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How Confucianism Can Positively Influence the Leadership of Organisation?

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ABSTRACT

The focus of this study is to explore how Confucianism can positively influence the leadership in organisations in Malaysia. A practical and theoretical understanding of the influence of Confucianism philosophy on Chinese corporate leadership will not only contribute to the body of knowledge of leadership studies, but also provide a different perspective on the understanding of the intricacies and complexities of Chinese corporate leadership. Hence, two interdependent areas of interests, that is, the practice and theory in the study corporate leadership, within the framework of an understanding of leadership behavior actions, involving knowledge and understanding of Confucianism philosophy, including values, ethics, morals and a review of leadership assumptions, within the context of Chinese corporate leaders in Malaysia, consciously or unconsciously applying their knowledge and understanding of Confucianism philosophy to execute vision and implement change in their organizations to be examined. The inductive analytic design employed to answer the research questions is organized into four sections, namely: (a) sampling-selection of respondent, (b) instrumentation, (c) data collection, and (d) data analysis. In this study, the findings indicated that the evaluated understanding of Confucianism Philosophy on aspects of leadership is of paramount importance in achieving people harmony and organisational performance. Based on the results of the enumerated data, the findings of this study filled the research gap by exhibiting that Confucianism values of ren, chung yung and morality displayed were the most important values in influencing organisational leadership actions. It is with the deep and evaluated

knowledge and understanding of these Confucianism values that lead to series of transformative action within the Chinese company in Malaysia.

Keywords: Confucianism, knowledge & understanding, corporate leadership, analytic, induction

INTRODUCTION

The conceptualization of leadership is mainly about the process of influencing people to work towards completion of actions, strategies, tasks and missions. Leadership is a domain dominated by many scholars from the West such as, Burns, Bass, Stogdill, Yukl, Avolio and etc. Leadership is seen as a success factor for organizational performance. According to Peters and Waterman (1982), traditional leadership theories about how human beings work individually and in large groups leads to a revision of several important economic tenets dealing with size and scale economies, precision, and the ability to achieve extraordinary results with the employees. According to their studies on excellent companies in the 1970s, Peters and Waterman (1982) discovered that good leadership and management practices amounted to treating people decently and enabling them to perform and be productive and innovative. However, many of the excellent companies did not survive into the 1990s, let alone into the 2000. There must be a difference in leadership between the companies that survived into the 2000 and those that perished in the 80s. For instance, 3M institutionalized entrepreneurship leadership practices which helped the company to consistently engaged in successful innovations. Former CEO of General Electric, Jack Welch's top down initiative leadership practices that liberating the company from restrictive past had successfully created a shared ambition that transformed workers commitment and action.

Similarly, Kanter (1992) argued that the world is clearly more complex than ever and companies no longer have a stranglehold on the means to exploit including the ideas, the natural resources, capital and even market advantages. And there is a wide variation in business strategy and product prowess among companies within similar industries. This constitutes the ultimate corporate success and it is very much determined by the balancing act between efficiency and innovation, supported by good leadership. What constitutes "good leadership" is the major business of researchers in this field, with most of them concentrating on theories (Vaill 1998; Hutchins 1986; Gill 2011; Yulk 2010; Stogdill 1974; Chemers 1997; Pedler et al 2004; Pettigrew; Bass et al. 1975).

The studies on leadership is found laced with paradox. Individuals who possess all of the important qualities and characteristics of effective leaders do not necessarily succeed. An individual who is a successful leader in one situation or context may fail in another situation even though the same leader employs the same skill, capacity or style. This observation brings up the doubt of whether leaders are born or trained. The current paradoxes of leadership are many thus making the study of leaders and leadership all the more relevant and challenging. Research on leadership theories, methodology, ideas, measurement and even definitions has been dominated by leadership scholars in the West (Yukl 2010; Mintzberg 1976; Bass 1985; Strong 1984; Bryman 2004; Wofford 1999; Bliese et al. 2002; Dansereau et al. 1975; Lowe and Kroeck 1996; Brown and Gioia 2002). There were almost none that based on oriental values and philosophy that lead to construction of Eastern model of leadership. In the East like in Japan, China, Korea, Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Malaysia, organizational successes could be defined differently, based on different terms and understanding such as those philosophical understanding particularly of *Confucianism*.

