards the organization’s goal. Therefore, the one that would be studied here, are leaders which has hierarchical authority to command and delegate tasks to their subordinate. It also involved not only top leaders but also line managers. As Jago (1982) stated, Leadership does not only considers as characteristics or qualities of someone, but it may also be translated as an act that someone does. So, we may draw a line between the previous researches that someone whom has a leadership quality may as well be an employee that has the ability to implicitly directing their
colleague towards better performances toward their company’s strategic goals. According to Jung and Avolio (2000), once a leader connected to larger purposes of others, which resulting in trust, sense of urgency, and also help the subordinate to determine working importance, they are considered to have performing an effective leadership.

Women Leadership
Gender parity, nowadays, has become a major discussion in the world. Even though gender equality is still seen as a minor problem, but the portion of women as leaders has grown in this past years. If we trace it from its root, the word ‘gender’ is a divider between men and women. Actually, there is a misappropriation when people tried to define gender. In many literatures there are also researchers that tries to differentiate gender by dividing them into two categories, which is male and female, whereas the differentiator supposed to be sex. Gender is considered to be psychological nature of human being; it is different with sex, which is categorized as biological or physiological. When it comes to gender the more appropriate term to identify it are by masculine, feminine or a neuter, since it shows certain traits or behavior, which constructed socially (World Health Organization). Even though there are misuses of term, people still continue to differentiate sexes by the name of gender. When we mentioned gender, mostly would be presented by emancipation, which is still considered to be minor problems. The concept of men as the breadwinner and women as the homemaker were vested for hundreds of years. It is not common for women to work outside their houses, rather than doing their daily chores. Men, on the other hand, perceived as the person whose duties were to put food on the table – literally said. (Bianchi, Robinson, Milke; 2007)

The above-mentioned framework is also widespread in Indonesia. As we probably know, most Indonesian people are Moslems and there are people who believed that women are discredited in comparison with men. Even though Indonesia does not belong to a specific religion country, there are few religions that acknowledged by the government, one of them is Islam and the adherent held a great number. Gender equality is not a common concept in Moslems countries, Indonesia nonetheless. Added with cultural diversity, which mostly paternalistic gives men superior status. Different perspectives towards the interpretation of the holy verses, sometimes led to atrocious problems, mostly for women. Hence, women seem to be discredited and did not get the same privileges as men does.

We may see that women were highly doubted when it comes to difficult tasks, even though in reality there were also many women that able to work similar tasks done by men. As mentioned above, different characteristics from men and women are emphasized when it comes to both physiological and psychological differences. Not to put aside physiological, but the problems lies greatly within psychological context. A research by Giscombe and Mattis (2002) demonstrating that Asian women tend to be stereotyped negatively as being passive, unfriendly, and lack of ambition. Further evidence shows that women that considered being highly achiever are less likely to be seen as responsive, violating norms, and liked but not well respected.

Women leaders in Indonesia
Years ago, women will never be seen as a leader, not to mention effectiveness. Even though there are numbers of women that held several prestigious positions in companies or even countries, they were not empowered, as they have to be. Women were underrepresented in many aspects of higher position of leadership. Nevertheless, there are proven numbers that women has shown spectacular contributions to companies they work for, not to mention the abilities to lead with
their own styles. There are few previous researches that we can make as a guidance of Indonesia’s situation nowadays. CGIO in 2010 did a research and found that the number of women that belongs in a position as directors and commissioners, which listed in Indonesia Stock Exchange (IDX), was almost 12%. This number is considered to be the highest in Asia, compared to few other countries which we probably known as Asia’s leader in economics. The numbers show that 406 women out of 432 were board members. This study resulted from 3,376 boards of memberships; it shows that 40% of these companies did not even have one woman in their commissioners or board of directors.

