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**THE INFLUENCE OF LEADERSHIP TRAITS TOWARD
LEADERSHIP BEHAVIOR AMONGST IMAMS IN
PENINSULAR MALAYSIA**



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Universiti Utara Malaysia

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
UNIVERSITI UTARA MALAYSIA
November 2012**

**THE INFLUENCE OF LEADERSHIP TRAITS TOWARD LEADERSHIP
BEHAVIOR AMONGST IMAMS IN PENINSULAR MALAYSIA**



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Thesis Submitted to
Othman Yeop Abdullah Graduate School of Business,
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in Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

OTHMAN YEOP ABDULLAH GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
Universiti Utara Malaysia



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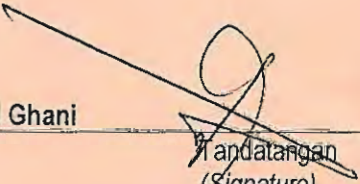
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Abstract

This study aimed to investigate significant traits of leaders that have potential to predict effective leadership behavior of imams in Peninsular Malaysia. Based on some theories and researches concerning leadership traits and behavior, a research theoretical framework to investigate leadership traits and behavior association was designed for this study. The imams' general cognitive ability, personality, and religiosity were hypothesized as distal leadership traits while leadership experiences, and motivation to lead were hypothesized as mediating leadership traits. In addition, this research also investigated the moderating influence of job autonomy toward the leadership traits and behavior relationship. This study was conducted by using the survey approach. A structured, Malay version-self-administered questionnaire was distributed to 206 randomly selected imams around Peninsular Malaysia. Results of the hierarchical regression analysis revealed that the traits of imams investigated explained 36.1% variance (R^2) of the imams' leadership behavior. Specifically, the analysis demonstrated the imams' personality and motivation to lead have significant potential to influence the imams' leadership behavior in positive direction. Past leadership experiences showed potential to influence leadership behavior of imams significantly in negative direction. This research found the imams' general cognitive ability, religiosity, and job autonomy did not have potential to influence leadership behavior significantly. In addition to the above, this research found motivation to lead partially mediated the influence of personality toward leadership behavior and the variable did not have significant potential to mediate the influence of general cognitive ability and religiosity toward leadership behavior. The same insignificant mediating influence was found for past leadership experiences. Moreover, this research also found high and low job autonomy did not have potential to moderate the influence of leadership traits toward leadership behavior significantly. Overall, results gained in this research could be generalized to the whole population of imams in Peninsular Malaysia and could be useful to assist future selection and training of imams. In addition, this research also provides some information concerning leadership of religious leaders in Peninsular Malaysia. Finally, this research could also provide some information concerning the potential influence of leaders' religiosity toward leadership behavior as compared to other well-identified leadership traits.

Keywords: Leadership behavior, leadership traits, general cognitive ability, personality, religiosity, past leadership experiences, motivation to lead, job autonomy, imams of mosques

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini telah dijalankan untuk mengenalpasti ciri-ciri kepimpinan yang berpotensi untuk mempengaruhi gelagat kepimpinan efektif para imam di Semenanjung Malaysia. Kajian ini juga mensasarkan untuk menilai bagaimana ciri-ciri kepimpinan tersebut mempengaruhi gelagat kepimpinan imam. Sebuah kerangka teoretikal telah dibina berdasarkan beberapa teori dan kajian kepimpinan. Menerusi kerangka teoretikal tersebut, kemampuan kognitif umum, personaliti, dan sifat keagamaan dihipotesiskan sebagai ciri-ciri kepimpinan asas. Sementara itu, pengalaman memimpin dan motivasi untuk memimpin dihipotesiskan sebagai ciri-ciri kepimpinan perantara. Manakala autonomi kerja dihipotesiskan sebagai konstruk penyederhana terhadap perhubungan di antara ciri-ciri kepimpinan dan gelagat kepimpinan imam. Kajian ini telah dijalankan dengan menggunakan kaedah soal-selidik. Satu set kertas soal-selidik berstruktur telah diedarkan kepada 357 imam yang dipilih secara rawak di sekitar Semenanjung Malaysia. Menerusi analisis regresi berhirarki, ciri-ciri kepimpinan imam menerangkan varian (R^2) gelagat kepimpinan imam sebanyak 36.1%. Khususnya, kajian menemui personaliti dan motivasi untuk memimpin para imam mempunyai potensi yang signifikan untuk mempengaruhi gelagat kepimpinan imam secara positif. Manakala, pengalaman memimpin menunjukkan potensi yang signifikan untuk mempengaruhi gelagat kepimpinan imam secara negatif. Kajian juga menemui, kemampuan kognitif umum, keagamaan, dan autonomi kerja para imam tidak berpotensi untuk mempengaruhi gelagat Kepimpinan efektif secara signifikan. Selain itu, kajian ini juga memperolehi keputusan yang signifikan mengenai potensi motivasi untuk memimpin berfungsi sebagai perantara secara separa kepada pengaruh personaliti terhadap gelagat kepimpinan. Namun, motivasi untuk memimpin tidak menunjukkan potensi untuk berfungsi sebagai perantara terhadap perhubungan kemampuan kognitif dan keagamaan dengan gelagat kepimpinan. Selain daripada itu, keputusan kajian menunjukkan autonomi kerja tidak berpotensi untuk menyederhana pengaruh ciri-ciri kepimpinan terhadap gelagat kepimpinan imam secara signifikan. Secara keseluruhannya, data yang diperolehi dari kajian ini mampu untuk digenerelisasikan kepada populasi imam di Semenanjung Malaysia dan boleh dimanfaatkan bagi tujuan pemilihan dan latihan para imam.

