

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter provides: (1) a summary of the study, (2) a summary of the findings, (3) discussions of the attitudes of subordinates toward the management style of female managers, (4) conclusions, and (5) recommendations for further research.

5.1 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

5.1.1 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study was to find out the attitudes of subordinates toward the personality and leadership style of female managers at Adidas Sourcing Limited, Thailand Representative Office. Furthermore, the sub-objectives were to investigate the opinions of the subordinates about the knowledge and skills of female managers when performing their duties, to identify the opinions of the subordinates about the fairness of female managers, to analyze the human relation characteristics that female managers have normally shown, to examine the best qualification and personality of female managers, and to elaborate on the management styles that female managers need to improve.

5.1.2 Subjects, Materials and Procedures

The populations of this study were the employees who work at Adidas Sourcing Limited, Thailand Representative Office. The sample size of this study was 96 employees who were asked to answer the questionnaires. The questionnaires were distributed to the sample group by using a cross-sectional study technique in order to collect data from the respondents who could provide the best information to achieve the objectives of the study.

The format of the questionnaire in the study was a 3 part questionnaire which composed of 30 closed-ended questions and 2 open-ended questions by using One-Shot contact with the study population in order to find out the attitudes of subordinates toward female managers.

The three parts of the questionnaires covered the personal information of the respondents, the attitudes of respondents toward the management style of female managers, and the respondents' additional comments regarding the best

qualification and personality, as well as the areas for improvement of management style for female managers.

The data was gathered by distributing the questionnaires to the employees working at Adidas Sourcing Limited, Thailand Representative Office. After the questionnaires were collected, the data was analyzed and designed by using descriptive statistics, frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation which were determined properly and appropriately in this study.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The results of the research can be summarized as follows:

5.2.1 Personal Information of the Respondents

The results obtained showed the majority of the respondents were female (77.1%). Most of them were in the age group of 31-40 years old (41.7%). Furthermore, the majority of them had a bachelor degree (59.4%), and they had worked with female manager for more than 4 years (32.3%).

5.2.2 The Respondents' Attitudes Toward Management Style of Female Managers

It was found out that the respondents felt positively towards the management style of female managers. They were most positive with the knowledge and skills of female managers, followed by the leader's fairness, human relations and personality and leadership style.

1. Attitudes Toward Personality and Leadership of Female Managers

For the overall attitude toward personality and leadership style of female managers, the result showed that most of the respondents had a positive attitude by the mean score of 3.49. They were most positive with the managers' commitment to their work (4.01), punctuality (3.77), and acceptance of responsibility in light of failures (3.70). However, they were negative when the female manager directs or threatens her subordinates with punishment in order to get them to achieve the organizational objectives ($\bar{x}=2.65$), so such a negative response was viewed positively.

2. Attitudes Toward Knowledge and Skill of Female Managers

The overall mean score of 3.72 confirmed that the respondents had a positive attitude towards the knowledge and skills of female managers. They were most positive about the knowledge of female managers in the position (4.02), followed by vision for working in the position (3.86), delegates or assigns tasks in order to implement a new procedure or process (3.64). However, they were less positive that female managers were able to create a strategy to keep a project or process on as schedule (3.58).

3. Attitudes Toward Fairness of Female Managers

The respondents felt positively towards the fairness of female managers by giving the overall mean score of 3.59. The components which respondents had a most positive attitude were that female managers allow subordinates to determine what needs to be done and how to do it (3.71), followed by female managers provide an equal opportunity for subordinates to learn their jobs (3.68), female managers give an equal chance for subordinates such as internal and external training (3.66), female managers give subordinates the right to determine their own organizational objectives (3.63). However, the respondents felt less positively about female managers treating subordinates equally (3.42).

4. Attitudes Toward Human Relations of Female Managers

The respondents had a positive attitude towards the human relations of female managers with an overall mean score of 3.56. The components of the human relations that were viewed positively were female managers encourage staff to participate in the company's activities (3.86), followed by female managers socialize with subordinates and other colleagues to keep and maintain a good relationship (3.57), female managers ask for subordinates' ideas and input on upcoming plans and projects (3.51), female managers get along well with all subordinates (3.49). However, they were less positive with female managers being well liked and respected in the organization (3.36).

5.2.3 Comments From Open-Ended Questions

The majority of respondents agreed that the best qualifications and personalities that were found in female managers were fairness and honesty at about 16%, followed by their caring and understanding of employees' feelings at about 11%

and their thoroughness and good relations at a little more than 8%, equal to their good morals and broad-mindedness. The other respondents said that the best qualifications of female managers were having high responsibility, being good communicators or negotiators, and having high competence and reasonableness at 7%, equally. The rest of respondents viewed that approximately 6% of female managers were good leaders, 5% good decision makers, and hard-working or enthusiastic and good planners at about 4%.

