

TANTANGAN KEPEMIMPINAN WANITA DI PT KAWANUA DASA PRATAMA

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Abstract: In recent years, women's working life has been marked by more sustainable labor force participation. However, research shows that despite an increase in the number of female employees in the work environment, the top position is still dominated by men. Their position in the company only occupies middle and lower manager positions, women do not have certain powers or rights in the company. There are various challenges that hinder women in leadership positions. This study aims to explore the challenges to women's leadership at PT Kawanua Dasa Pratama and their solutions. This research was conducted using qualitative methods. The sample size of this study is 9 female leaders who work at PT Kawanua Dasa Pratama. The findings revealed that stereotypes, sexual harassment, work-life balance, and mentoring were the most frequently reported challenges by female leaders at PT Kawanua Dasa Pratama. To overcome these challenges, they need to continue developing themselves and working hard, manage time well between work and family, don't see feminine characteristics as weaknesses, and creating a mentor and disciple cycle between women. Companies also need to provide job training to employees and not tolerating sexual harassment and discrimination in the workplace.

Keywords: *women, leadership, challenges*

Abstrak: Dalam beberapa tahun terakhir, kehidupan kerja perempuan ditandai dengan partisipasi angkatan kerja yang lebih berkelanjutan. Namun, penelitian menunjukkan bahwa meskipun terdapat peningkatan jumlah karyawan wanita di lingkungan kerja, posisi atas tetap didominasi pria. Posisi mereka di perusahaan hanya menempati posisi manajer menengah dan bawah, perempuan tidak memiliki kekuatan atau hak-hak tertentu di perusahaan. Terdapat berbagai tantangan yang menghambat wanita diposisi pemimpin. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi tantangan kepemimpinan wanita di PT Kawanua Dasa Pratama dan solusinya. Penelitian ini dilakukan dengan menggunakan metode kualitatif. Ukuran sampel penelitian ini adalah 9 pemimpin wanita yang bekerja di PT Kawanua Dasa Pratama. Temuan mengungkapkan bahwa stereotip, pelecehan seksual, keseimbangan kehidupan kerja, dan pendampingan adalah tantangan yang paling sering dilaporkan oleh pemimpin perempuan di PT Kawanua Dasa Pratama. Untuk mengatasi tantangan tersebut, mereka perlu terus mengembangkan diri dan bekerja keras, mengatur waktu dengan baik antara pekerjaan dan keluarga, tidak melihat karakteristik feminin sebagai kelemahan, dan menciptakan siklus mentor dan murid antara perempuan. Perusahaan juga perlu memberikan pelatihan kerja kepada karyawan dan tidak menoleransi pelecehan seksual dan diskriminasi di tempat kerja.

Kata Kunci: *wanita, kepemimpinan, tantangan*

INTRODUCTION

Research Background

According to Hejase et al. (2013), in today's fast-paced world, the need for women to balance work and family roles has become very important. They have to look after their family and at the same time be professional and successful in their career. Especially in today's highly competitive business world, women make up half of the workforce and are said to play a very important role in the economic growth of their countries. However, what's most worrying is that women still haven't risen to the top positions, as they should be.

Unfortunately, women, in particular, face challenges and barriers that limit and control their mobility in the workplace (Hampden, 2015). As gender diversity in the workplace increases, the complexities surrounding the challenges faced by organizations, men, women, and their families also continues to evolve (Sweat, 2020). In recent years, this shift has women entering the workforce in record numbers allowing them the opportunity to have successful careers and expand their professional influences, particularly with respect to leadership (International Labor Office, 2015; Schock et al., 2019; Sweat, 2020). Eagly and Carli (2007) claimed that the implicit gender bias has been unconsciously woven into the fabric of our culture and society based on the outdated stereotypes of the particular roles that both men and women are expected to play.

When viewed by gender, the percentage of the male population who are economically active is much higher than the percentage of the female population. In fact, the percentage of the male population who are economically active is almost twice as large as the percentage of the female population. The proportion of the male working-age population in the working group is 74.84 percent and the taking care of household group is 4.82 percent. Meanwhile, the proportion of the working-age population of females in the working group is 42.05 percent and the taking care of household group is 41.86 percent. This value indicates that the percentage of the female population who takes care of the household is almost nine times greater than the percentage of the male population. The understanding that taking care of the household is a woman's job and work is a man's job seems to still apply among the people of North Sulawesi (Central Bureau of Statistics of North Sulawesi Province, 2021).