There is a large number of Malaysian Chinese corporate leaders who started their business from a very small family concern to become multi-billion business enterprise. Success stories of personalities such as Robert Kuok, Lim Goh Tong, Lok Boon Siew, William Cheng, Vincent Tan, Lee Shen Jin, Yeoh Tiong Lay (YTL), Teoh Hong Piow, Quek Leng Chan, and many others are commonly splashed across pages in local newspapers, business magazines. Their business acumen, diligence, determination, beliefs, philosophy, and etc have become the hallmark of their many successes. The strong oriental character in general and Chinese character in particular in the conduct of their business is a reflection of deeply entrenched or embedded Confucianism philosophy, and the ability to act as a result of their knowledge and understanding of the Chinese values, morals, strategies, and traditions (Lam, 2019 Yeung 2006; Xi 2011; Warner 2008). As a departure to the normal approaches to leadership as mentioned above, it is believed that there is a strong need to study leader and leadership in a new light, not being unnecessarily being confined and restricted theoretically, a qualitative research approach should be chosen to explore and examine the potentials of Confucian values, traditions, beliefs, morals and philosophies and in facilitating leaders in the transforming their businesses. The research on leadership is found laced with paradox. Individuals who possess all of the important qualities and characteristics of effective leaders do not necessarily succeed.

The basic purpose of the study is to explore how Confucianism influences organizational leadership in Malaysia. It is primarily based on an analytic induction, embodying within its framework the qualitative paradigm. The approach provides an

in-depth investigation of the influence of Confucianism philosophy in the building of effective corporate leadership practices.

The study attempts to achieve the following objectives:

- (1) Examine what is the Malaysian Chinese corporate leader's responses of knowledge and understanding for Confucianism philosophy.
- (2) Explain the relationship between Confucianism philosophy and corporate leadership.

Specifically, the study attempts to provide answer to the following research questions:

Research Question 1. What are the respondent's responses of knowledge and understanding for Confucianism philosophy?

Research Question 2. How does Confucianism philosophy influences organisational leadership of the respondent?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study aims to rediscover the exploratory insight how Confucianism philosophy influences Malaysian Chinese corporate leadership. It is designed to guide the larger scale of research of future studies in this related area. It provides the first comprehensive account of the understanding of how Confucianism philosophy influences corporate leaders and leadership in general and Chinese corporate leaders in Malaysia in particular. It fills a significant knowledge gap about the Malaysian Chinese leaders and leadership by exploring and examining important facets of Malaysian Chinese leaders and leadership. It examines the respondent's responses of knowledge and understanding of Confucianism philosophy. To date, empirical evidences have indicated that Confucianism philosophy is perceived as the most important factor in contributing and shaping Chinese business leadership practices around the world (Cheng 2011; Liu 2009; Tan 2017). Nevertheless, the crucial influence of Confucianism philosophy values on practices of corporate leadership has yet to be investigated carefully in the Malaysian context. It is partly for this reason that the study was conducted to fill this research gap. It is hope that the research findings would be able to throw light on the influence of moral, ethics and values of Confucianism philosophy on practices of corporate leadership in Malaysian corporate sector and the new understanding for Confucianism philosophy.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Confucianism Philosophy Revisiting Philosophical Probing

