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STUDIES**



**EMPLOYEES' PERCEPTION ON FEMALE LEADER: A
STUDY AT SABAH LABOR DEPARTMENT**

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Abstract

Despite the progress made and new measures introduced, concerns on the status and position of women continue to prevail. Previous empirical researches have revealed that women are likely to face more negative criticism than men in leadership positions. They are seen as ineffective leader, which stems from differential distribution of men and women into social roles. Thus, there is an urgent need to examine the perceptions of employees' towards their female leader to unfold some of the prejudice facing them. This was due to the fact that human development will be very difficult when half of the nation's population comprising women, are marginalized and discriminated upon. In this study on "Employees' Perception on Female Leader: A Study at Sabah Labor Department", a sample of 32 respondents from Sabah Labor Department have been selected. Based on the data gathered, it has been analyzed using SPSS 12.0 versions. In assessing the perception of female leader, it has been studied based on three dimensions, i.e. the leadership styles, problem-solving capabilities, and leader's traits. Both three dimensions been studied by looking at the frequencies of each items. The degree of cooperation among employees also been examined. This dimension also been analyzed by looking at their frequencies. The findings reveal that, both male and female employees do not have any problem accepting female as their leader. Finally, the characteristics of an effective leader based on employees' perspective also being studied.

Declaration

I hereby declare that the work contained in this research report is original and my own except those duly identified and recognized. If I am later found to have committed plagiarism or acts of academic dishonesty, action can be taken in accordance with UiTM's rules and academic regulations.

Signature

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CHAPTER 1

1.1 Introduction

Leader plays an important role in determining the success or failure of an organization. They can be powerful agents of change too. ***“As Malaysia evolved from a subsistence agricultural economy to a knowledge-based economy, women continued to participate actively in the national development agenda. Out of total population size of 26.6 million, the female population accounted for 49.1 per cent of to the total population. In the corporate sector women who are broad members remained around 10 per cent for the period of 2001-2005 and declined to 7.6 per cent in 2006. However, women who hold the positions of general manager to president or CEO of companies increased gradually from 12.0 per cent to 14.3 per cent for the period of 2001-2006”.***¹

As women gain traction in the management position, gender differences are increasingly playing out in the way they run their shows. Social role and role congruity theory both posit that women in leadership positions are likely to face more negative criticism than men in leadership positions (York, 2005). One of the popular reasons given for differential treatment of women in management stems from stereotyping females as ineffective leaders (Brown, 1979). Gender stereotypes emerge as a result of differential distribution of men and women into social roles (Hoffman & Hurst, 1990). Men usually hold

¹ YB Paduka Chew Mei Fun, Parliament Sectary of the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development.