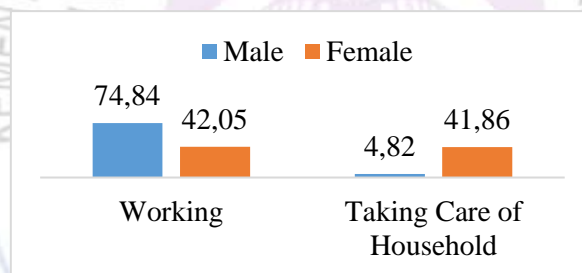


Figure 1. The Percentage of Working and Taking Care of the Household by Gender

Source: Central Bureau of Statistics of North Sulawesi Province, 2021

The fundamental structure of patriarchal society depends upon an understanding that males are superior, more powerful, and that they represent the “norm,” while women are understood as inferior, lacking in power and autonomy, and secondary. The power of socialization on which this system is based cannot be ignored. Gender discrimination and patriarchal values are so deeply rooted in society's consciousness that they are largely invisible. The structures of social organization have been built by males, for males, to support males. In many bureaucracies, whether they are governmental or corporate, most of the top positions are held by men. Women are generally concentrated in the lower, supportive positions necessary to keep this male leadership in power. Therefore, the power, prestige, and privileges of those in positions of power, generally men, depend on the subordinate position of women. Thus, this ordering of power has serious consequences for women's leadership (Jakobsh, 2012).

PT Kawanua Dasa Pratama is a company engaged in the supermarket. The company is located at Wolter Monginsidi Street, no.1, Bahu Mall. PT Kawanua Dasa Pratama (also known as Fresh Mart) was established on March 19, 2002. In other words, the establishment of this company for more than 19 years illustrates how Fresh Mart Supermarkets have a better place in the hearts of the people of Manado in terms of shopping. Apart from Bahu, Fresh Mart itself has opened several branches in Manado. These branches are located in Kembang, Teling, Winangun, Tikala, Paniki, Airmadidi and Wonasa. Currently, PT Kawanua Dasa Pratama has more than 600 employees. There are 22 leaders at PT Kawanua Dasa Pratama, consisting of 9 women and 13 men. In other words, women hold as much as 41 percent of the total leadership in the company. This shows that the percentage

of male and female leaders in PT Kawanua Dasa Pratama is almost equal. However, this does not mean those female leaders at PT Kawanua Dasa Pratama do not face challenges during their careers. Based on the background problem, the author was inspired to perform this research on the challenges to women's leadership at PT Kawanua Dasa Pratama. This research will mainly concentrate on the discussion of the challenges faced by female managers at PT Kawanua Dasa Pratama. This research expects to explore the challenges to women's leadership at PT Kawanua Dasa Pratama through the research analyses.

Research Objective

Based on the research problem, the objective of this research is:

1. To explore the challenges to women's leadership at PT Kawanua Dasa Pratama.
2. To obtain the solutions to women's leadership challenges at PT Kawanua Dasa Pratama.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Human Resource Management

Human resource management (HRM or just HR) is a term commonly used to describe all organizational activities related to recruiting and selecting, designing work for, training and developing, assessing and rewarding, directing, motivating, and controlling workers (Wilton, 2016).

Challenges to Women's Leadership

Challenge is a task or situation that tests someone's ability and skill. In this research, challenges refer to difficulties that female leaders face during their career journey and advancement to higher positions. One of the most common and well-known challenges for women in the business world is known as the "glass ceiling". Women's social capital in organizations including mentoring, gender stereotypes, discrimination, and most importantly family-related concerns are the most common examples of organizational challenges. Balancing between work life and family life leaves less time for both socializing with colleagues and other members of the organization, but also less time for building professional networks. The scarcity of women in top leadership positions in the companies leads to women being unable to find or having limited access to female mentors (Elmuti, Jia, and Davis, 2009). This may lead women to be more inhibited and even reserved at the workplace. Mentors with the same gender often help with understanding and overcoming the gender stereotype and challenge the men do not face and experience at the workplace. These include perceptions and assumptions of women being more emotional, less skilled than men at the problem-solving tasks, and the fear and risk of the sexual harassment issues (Elmuti, Jia, and Davis, 2009; Järvinen, 2018).

Stereotypes

Stereotypes refers to the characteristics we impose on others based on their nationality, ethnicity, or gender groups (Schneider, 2003).

Glass Ceiling

The glass ceiling is a term coined in the 1970s in the United States to describe an invisible, artificial barrier created by attitudinal and organizational prejudice that prevents women from senior executive positions (Wirth, 2001).