Confucianism believed that a leader should be simultaneously knowledgeable and virtuous. Much emphasis has been given to *de zhi* or rule of virtue, which means the best way for leaders to lead through means of *de* that incorporates both meanings of virtuous conduct, *dexing* and virtuous character behind behavior (Lai 2010). According to Confucianism, *chung* means to be central and *yung* means to be in harmony. The principle of *chung yung* emphasized the balance between the extreme of thinking and the actions and thus formed an underlying principle governing all human thought and action (Lai 2010). These virtues exemplify the distinctiveness of Confucianism understanding on Chinese leadership practices. Yao (2006) and Nuyen (1999) stated that the goal of social harmony is consistent with principle of *chung yung* in which every viewpoint or opinion can coexist without any bias and prejudice. As a result, the cultivation of *chung yung* will develop gentlemen or *junzi* and the world will be harmonized so that the principle of humanity will be prevalent (Lam, 2019; Li 2004) For many decades, Confucianism has been identified as the underlying cultural catalyst that is contributing to the progress of Chinese capitalist development particularly in East and South East Asia (Redding 1990; Tan Hock 1989). According to Confucianism, leadership is considered an art of social interaction which include cautiousness in speech and behavior, adoption of the doctrine of the mean (*zhong yong*), forgiveness and self discipline as these will prevent human relation troubles while maintaining the spirit of building and developing individual virtues and leadership behaviour (Zhang 2008). An overview of the literature on *The Analects* concluded with the identification of five major distinct wisdom areas or most relevant to effective leadership, namely; moral character, proper conduct, humanity, life long learning and maintaining a balance.

The individual should continuously cultivate oneself to build the five constant virtues: *ren, yi, li, zhi* and *xin*. Self-cultivation of such kind could assist to the way to social and state harmony when harmony in human relations is maintained through the practice and perfection of these five constant ethical virtues. It is the courage and willingness of oneself to seed these factors within their hearts for such successful cultivation.

The Master Confucius said: “*To subdue one’s self and return to propriety or rites, is perfect virtue. If a man can for one day subdue himself and return to propriety, all under heaven will ascribe perfect virtue to him. Is the practice of perfect virtues from a man himself, or is it from others?*” (Analects 12:1).

子曰：“克己复礼为仁。一日克己复礼，天下归仁焉。为仁由己，而由人乎哉？”
(论语颜渊 12: 1)

Li (propriety or rites) is a manifestation of *ren* (love or benevolence), which prescribes the appropriate human relationships. *zhi* (wisdom) is the cognitive capability in differentiating the good from the bad, which forms the basis of *yi* (righteousness) and *xin* (sincerity or trustworthiness). As a consequence, the ideal human behavior can be characterized by *zhong* (loyalty) and *shu* (reciprocity). Self-cultivation raised by *the Analects* makes its distinctive from many Western systems of ethical thoughts. Overcoming the self through self-cultivation and examination is the basis to harmonize human relationships and help to achieve peace and prosperity of a state as a whole. In another words, *the Analects* could help to establish a model of ethics, social values and framework for moral living especially related to leadership.

As the focus of the *Analects* is on spiritual morality, and the war- like business field empirically demand high level of competition among corporate leaders, the principles in business and management teaching thus hold and provide basis for relevant readiness in the business field upon spiritual morality support from the Confucius emphasized the fulfillment of life and full development of *junzi* or gentleman. Poor character of a man, family background and societal order are the key factors contributing to separation among people. Thus, in an organization, effective leaders pay special attention to their individual characters with commitment through self discipline and self restrain and served as a living example. Confucius said:

“He puts his words into action before allowing his words to follow his action”

The Analects (2,13) quoted in *Confucius: The Analects* (Lau 1979)

“The gentleman desires to be halting in speech but quick in action.”

The Analects (4,24) quoted in *Confucius: The Analects* (Lau 1979) *Analects*.

Confucius teaches to follow the five fundamental human relationships process, namely, started from the self cultivation, to regulating his family, then to governing the country and establishing peace in world at large. The effects of cultivating good

self will eventually lead to maintaining good relationships with others. Confucius focused on proper conduct or *li*, Sincere affection and good practice of *li* will strengthen relationships and networking.