In addition, the findings demonstrate that to be more effective, 14% of the respondents said that female managers must have better communication and good relations with subordinates. The respondents would like their female managers to be fairer at about 13% and more understanding of employees' roles at around 10%. Some respondents perceived that female managers should be more decisive, followed by more reliable and more optimistic or generous with the rating of 9%, 8% and 7%, respectively. The respondents would also like their female managers to be team oriented at about 6%, with 5% stating the managers should be good listeners and 4% stating they should be less emotional. The rest of respondents about 3% preferred their female managers to be more knowledgeable and cooperative in the position.

5.3 DISCUSSION

This section discusses the results of the study which is divided into six topics: attitudes of subordinates toward the personality and leadership style of female managers, attitudes toward the knowledge and skills of female managers when performing their duties, attitudes toward the fairness of female managers, the human relation characteristics that female managers normally have shown, the best qualifications and personalities of female managers, and the management style that female managers need to improve.

5.3.1 Attitudes Toward Personality and Leadership Style of Female Managers

The most positive attitudes toward personality and leadership style of female managers were commitment to their works (4.01) and high responsibility (3.70). These are in line with the action-centered leadership model of Adair (2005) that task needs or organizational role is needed to identify tasks and understand that

the task fits in with the overall plans of the organization for both short term and long term projects. Also, the findings are similar to the study of Teerayout Wattanasupachoke (2007) that enhancing the company's image and employees' morale are conducted through the ethical and socially responsible activities by Thai executives.

In addition, the result showed that female managers always encourage subordinates to solve problems (3.53). This result matches with Adair (2005) that directing is a managerial function of giving support teams toward the plans or problems. Directing is also the way of creating team spirit by giving recognition and praise toward individual effort and responsibility and providing encouragement toward team objectives.

Relating to other studies of personality and leadership style, the respondents perceived that their female managers are decisive (fast, prudent and exact). Female managers always retain the final decision making authority with their department or team. This study corresponds with the theory of Managerial Decision Making by Vroom (1973) which stated that decision maker of group style shares the problems with group members. In group style, alternative solutions are generated and evaluated in an attempt to achieve consensus. The decision maker functions as a facilitator without attempting to influence the group. And they adopt and implement the consensus decision.

Moreover, the research showed that female managers closely monitor their subordinates to ensure the latter is performing correctly. This finding is in agreement with Adair (2005) in that controlling is a function of monitoring activities to follow plans and ensure that they are accomplished timely and as planned.

5.3.2 Attitudes Toward Knowledge and Skill of Female Managers

The important skills in managerial level as female managers were the knowledge or competency in the position (4.02). This finding supports Lewis and Slade (1994) that knowledge is a crucial leadership competency for leaders' success. A leader with knowledge in the position is more respected by subordinates than those with little knowledge on the jobs. Additionally, the study showed that female managers have vision for working in the position (3.86) and delegate or assign tasks in implementing a new procedure or process (3.64). These findings imply that female

managers require planning as the initial managerial function of identifying vision and mission, and developing sub-plans to coordinate activities for the organizational achievement (Adair, 2000).

Another important skill in management style which the respondents found in female managers was being an effective communicator and coordinator with subordinates and other colleagues (3.59). The result of this study is in line with the Action-Centered Leadership Model of Adair (2000) in that the interpersonal roles of female managers is to communicate efficiently and effectively with team members and consult them before making any decision that affects the team.

5.3.3 Attitudes Toward Fairness of Female Managers

The components which the respondents had a positive attitude in terms of fairness of female managers were their female managers allow subordinates to determine what needs to be done and how to do it with a mean score of 3.71. This is in agreement with the study of management processes by Adair (2000) who claims that organizing is a function of deciding what needs to be done and matches with team members' personality, skill, strengths as well as how it will be done by establishing responsibilities for the team members.

Then the respondents also thought that female managers give subordinates the right to determine their own organizational objectives with a mean score of 3.63. However, the result of this study is different from the research of motivation to manage and status of women in Library and Information Science by Murgai (2004) which stated that Thai people would like their supervisors to set their goals and seek guidance. This implies that a high respect for authority and power exists and is concentrated in the hands of Thai superiors.