Discrimination

The word "discrimination" comes from the Latin *discrimino*, which means "to divide or separate". And anything that involves discrimination, it's based on dividing people into categories (Schneider, 2003).

Sexual Harassment

There are two types of sexual harassment. The first one is verbal sexual harassment. Verbal sexual harassment does not necessarily involve any physical contact. It happens through inappropriate comments, statements that are sexually suggestive, and much more. The other is non-verbal sexual harassment. You can also experience sexual harassment visually. If someone at work sends you explicit messages or images, that's harassment. Of course, unwanted physical contact is also sexual harassment. This includes brushing someone,

touching, leaning on someone, cuddling, and more. If someone touches you in a way that is unwanted, inappropriate, or makes you uncomfortable, you could become a victim (Julien, 2020).

Work-Life Balance

'Work-family balance' can be defined as the degree to which an individual is equally engaged in - and equally satisfied with - his or her work roles and family roles (Greenhaus, Collins, and Shaw, 2003; Zerwas, 2019).

Networking

Network settings provide invaluable information, visibility, and support. When more senior positions become vacant, the "network" usually recommends suitable candidates fill the empty spot that is drawn from their own circle and who are practically always men (Wirth, 2001).

Mentoring

Mentoring is an arrangement where an individual who has experience and knowledge in a particular area can actively guide and offer support to facilitate the learning or development of others. Such arrangements generally involve someone in a leadership position providing guidance and assistance to individuals in a more junior position (Jakobsh, 2012).

Previous Research

Hampden (2015) examined the barriers and challenges affecting women before and after they enter leadership positions. The analysis for this paper included a systematic review of 35 studies that focus on the barriers and challenges that many women face as they navigate a corporate world lacking in advancement opportunities for them. Specifically, it identified and examined seven main themes: Mentoring, Networking, Opportunities and Assignments, Work-life Balance, Exceeding Performance, Expectations, Salary Gaps, and Corporate Culture.

Järvinen (2018) aimed to find out which are the main organizational barriers women experience while trying to get to the leadership level, and also how this impact on women's opinions of the finance sector. A qualitative method was used in this thesis to investigate the above. The method of using interviews was the most effective and convenient way to obtain all necessary and relative information of the study's problem from the participants. The main findings from the interview results may help understanding more about the issue and how to improve the women's situation.

Elmuti, Jia, and Davis (2009) aimed to discover working public thoughts about roles of United States women in leadership positions and to test the relationship between managerial leadership styles and organizational effectiveness. A survey of perceptions of leadership roles and effectiveness distributed 700 randomly selected entities from industries in the United States. Findings suggest approximately 50% of women leaders perceive barriers that prevent women for entering management positions and lower advancement rates for women. This study shows that aspiration in women exists whether or not they take action and motivate themselves to advance for top management positions. However, barriers like discrimination, family-life demands, prejudice, and stereotyping result in fruitlessness in many cases.

Conceptual Framework

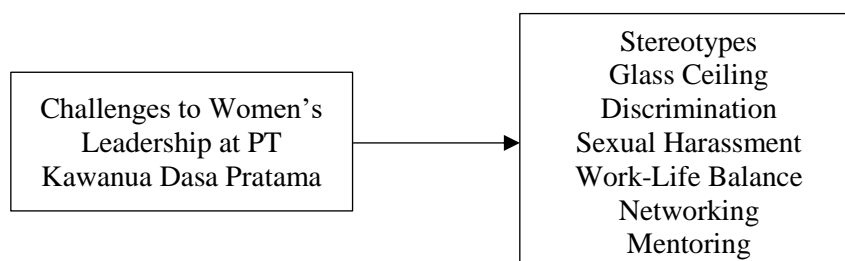


Figure 2. Research Framework

Source: Theoretical Review, 2021

RESEARCH METHOD**Research Approach**

This research is a qualitative research. This study uses a case study approach. A case study is an in-depth inquiry of a topic or phenomenon in a real-life setting (Yin, 2014; Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2016).

Population, Sample Size, and Sampling Technique

The population in this research was 9 female leaders at PT Kawanua Dasa Pratama. The sampling technique used in this study is non-probability sampling, namely saturated sampling. Saturated sampling is a sampling technique when all members of the population are sampled. So, the sample of this research is the entire population, namely 9 female leaders at PT Kawanua Dasa Pratama.