The fulfillment of humanity is by practicing moral behavior according to the principle of *li*. Thus, to practice *ren* is to love without discrimination and love is the one principle that permeates all human behaviour. Confucius said:

“ Courtesy, for those who are courteous will not be humiliated; Magnanimity (generosity), for those who are magnanimous wins the heart of the masses; Good faith, for those who are in good faith are trusted by the people; Diligence, for those who are diligent will attain their goals; and Kindness, for those who are kind will receive service from the people.”

The Analects (17, 6)

In this study, the influence of Confucius values on corporate leadership will be investigated. Based on the literature reviewed, it is noted that the main concern for leadership challenges is to organize human resources, including managing the harmonious inter relationships in order to achieve the organizational goals. Hence, the wise strategic decision for developing the organisations should be based on full understanding of various levels of environments. The application of Confucius values such as *li*, *chung yung*, *ren* and humanity can be fulfilled by interdependency and harmonious relationships established. In another words, to achieve the harmonious relationships, people must behave according to appropriate roles based on *li* and treat others the way he likes others to treat him and keep moderate thought and action flexibly according to timing and situation by not breaching the principle of humanity in general.

METHOD

The focus of this study is on rediscover the relationship between Confucianism philosophy and Chinese corporate leaders and leadership in Malaysia. Firstly, leadership is complex in nature, let alone corporate leadership in a multi-racial and multi-cultural context. A practical and theoretical understanding of the influence of Confucianism philosophy on Chinese corporate leadership will not only contribute to the body of knowledge of leadership studies, but also provide a different perspective on the understanding of the intricacies and complexities of Chinese corporate

leadership. Hence, we see two interdependent areas of interests, that is, the practice and theory in the study corporate leadership, within the framework of an understanding of leadership behavior actions, involving knowledge and understanding of Confucianism philosophy, including values, ethics, morals and a review of leadership assumptions, within the context of Chinese corporate leaders in Malaysia, consciously or unconsciously applying their knowledge and understanding of Confucianism philosophy to execute vision and implement change in their organizations.

The sample is selected according to the size of the business (market capitalization), business type, and performance of corporation based on the various indices as published by Bursa Saham Malaysia (BSM). The operational difficulties of defining corporate performance objectively, on close inspection, permeated with practical and conceptual difficulties. As such, a rather straight forward definition is adopted based on BSM's yardstick of performance standards in corporate performance. The sample of Malaysian Chinese corporate leaders is to be selected purposively from among the cohort of corporate leaders in companies listed in the BSM. The selection strategy consists of first attempting to obtain a mix of cases or individuals that would provide diverse background between various corporate entities, and within these cases, to get as much range along the other dimensions as possible. As a practical matter, this meant cases are chosen purposively to maximize diversity along these dimensions but within the constraints of finding cases that fits these dimensions. In short, the sample is not random but purposive to maximize corporate and individual diversity. The dimensions in consideration are: type of business, size of business, performance, age of respondents, and experience of respondents. The method of seeking cases is deliberate and intentional, through contacts with some preliminary knowledge of the cases as this will allow for much stronger research design, and provide potential opportunities for theory building (Bennett 1997a).

In the larger study, a purposive sampling is used as the form of data collection. In special situation, the purposive sampling provided the appropriate means to investigate a specialized population of Malaysian Chinese corporate leaders. The exploration of purposive samples allowed for the investigation of element of Confucianism philosophy in leadership practices from the respondents, which had not taken place prior to this study. Approval had been received from the selected respondents for interviews and data obtained were used for the purposes of this study. An agreement to maintain confidentiality and anonymity of companies and individuals was signed by both the researcher and respondents.