Katakunci: Gelagat Kepimpinan, Ciri-Ciri Kepimpinan, Autonomi Kerja, Imam Masjid

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Yours sincerely

Mahazan bin Abdul Mutalib @ Taib

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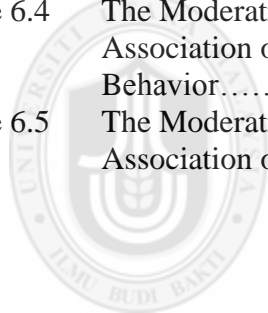
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|----------|---|
| AMT | Achievement Motivation Theory |
| CLT | Central Limit Theorem |
| CRT | Cognitive Reflection Test |
| CVF | Competing Values Framework |
| ECP | European Conference on Personality |
| FFM | Five-Factor Model of Personality |
| IPIP | International Personality Item Pool |
| JAKIM | Jabatan Kemajuan Islam Malaysia |
| JCI | Job Characteristic Inventory |
| JDS | Job Diagnostic Survey |
| JPA | Jabatan Perkhidmatan Awam |
| LBDQ | Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire |
| LOQ | Leader Opinion Questionnaire |
| LMP | Leadership Motive Profile |
| MARS | Muslim Attitude toward Religiosity Scale |
| MBTI | Myers-Briggs Type Indicator |
| MPS | Managerial Practice Survey |
| MTL | Motivation to lead |
| MRPI | Muslim Religiosity and Personality Inventory |
| NEO-PI-R | NEO Personality Inventory |
| PCA | Principal Component Analysis |
| PCI | Personal Characteristic Inventory |
| PLP | Personality and Leadership Profile |
| RCI | Religious Commitment Inventory |
| s.a.w. | <i>Salla Allah alayhi wa Sallam</i> (Peace be Upon Him) |

| | |
|---------|--|
| s.w.t. | <i>Subhanahu Wa Ta'ala</i> (may He be glorified and exalted) |
| SBDQ | Supervisory Behavior Description Questionnaire |
| SISMIM | Sistem Maklumat Imam dan Masjid |
| USMaP-I | The USM Personality Inventory |
| WPT | Wonderlic Personnel Test |
| NFC | Need for Cognition Scale |



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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

| | |
|----------------|--|
| Al-Quran | The Holy Book of Islam contains the Words of Allah revealed to Prophet Muhammad s.a.w.for mankind. |
| Azan | The Muslim summons to prayer, called by the muazzin from a mosque, five times a day. |
| Eid ul-Fitr | Muslims' religious holiday that marks the end of Ramadhan, the Islamic holy month of fasting. The holiday celebrates the conclusion of the 29 or 30 days of dawn-to-sunset fasting during the entire month of Ramadhan. The first day of Eid ul-Fitr therefore, falls on the first day of the month Shawwal. |
| Eid ul-Adha | Muslims' religious holiday to commemorate the willingness of the Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham) to sacrifice his son Ismael (Ishma'il) as an act of obedience to Allah s.w.t. The Eid ul-Adha is celebrated annually on the 10 th day of the 12 th and the last Islamic month of Dhu al-Hijjah of the lunar Islamic Calendar. |
| Jumaat | Friday |
| Masjid | Mosque |
| Nikah | Marriage |
| Sunnah | Any saying, action, approval, or attribute, whether physical or moral, ascribed to the Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. |
| Solah | Prayer in Islam |
| Solatul Jamaah | Congregational prayer |
| Tahlil | Islamic religious activities of <i>dzikr</i> or remembrance of Allah by reciting <i>la ilaha illa Allahu</i> (there is no god but Allah) and several other verses of Quran. |
| Yaasin | One of the verses in the Holy Quran |

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Managerial and organizational leadership, in contrast to parliamentary leadership, leadership of social movements, or emergent leadership in informal groups, is a field of study that concerns itself with leaders' and managers' performance in formal organizations (Yukl, 2006). Most scholars have accepted that the major focus of the field of organizational leadership is the process of how a leader "exerted influence over other people to guide, structure, and facilitate activities and relationships in a group or organization" (Yukl, 2006, p.5). In addition, organizational leadership also focuses on "leaders' dispositional characteristics and behaviors, follower perceptions and attributes of the leader, and the context in which the influencing process occurs" (Antonakis, Cianciolo, & Sternberg, 2004, p.5). Furthermore, most scholars also agree that the process of leadership should reflect the effectiveness of the leader (Antonakis et al., 2004; Yukl, 2006). The explanations on the foci of organizational leadership above could help us understand the importance of leaders to organizations. Moreover, the explanations also signify that the issue of organizational ineffectiveness should also be investigated from the standpoint of organizational leadership theories and research. In relation to this study, this research engaged in one of the most popular areas of research in organizational leadership, the leadership traits and leadership behavioral associations (Antonakis et al., 2004; Yukl, 2006). This is because this research attempted to provide

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