Data and Sources

The data used in this study are primary data and secondary data. Primary data is data collected by the researcher specifically for the research project being undertaken (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2016). In this research, the primary data collected through interviews. Secondary data is data that was originally collected for some other purpose. In this research, the secondary data obtained through literature sources that are closely related to research titles and also from news, articles, and online journals.

Data Collection Technique

Data collection methods used in this study are based on interviews. The type of interview used in this research is a semi-structured interview, which in practice is freer than structured interviews (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2016).

Indicators

In this research, Stereotypes, Glass Ceiling, Discrimination, Sexual Harassment, Work-Life Balance, Networking, and Mentoring are the indicators of Challenges to Women's Leadership at PT Kawanua Dasa Pratama.

Research Instrument Testing**Validity Test**

The instrument validity test was conducted to show the validity of the instruments that will be used in the study. Validity refers to a measure that shows the level of validity of an instrument. The definition of validity shows the accuracy and appropriateness of measuring instruments used to measure variables. The measuring instrument can be said to be valid if it really fits and answers carefully about the variables to be measured. Validity also shows the accuracy of the statement with what is stated by the validity coefficient (Moleong, 2006). In this study, the validity test was carried out through confirmation.

Analysis Technique

In accordance with Moleong (2006), data analysis is the process of organizing data, sorting it into manageable units, synthesizing it, looking for and finding patterns, discovering what is important and what is learned, and deciding what to tell others. Data analysis techniques in qualitative research include: data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION**Result****Stereotypes**

Women leaders at PT Kawanua Dasa Pratama experienced gender and age stereotyping. Informants feel that their feminine traits are considered as a weakness. And some of the older informants were stereotyped as being less agile than their younger coworkers.

Glass Ceiling

The interview results show that there is no glass ceiling in the company.

Discrimination

The majority of informants did not experience discrimination. 7 out of 9 informants said they had never felt discriminated against.

Sexual Harassment

The majority of informants had experienced sexual harassment. Of the 9 informants, 7 had experienced sexual harassment. Most of the sexual harassment experienced by informants occurred in verbal form.

Work-Life Balance

Of the 9 informants, 7 did not achieve work-life balance. All informants who did not achieve work-life balance were married. Of the 7 informants who did not achieve work-life balance, 5 experienced time-based conflicts and 2 experienced strain-based conflicts.

Networking

The majority of informants do not have a network. Of the 9 informants who were interviewed, 8 informants did not have a network.

Mentoring

Most informants did not have a mentor or become a mentor for others. Of the 9 informants, 2 had mentors, 2 were mentors for others, and the remaining 5 informants did not have mentors and did not become mentors for anyone.

Solutions to Women's Leadership Challenges

Of the 9 informants, 3 mentioned self-development, 3 mentioned managing time between family and work, 1 mentioned not seeing feminine traits as weaknesses, 1 mentioned training workers, and 1 mentioned not tolerating discrimination and sexual harassment in the workplace.

Discussion

Based on the results of interviews with female leaders at PT Kawanua Dasa Pratama, there are gender and age stereotypes aimed at female leaders. The characteristics possessed by women are considered incompatible with the characteristics of a leader. And women who have ambitious, confident, and assertive characteristics - which are commonly socialized as characteristics of men - are perceived as inappropriate or unwanted to have these characteristics. This is in line with Enloe (2004); Flammang (1997); Hill, et al. (2016). Then, in line with Gregory's (2003) which states that older workers tend to be inflexible, less able to adapt to new technology, and less productive than younger workers, the female leaders interviewed who were older also said that they considered old-fashioned and not as agile as their younger co-workers.

In contrast to Jakobsh (2012) which talks about the separation of jobs and companies that encourage men to advance to executive positions rather than women, the results of the interviews stated that there is no such thing in the company. Especially the two informants - directors - who have reached the executive position said that the company does not prioritize men and restricts women from sitting in the executive chair. Executive positions, as well as middle and lower leadership positions, are chosen based on their respective abilities, and men and women have the same opportunity.

The results of interviews regarding discrimination show that the majority of informants do not experience discrimination. Contrary to Schneider's (2003) which states that individual discrimination occurs when people are treated unfairly just because they are part of a certain group (women), research finds that unfair treatment is not caused because someone is part of a certain group, but occurs because of individual views. Then, contrary to Gregory's (2003) who say that older women are replaced by younger men, the results of the interviews show that there is no discrimination against older women in the company.