For the purpose of this study, an inductive case research design was used. Cases permit a replication logic in which cases are treated as experiments, with each case observing to confirm or disconfirm inferences drawn from others, and this process

normally yields more robust insight than single case (Eisenhardt, 1989a; Yin, 1984). This study design embeds the knowledge and understanding as the unit of analysis. It was interesting because of the emergence of insight of wisdom based on the knowledge and understanding from the respondent. The focus is thus on the discovery of meaning and the wisdom based on the knowledge and understanding of Confucianism philosophy from the respondent. Given the purpose of investigating leadership practices based on the leader's knowledge and understanding of Confucianism philosophy, this study employed a research design that comprehensively tracks the wisdom from the respondent. +Since the main objective of this study is to examine Chinese Corporate leader and leadership process, respondent's perception and the challenges he faces with theoretical implications in strategic exchange, managerial activities and behavior, role theory, within the context of Chinese values and wisdom is explored. In short, this study of leadership is designed within the framework of the influence of knowledge and understanding of Confucianism philosophy in the practice of leadership. Thus the person-centered or individualistic focus of this study is the central premise of analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study was designed to rediscover the relationship between Confucianism philosophy and Malaysian Chinese corporate leadership. To that end, the characteristics of the respondent associated with wisdom, and the relation of these socio-psychological constructs, and the respondent's self-ratings regarding the constructs of wisdom correlated with assessments of organizational performance and leadership, will be explored.

Description of the Respondent

Table 1 presents a brief description of the respondent for this study.

BASIC INFORMATION AND FAMILY BACKGROUND OF THE RESPONDENT

Table 1 Respondent's Age, Educational Background/Level, Experience and Family Background

Respondent	Age	Educational Background	Educational Level	Experience/Family Background
Respondent 1 (R#1)	75	Chinese Educated	Undergraduate degree in chemistry	<p>Experience:</p> <p>More than 45 years of gold jewellery industry in Malaysia and international markets. An absolute expert in the industry. A well-known leader in Chinese Associations in Malaysia.</p> <p>Family Background:</p> <p>Like many other Chinese who lived in the Southern region of China, R#1's parents were from Da He village in Cheng-Jiang town of Meixian in the Guangdong Province, decided to seek greener pastures in Malacca in view of the political uncertainty in the country and poor production in the agricultural sector. The couple migrated to Malacca in 1927 before moving on to Pasir Puteh in 1933. They earned a living as farmers. In 1941, R#1's father passed away in Penang. R#2 was their 10th child and he had four brothers and five sisters. R#1's father passed away when he was four. With the family losing its main source of income, his mother became the sole breadwinner in the family by growing vegetables, rearing pigs and making tofu (beancurd) for a living. During his</p>

				<p>primary schooldays, R#1 had to walk barefeet for two miles to SJK (C) Pay Fong and the situation improved during his secondary schooldays as he could cycle to Pay Fong High School, after he had finished his daily chore of selling his homegrown vegetables at the wet market. The family's expenses were defrayed from the income received on the sale of vegetables and toufu, while money earned through the selling of goats and pigs was meant for education. Although R#1's mother had never received any formal education, she deeply subscribed to a principle-education should not be hindered by poverty. R#1 did quite well academically during his secondary schooldays. His excellent result thus secured him a free air ticket to Taiwan to study Chemistry in NCKU. His inclination toward Chemistry was influenced by his teacher.</p>
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The findings were based on the coding of the data in examining the knowledge and understanding of Confucianism philosophy from the respondent. The semi-structured interviews transcripts, autobiographies, documentary analysis and observation were triangulated in this study reports. Direct quotes are indented and single-spaced. Reflexibility for the presentation of the major findings based on the emerging concepts from data was used in this study. This is consistent with commonly used qualitative practices. (Bennett & George, 1997; Chua 2012; Gabarro 1987; Hancock 1998; Marshall & Rossman 1994; Miles & Huberman, 1993; Yin 1984)

Within Case Analysis of Responses of Knowledge and Understanding for Confucianism Philosophy from the Respondent

Table 2 Frequency, Intensity and Consistency of

Responses of Knowledge and Understanding for Confucianism philosophy for the Respondent

