THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERSONALITY TRAITS, INTERNAL COMMUNICATION, TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND SENSE OF URGENCY: A MIXED METHOD STUDY OF REPSO MALAYSIA

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ABSTRAK

Rasa mendesak (*sense of urgency*) merupakan perkara penting bagi proses perubahan yang berjaya. Penyelidikan ini direkabentuk untuk menyiasat hubungan antara sifat-sifat personaliti, komunikasi dalaman dan dimoderasi oleh gaya kepimpinan transformasional terhadap rasa mendesak. Kajian menggunakan kaedah bercampur iaitu metodologi kuantitatif dan kualitatif bagi mengkaji hubungan tersebut berdasarkan senario kehidupan sebenar terhadap perubahan besar dalam satu entiti iaitu syarikat multinasional – Repso Malaysia. Melalui soal-selidik atas talian dan temubual secara semi-struktur, kajian kes dilakukan terhadap 247 pekerja pelbagai fungsi, tahap pekerjaan dan budaya rentas-sempadan. Penemuan kajian telah mengesahkan wujud hubungan positif antara *conscientiousness*, *extraversion, agreeableness* dan *openness to experiences* terhadap rasa mendesak. Sifat *neurotisisme* menunjukkan hubungan negatif tetapi tidak signifikan terhadap rasa mendesak dan telah disokong dengan justifikasi oleh kajian. Sementara itu, komunikasi dalaman seperti yang dijangkakan juga menunjukkan hubungan yang negatif terhadap rasa mendesak. Sebagai tambahan, pembolehubah moderasi iaitu kepimpinan transformasional menunjukkan pengaruh signifikan terhadap hubungan pembolehubah-pembolehubah tidak bersandar terhadap rasa mendesak. Selain daripada menyumbang terhadap bidang pengetahuan terhadap subjek di mana secara empirikal adalah kurang, kajian ini telah memperbaharui kepentingan analisis tahap mikro bagi organisasi iaitu individu dan bukan hanya peringkat makro. Kajian menunjukkan keasliannya dan diakhiri dengan cadangan praktikal yang komprehensif bagi syarikat dalam mencampurkan elemen personaliti pekerja, komunikasi berstruktur dan dileveraj oleh gaya kepimpinan transformasional bagi mencapai tahap yang diingini terhadap rasa mendesak untuk berubah.

ABSTRACT

Sense of urgency is a crucial element of a successful change process. This research was designed to investigate the relationship between personality traits (FFP), internal communication and moderated by leadership style of transformational with sense of urgency. It employed mixed method, which is both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies in examining the said relationship against a real-life scenario of major change in a single entity of a Multi National Corporation – Repso Malaysia. Through on-line questionnaire and semi structured interviews, a total of 247 employees of various functions, job levels and cross border cultures made up the case study of this research. The findings of the research confirmed the positive relationship of conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness and openness to experiences with sense of urgency. The trait of neuroticism revealed a negative but non-significant relationship to sense of urgency and duly supported with justification by the research. Meanwhile, internal communication as predicted showed a positive relationship with the sense of urgency. In addition, the moderating variable of transformational leadership indeed showed significant influence on the independent variables relationship to sense of urgency. Other than contributing to the body of knowledge over a subject which is empirically scarce, the research further renewed the importance of micro level analysis of an organization i.e. individuals rather than only the macro level. The research prides its originality and ends with comprehensive practical recommendations for company in blending the elements of employees' personality, structured communication and leveraged by transformational style of leadership into arriving to the desired state of sense of urgency to change.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
CP	Contract Price
DME	Demeythonal Ether
DV	Dependent Variable
FFM	Five Factor Model
IT	Information Technology
IV	Independent Variable
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin
LPG	Liquefied Petroleum Gas
MNC	Multi National Corporation
MV	Moderating Variable
TQM	Total Quality Management

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Against the backdrop of an increasing trend of globalization, coupled with an imminent indication of a prolonged global economy slow-down, management of change is taking center-stage on business leader's set of priorities. Change can come in many ways such as total quality management (TQM), redesign, restructuring or right sizing, as well as the radical ones like business re-engineering, behavioral and cultural change, and business turnaround (Ahmad & Francis, 2006; Kotter, 1996a; Taylor-Bianco, 2006; Stanleigh, 2008). In whatever forms it comes, the desired outcome of change remains intact that is, to make the organization stronger and more resilient to the dynamics of the operating environment.

Despite of the overwhelming call for change, the statistics (e.g. Hertog, Iterson & Mari, 2010; Raineri, 2009) demonstrate that most change efforts fails to achieve its desired outcome. The studies indicated that failure rate was approximately up to 70% (e.g. Hertog et al., 2010; Raineri, 2009). The latter cited example, Riva (Video Company) faced failure at the first stage of ensuring employees aware of the new direction of the company. The studies were in line with Lai and Ong (2010) who stressed that leaders should be aware of the employee's sense of urgency to embrace changes which likely

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