Based on the studies, women are well presented in trade, finance, and service companies. A study by McKinsey and Credit Suisse shows quite an intriguing fact. More women whom have position on boards tend to be related highly with the return of equity, margins, share price, and better average growth, compared to companies that have no women at all in both their board of directors and board of commissioners. Furthermore, Indonesia Statistics Department (BPS) provides us with significant numbers taken from residents’ census in 2009. It shows that female literacy rate in Indonesia is quite high and their educational background is rising quite significantly. Nonetheless, Indonesia’s Gender Equity Index shows that in total, numbers of the opportunity in workforce were only opened a probability for one fifth compared to men. This is one of the examples of how hard Indonesian women competed with men.

Organizational Performance

Organizational performance will be more deeply analyzed as the dependent variable. As we may see from few researches that had been done in the last few years. Longenecker (2010) said that individual performances are highly influenced by ability, motivation, and support. The three key factors mentioned have a tight connection with efficacy of people in performing their tasks and motivating them to reach their goals ethically, moreover provide them with proper and right tools. Lewin and Minton (1986) also mentioned that efficacy also comes with set of obstacles that defines by multidimensional nature concepts.

The research about organizational performance itself did not stand alone, organizational performance are one of many factors that influenced highly by leadership styles. O’Reilly (2010) stated that organizations are consist of numerous groups and resources, thus leadership also spread between this organizations. Previous researches on leadership have primarily been concentrated on comparing the effects of transactional and transformational leadership on employee attitudes, effort, and job performance. However there are still less number of researches, which explained more about the women leadership styles. As Elenkov (2000) mentioned, hardly any attention be put to evaluate other factor that will deeply influence performances. In Indonesia, patriarchal and rights of women are still considered to be second-class problems. This is one of the reasons why most companies also did not take women issues very seriously, even though in few literature and findings, women can be compared to be equal with men regarding task accomplishment and performance.

To understand these problems, there are few things that need to be focused on. How women leaders able to achieve and maintain their position in correlation with their company’s performance? What kind of obstacles that women met as a leader? What kind of leaders that sought to be able to motivate employees, as perceived by the workers? How is the organizational performance under women leaders?
3. RESEARCH METHODS
The research methods used are descriptive studies. In order to gather a valid figures, data from Indonesia’s Statistics Department and also few other government websites that has a close link in providing accurate data, are observed. In order to be impartial; other data, measurements, and reports from other private sources and non-governmental organization also included. After taking few steps of measurements, facts and figures are being processed until it can analyzed to generate some hypothesis.

4. RESULT

Boulder and Obstacles
It is shown that many women, whom had a maternity leave or other tasks, hesitated to go back to work. Women felt greater pressure or often said as a ‘double burden’. It is a term to shows that even though these women works outside of the house, they still have the obligation to take care of domestic tasks – mostly related with child rearing. Despite natural feelings as mothers, they often feel that they would not be able to compete with those whom did not take any career break.

In reality there are many obstacles, which may categorize as blocking women to achieve higher position in a company. The term ‘glass ceiling’ are given to shows that, whether we realize it or not, there are always an invisible barrier that held women to climb the organizational hierarchy easily. There are also early researches which came out during androgy nous term became quite popular. These research mentioning about male-dominant environment and traits that women need to perform in order to achieve success (Moran: 1992). It can clearly be stated that inside these women mind, no matter how many contributions they give, they could never have the desired position and lagged behind their male colleagues.

Another barriers are culture. It is strongly believed that vested culture of Indonesia and diverse demographic which very much paternalistic, gives women a barriers to pursue their career path (Hakim, 1995). Gender stereotyping still affect women hesitation to work outside the house. Companies where these women work also did not quite give benefits for them to work there. Many problems faced by a working mother, who does not have access to a creche facility, minimum lactation room, long working hours, and external tasks. Company need to be able to put solution to the abovementioned problems if they would like to retain women workers in their companies. As Booz & co stated, country’s GDP and welfare of the next generations are closely linked with investment through women leaders.