	2:30PM	3:10PM	3:50PM
4:30PM			
Confucianism	CCCCC	CCCCC	CCCCC
Philosophy	CCCCC	CCCCC	CCCCC
	CCCCC	CCCCC	CCCCC
	CCC	CCCCC	CCCCC
		CC	CCCCC
			CCCCC

Legend: The concepts of knowledge and understanding of Confucianism philosophy mentioned (Stripes of data) and discussed during the in-depth interview between the time slots from 2:30pm through 4:30pm

C=Confucianism Philosophy

R#1 had a very deep and high level of evaluated knowledge and understanding of *ren* of Confucianism and expressed his experience in the following way:

“When facing difficulty, we need to be calmed and think of ways to resolve the problems. We have to train ourselves to be patience, do not too dependent on others for solving our own problems unless we have failed to do it ourselves. Diligence is key towards problem solving.”

R#1 further expressed his Confucianism values in the following way:

“Do not blame others as it won’t be good in solving problems. What is the most important thing is to be a jun zi (gentlemen). Doing business anywhere, sincerity and trustworthiness are the essence to success. Traditionally, we have to be hard working with good faith. I told my children, if they want to be successful in taking over my leadership for the company, they need to be hard working and with good faith, in dealing with all relevant stakeholders involved. Even with my two new subordinate companies, My Diamon and TH Jewelry, I insisted on the practice of sincerity, hard working and good faith for all aspects of operation.”

R#1 also shown deep and high level of understanding of Confucianism in the following way:

“Show your courtesy to everyone, even with your competitors! Competition is based on improvement on services, design and quality, not unethical business behavior. As the founder and executive chairman, I have been applying my knowledge and understanding from confucianism in the growth and development of the group. I responsible for the overall strategic business direction of the group, I bring with me 40 years of experience in the jewellery industry including precious metals and gemstones. I have dedicated to assure products of the highest quality. I have been the President of the Federation of Goldsmiths and Jewellers Association for six years since 1996 and is currently serving several other associations in various capacities. In 2006, I had set up ‘NTF’ Foundation ‘with a total fund to date over RM 1.2 million to assist the education needs of the needy student. “

R#1 further described in details:

“Friendship, particularly in business is very important to me in my life. Friendship in business must be based on loyalty, sincerity and trustworthiness. It is an asset to me. Even to my HR practice, I trust my staffs and empowered them to their tasks and jobs all based on trust. Today, with the hard work of all my staffs, clients and suppliers, we managed to produce 250 kg of jewelry monthly and 60% was for export, and 40% was for local consumption. We have 40 outlets now and annual sales has reached 150 million. All in all, I personally attribute

this humbly performance to the practice of chung yung as suggested by Confucius. It is not the matter of my own hard work, but is the team work that based on moderation, sincerity and trust among everybody. In this context, I think Confucius values helped me a lot in my personal and organizational success. I have instituted Confucianism values of courtesy, diligence, kindness, sincerity and good faith through the practice of chung yung in my company and this has shown effective support for my organizational cultural development. Whether a company can continue to be successful is highly dependent on human capital. Nothing is perfect, from the management, marketing, purchasing, financial planning as well as HR, I embedded these Confucianism values as the main thrust of company organizational culture.”

It was also interesting to observe that R#1 generalised his evaluated understanding of Confucianism in the following list on responsibility and knowledge.

“...to develop his power to influence others, a leader practices doing these things: He encourages trust and loyalty. He instills confidence and purpose...”

“...within his own organization, a responsible leader is respectful to his bosses and reserved with those his subordinates. When dealing with other stakeholders, he is calm and assured but careful when he speaks. When working with lower-level staff, an effective leader is pleasant and efficient. When working with his bosses, he is polite and unpretentious...”

“...take great care when everyone disagrees with you. But take even greater care when everyone agrees...”