In accordance with Julien (2020), there are two forms of sexual harassment in the workplace, namely verbal and non-verbal sexual harassment. Informants who experienced verbal sexual abuse said that they experienced sexual harassment in the form of inappropriate comments. The comments were not obvious because they were delivered in a joking tone. Therefore, informants who experienced it did not want to bother and report it. Informants who experienced non-verbal sexual harassment did not experience sexual harassment in the form of physical contact but experienced it visually. Informant was sent a vulgar sticker in the chat application.

Work-life balance is an individual's perception and includes the importance of work and non-work activities for each individual (Zerwas, 2019). Achieving a balance between work and family is one of the most important things from the interview. From the results of interviews with informants, the majority felt that their work and non-work activities were not balanced. Informants find it difficult to divide their time between work and family, especially those who are married. This difficulty dividing time is called time-based conflict. There were also informants who had difficulty carrying out non-work activities due to pressure from work activities. Informants admit that their job makes them run out of energy to do household chores. This difficulty is called strain-based conflict.

Regarding networking, the results of interviews with informants stated that there was no networking at PT Kawanua Dasa Pratama. According to Gregory-Mina (2012), in companies, there are formal and informal networks separated by gender or race that have an important role in filling empty seats. However, the informants admitted that there was no such network in the company. Informants claim that their positions as leaders from low, middle, and top positions are chosen based on work performance. The results of the interview also contradict the old-boy network by Jakobsh (2012) which talks about male networks that benefit men.

The results of the interviews showed that most of the informants did not have a mentor. Informants who have mentors think that having a mentor make it easier for them to do their jobs. There are also informants who act as mentors for their subordinates. Also, even though the majority of informants do not have a mentor or become a mentor for others, they admit that having a mentor can help their career development. This is in line with the Friday, Friday, and Green (2004) and Gregory-Mina (2012) that compared to someone who doesn't have a mentor, individuals who have a mentor find they have greater career success.

Then, from the results of interviews with informants when asked about solutions to challenges to women's leadership, the thing most often called by informants was self-development. They believe that hard work will not betray results. Another thing that was mentioned by the informants was managing time between family and work. This is in line with Sweat (2020) which says that women leaders must devote time to what matters most and continually reflect on that approach as demands and obligations shift. Control where time and energy are spent, but not on a daily basis. Set long-term goals and objectives that span months or sometimes years. Continually re-evaluate priorities for work and personal life, see where the time goes, and discipline in meeting goals. Other informants also mentioned not seeing women's characteristics as weaknesses. This follows Kiamba (2008); Hejase et al. who say that women in leadership positions should not be ashamed about displaying feminine traits like caring, empathy, trusting, sharing, empowering, and others. Women should be comfortable in leadership and recognize these traits as strengths and not weaknesses. Informants also mentioned training workers and not tolerating discrimination and sexual harassment in the workplace. This is in line with Hejase et al. (2013) who said employees must be educated about discrimination: what discrimination is, how it occurs, and how they can prevent their stereotypes from biasing their actions. Likewise, t adopting a zero-tolerance policy (Hejase et al., 2013). To prevent gender discrimination or sexual harassment from occurring in the workplace, an increasing number of employers are adopting zero-tolerance policies against all acts of discrimination. Such a policy should be written and circulated to all constituents of the organization, demonstrating that not only discrimination is wrong, but also should not be tolerated.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusion

The conclusions of this research are:

1. This research explores and seeks solutions to the challenges to women's leadership at PT Kawanua Dasa Pratama. The findings revealed that stereotypes, sexual harassment, work-life balance, and mentoring were the most frequently reported challenges by female leaders at PT Kawanua Dasa Pratama.
2. To overcome these challenges, the female leaders at PT Kawanua Dasa Pratama need to continue developing themselves and working hard. In addition, it is important to manage time well between work and family so that it can be balanced. Be yourself and don't see feminine characteristics as weaknesses. Companies also need to provide job training to employees so that they have a good work ethic. Not tolerating sexual harassment and discrimination in the workplace is also important to prevent it from being experienced by women. In addition, creating a mentor and disciple cycle between women can also help women's career development.

Recommendations

Based on the overall findings of this research, the researcher proposes several recommendations for women and the company:

1. Recommendations for Women: Women have to change their mindset, Not be ashamed about displaying feminine traits, Be authentic, Devote time to what matters most, Expand and strengthen the network continuously, Continually seek female mentors with which to connect, and Be a mentor to other women trying to grow.
2. Recommendations for the Company: Evaluate processes for hiring leaders, Provide training to employees, Carry out a thorough investigation whenever a discrimination or harassment claim is made, Adopt a zero tolerance policy, and Offer flexible work arrangements.

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