Styles of leadership in correlation with organization performance
In correlation with abovementioned literature review, there are few findings, which can answer few research questions listed. Male leaders often categorized as transactional leaders, whereas women tend to be seen performing and categorized as transformational leaders. Transformational leaders are the one that always encourage development. Not only give orders, but they also give directions as well. They grew up with the organization, which means they always encourage their subordinates to do the right things by ‘nurturing’ them, not only doing things right.

According to McKinsey report in 2009, women leadership styles are people-based. A research by Eagly, et al. (2003) shows that women has tendency to empower others and often to be more collaborative. They implement a more participative styles where their subordinate may as well be included in a decision making process (Eagly and Johnson, 1990). They will also provide intellectual stimulations for the employees, not only helping with their personal development (correlated with their career path).
but also with the character building (correlated with ethics). This can be done through mentoring, workshops or any other empowerment programmes. Transformational women leaders are the one with many exceptionally positive behaviours, and able to transmit it through a rational procedures for subordinates to follow. Their position not merely seen as superior in hierarchical structure in an organization, but also perceived as a role model for the company. This brings a new horizon to leadership studies since transformational leaders have been seen as the highest parameter in an organization. When people said that their leader is transformational, it means that the leaders possess many constructive traits, which can be used as foundation of organizational development. The leader will also elevate the abilities of the organization members to compete and achieve goals by developing their skills and create a better way of thinking. It means that when someone categorized as leader they will get a new experience and obstacles that can help, or burden them instead. However when they possess the transformational leaders criteria, they will change those burdens into challenges that they need to overcome. Transformational leaders also deeply linked with organizational culture, where their role as significant figure may also inspire other employees. That is why their intellectual and emotional intelligence should be balance, and considerably higher rather than their subordinates. Leaders standards can be portrayed through the organization members and employees perceiving them. Another figures shows that women whom leading by nurturing and facilitating are most likely to be accepted by their subordinates. Most women leaders in Indonesia show their capabilities but still have not been able to fully-demonstrate their concerns towards empowerment of women. It was proven from their programmes that did not specifically aiming at gender and women empowerment, moreover inclusiveness. Most of trainings and workshop for gender parity or empowerment are part of the company CSR towards people outside their companies, but rarely aimed at female worker within their organization. This case also can be seen as quite a problem, since these women also need to gain equal benefit. As Whitaker and Lane (1990) stated, mentoring is one of the most well targeted programs since they assisting subordinates or even work colleagues – mostly older mentoring younger women- in getting benefits, learn specific skills, etc.

5. CONCLUSION AND FURTHER IMPLICATIONS
Based on the literature studies, the Indonesian government has not actively encouraged or regulated the participation of women in top positions in the private sector, other than through prohibiting discrimination. Even there are several programmes for enhancing women abilities and skills; the programmes is not yet taken to the next level – for example channeling them with the specific work field. The government also needs to put more attention to the allocation of workforce number, which will also give chances for women to have a proper work in Indonesia. Women leaders also needs to put more words in the boardrooms to enhance number of women and setting more programmes for empowerment of their subordinate. They also need to collaborate with the government to initiate a corporate social responsibility programmes or any similar programmes to enhance the skills of women.

There are few implications that can be formulated into set of actions. First, as we all know, Indonesia is a very diverse country; it is one of many assets that can help with empowerment programmes. Second, Indonesian government has the ability to impose a women quota program, not only in the board of representatives but also in state-
owned companies. Third, family-based companies also need to give opportunities to accommodate talented women leaders to reach a position in the boardrooms. Fourth, women that already reached higher position in companies should show a commitment to empower themselves as well as their subordinates. Women need to put more effort in including their subordinates towards the development process, both for themselves and the company they work for. Lastly, it is our duty to assure that these programmes may be performed and functioned well.

By and large, women empowerment is one of minorities’ issues that need to be put into consideration as one of important agendas. Commitment of all entities needs to be put into implicit actions in order to gain gender parity.

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