Apparently, these understanding were indeed induced influence of Confucianism on R#1’s corporate experience.

Apparently, knowledge and understanding of Confucianism has played a very important role in shaping R#1’s managerial and leadership actions. R#1 has shown a deep and high level of evaluated knowledge and understanding of Confucianism that influenced his organizational decision making. Table 3 exhibits the attributes of leadership of the respondent on his evaluated understanding of Confucianism philosophy relevant to the related dimensions of leadership. It is noted that the bold importance of people management as in the related dimension of leadership is

observed. This is aligned with the core meaning of Confucianism where humanistic value is stressed.

Table 3 The Attributes of Leadership of the Respondent on his Evaluated Understanding of Confucianism Philosophy and The Related Dimensions of Leadership

Confucianism Philosophy- The Humanistic Attributes	Acronym	Related to Dimensions of Leadership in terms of:
**Deals with cause and effect relationships, focuses on problem-solving,	C&ER	-People Management
**Recognizes the importance of observation and verification	OV	-People Management
**Emphasized the importance of maintaining one's values, promoting self-management	MV	-People Management -Leadership Behaviour and Styles -Organisational Design and Structure
**Developing one's abilities, and the abilities of staff	DA	-People Management -Business Strategy and Orientation
**Personal development for continuous improvement	PD	-People Management -Business Strategy and Orientation
**Working of the group over the individual as it has a more positive implications for effective team building	WGETB	-People Management -Leadership Effectiveness and Organisational Performance -Leadership in Managing and Leading Change 126

		-Organisational Renewal and Success
**Focus on group harmony as it is a most important value to effective organizational functioning	<i>GH</i>	-People Management -Leadership Behaviour and Styles
** Work on being more authentic get to know their followers holistically and empathize with their followers	<i>MO</i>	-People Management -Leadership Behaviour and Styles
**Remove barriers between themselves and followers and promote and celebrate the uniqueness of each individual	<i>RB</i>	-People Management -Leadership in Managing and Leading Change

** (denotes the bold importance of people management as in the related dimension of leadership)

Table 4 Summarises the respondent's matrix of the outcomes of Confucianism philosophy on leadership actions during stages of organizational development. All the coded humanistic attributes found contributed to the influential and determinants of key decision making during various stages of organizational development. It is quite striking to note that the attributes of Confucianism philosophy of the respondent were explicitly reflected in his leadership actions and decision making. The respondent actually uses a very wide attributes of Confucianism philosophy on most of the leadership dimensions on decision and performances as well as for the sustainability of competitive advantage.

Table 4.

Matrix of the Outcomes of Confucianism Philosophy on Leadership of the Respondent During Organisational Development