Moreover, the result showed that female managers provide an equal opportunity for subordinates to learn their jobs (3.68), and female managers can assign or delegate work based on individual competence (3.52). These findings match with Adair (2000) that individual need or self attribution is a must to be able to get satisfaction from personal achievement in the jobs they are doing. Self attribution is also needed to authorize or delegate subordinates making a worthwhile contribution to the organizational objectives, and female managers must give subordinates a degree of responsibility that matches with their abilities, competency and experience for their

achievement. Also, according to Podesta (2005), fairness is the ability to control and guide people in the right direction.

5.3.4 Attitudes Toward Human Relations of Female Managers

The findings showed the characteristics of human relations that female managers normally perform were encouraging staff to participate in the company's activities (3.86), socializing with subordinates and other colleagues to keep and maintain a good relationship (3.57), and getting along well with all subordinates (3.49). These correspond with the study of Johnson (1999) in which it was stated that human relations and interpersonal skills are the helping, sharing and combining which managers need to work as part of cooperative team. The overall goals of the organization can be achieved by coordinating and cooperating with other people. Moreover, communication is an important part of human relations, as work can not take place without communication. Johnson also pointed out that to work successful, it is essential that people at the management level interact with other people and keep good relationships because these other people are a key aspect of job success.

In addition, these findings relate to the study of Teerayout Wattanasupachoke (2007) that Thai executives focus on human relations and negotiation skills which are given the most emphasis in their management style. Harmony and unity of organization are the fundamental management principles of Thai executives.

5.3.5 The Best Qualifications and Personalities of Female Managers

It was found that the best qualifications and personalities of female managers were their fairness and honesty (15.63%), followed by their caring and understanding of employees' feeling (11.46%), and thoroughness and good relations (8.33%). These results are in agreement with the study of Podesta (2005), Johnson (1999), and Adair (2000) in that being a good manager or leader, one must be able to control and guide subordinates in the right direction. A successful manager or leader needs to work as a cooperative team with other people and maintain good relationships or the unity of team members.

5.3.6 Management Style Needs Improving

For management development, the majority of the respondents said that female managers in the organization must have more communication and good relations with subordinates (14.58%), need to be fairer (12.50%), and have a better understanding of employees' roles (10.42%). The results are in line with the study of Adair (2000), Podesta (2005), and Johnson (1999) which revealed that female managers need to have effective communication and human relations skills with employees. They must not only be fairer in terms of delegating tasks equally based on a degree of responsibility and competency, but also have to understand well the employees' individual roles and feelings. They need to avoid getting personally involved as this can create a bias toward their employees' point of view.

5.4 CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusions can be drawn from the discussion above.

5.4.1 Personality and leadership style play an important function of management processes which can lead the organization to accomplish the stated purpose. The organizations still prefer to have female managers who have leadership traits in the aspects of commitment to their work and high responsibility when failure occurs; good female managers never push the burden to their subordinates. The organizations also need female managers to always support and protect their subordinates on the right basis when problems occur.

5.4.2 The most important skills for female managers are knowledge or competency in their position. Female managers also have vision for working and delegating tasks to subordinates to implement a new process or procedure. In addition, female managers should be effective communicators and coordinators with subordinates or other colleagues.

5.4.3 Being a fair female manager, they have to know how to control and guide people in the right direction. Female managers can determine what needs to be done and match with employees' personality, skills and competency. Moreover, the organization prefers female managers who can provide equal opportunity for subordinates to learn their own jobs and female managers must assign or delegate work by considering a degree of responsibility that matches with the subordinates' abilities and experience.

5.4.4 The best characteristics of human relations that female managers perform are the ability to encourage their staff to participate in the organization's activities. Female managers can also socialize with subordinates or other colleagues to build and maintain a good relationship. These are the fundamental principles of their management.

5.4.5 The best qualification and personality of female managers should be fairness and honesty in their position. Good female managers need to care and understand the employees' feelings or problems, whether they be work or personal matters. To survive on the job, people at management level must create good relations between managers and subordinates, which is an important part of working as a cooperative team.

5.4.6 The weakest characteristics of female managers which need to be improved, relate to their effective communication, fairness and understanding of employees' roles. These feminine characteristics could be a barrier for female managers reaching the managerial level in an organization.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made for further research.

5.5.1 Due to time period and budget limitations, only 96 samples were used for this study. The sample size of the population should be increased in order to obtain more reliable results.

5.5.2 Further studies should be conducted to compare and contrast the self evaluation of female managers with that of the respondents in order to improve their management style and increase their opportunity for promoting.

5.5.3 Further studies on various aspects about the management style of female managers should be conducted to provide more effective managerial skills toward the findings of this study.