	Overall Rating (a)	Organisational Maintenance & Sustainability	Increased Growth & Expansion	Leading Crisis & Organisation Ineffectiveness	Result (b)
Definition & Rationale		Leading the organization in maintaining and sustaining business operation	Leading organization to gain new market (e.g. new geographies, new customer)	Leading organization to overcoming crisis an dilemma at organizational inflexion points	
Outcome of Confucianism Philosophy		Sustaining competitiveness in industry involved	Increased competitiveness in new market	Turnaround and revival of organization	
Humanistic Attributes: C&ER;OV AND MV	"+++"	"++" Influence identified to react to internal and external environmental changes for sustaining organisational competitiveness in the industry. <i>"After the 1997 financial crisis, we learned to be more conservative toward investment projects paticularly managing the cashflow and other operational aspects of our company's ventures."</i>	"+++"Influence identified for leading the company proactively to gain new market. <i>"The world is changing fast with unprecedented technology advancement, past insensitivity to changes was dangerous and now we stressed on conducting research for organisational growth and expansion."</i>	"+++"Influence identified for managing crisis for revitalising the company. <i>"Since the successful listing of our company, we have been very careful managing the potential crisis and crisis management now is a must our business future"</i>	From market follower to market leader in terms of market share(Based on 2011 company financial information)
Humanistic Attributes: DA AND PD	"+++"	"+++"Influence identified to react to environmental changes for sustaining competitiveness in the industry. <i>"I advised everybody learn to be calm and think hard to resolve what ever issues facing the company "</i>	"++"Influence identified for leading organisation proactively to gain new market and its position. <i>"We need to learn to trust people so that they would help us expand our business relationships, these people are the suppliers, good friends and and other business associates."</i>	"+++"Influence identified for engaging and managing crisis. <i>" We must learn to be independent and able to manage crisis and grow during crisis!"</i>	Maintaining a strong market leadership in local market
Humanistic Attributes: WGETB AND GH	"+"	"+" Influence identified to response to sustaining the business operation. <i>" We need to working hard continuously while looking for better business opportunities "</i>	"+" Influence identified for helping the organisation to further expansion. <i>" We believe in branding, services, pricing as well as quality that are instrumental to innovation for further expansion of group business performance."</i>	"++"Influence identified for leading and managing change that affect the company's future direction. <i>"We will follow the market trend and have continuous dialogue with staffs for adaptation to possible changes."</i>	Acquiring increasing market share in maternity wear industry locally
Humanistic Attributes: MO AND RB	"+++"	"++"Influence identified for sustaining business operation. <i>"We must be able to convert our mistake into opportunities in order to sustain our business operation."</i>	"++" Influence identified for increased growth and expansion. <i>"Expansion must look into own self, strategies of doing something best, must have sustainabilty, focus and the luck factor must be there..."</i>	"++" Influence identified for leading organization to overcoming crisis and dilemma at organizational inflexion points. <i>" We have to be fluid and learn not to be too aggressive rather to be more focus when dealing with drastic change."</i>	Sustaining market share in local supermarket industry

(a) To rate the influence by assigned group of Humanistic Attributes of respondent a "+" for identified influence and a "+++" if the respondent used them consistently and "+++" if respondent used them early and proactively.

(b) All interviewed and archival sources were used for the purpose of triangulation of data analysis

CONCLUSION

This interesting findings of this study would further enhanced Burns (1978); Bass (1990) and Jeannot (1989), contemporary literature on leadership that has emerged from the influence on leadership based on morality and values that require indication of wisdom or some kind of qualities of mind. The finding of this study suggested that the leadership actions is a function of knowledge and understanding of Confucianism philosophy that led to series of successful organizational transformation. The findings of this study further acknowledged that Confucianism philosophy is particularly concerned with actions that focused on managing people in a responsible manner through humanistic manners. This echoed the social understanding that is vital for managing people work stress and individual well being in order to build commitment and relationships (Kakabadse 1991). Thus, effective leadership needs wisdom that lead actions.

The seminal work of Kessler et al. (1985) offers an intriguing perspective. They postulated that the elements of wisdom are judgment and action. They then posit a useful path to wisdom involving conceptions of experience, spirituality and passion. That is, as a consequence of a leader's evaluated knowledge and understanding of Confucianism philosophy by taking the right actions, organisations undergoing transformation (Kessler et al., 1985). The findings about the influence of Confucianism philosophy on leadership in this study also echoed the findings that action is consistent with wisdom theories (Boal and Hooijberg, 2000; Kakabadse & Kouzmin, 2001; Kriger & Seng, 2005; Whittington, Pitts, Kageler, & Goodwin, 2005).

With reference to the findings of this study, it is clearly shown that influence of Confucianism philosophy on leadership is monumental, nevertheless, such a evaluative based leadership conception is found to co-exist with existing western models of leadership (Lam, 2019). Confucianism philosophy is thus an inexhaustible source of values and wisdom for good leadership practice, and has succeeded in finding a place in the world of Malaysian Chinese corporate leadership. The magnitude of Confucianism philosophy lies in its rich practical values as virtues witnessed in corporate leadership in Malaysia.

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