

Contributing Factors towards Women's Leadership in Malaysia Creative Industry: A Preliminary Findings

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Abstract

This research focuses on the contributing factors towards women's leadership in Malaysia's creative industry. Despite increasing research focused on professional work group leadership by male leaders, research on female leadership, has received little attention in the creative industries. This paper focuses on senior female executives working in film, digital, television and radio in Malaysia. As more and more women hold decision making positions in these areas, there are also more opportunities for women to manage and influence the content of the programs broadcasted on these media platforms. These women are not only industry leaders, but also have the power to shape the attitudes of society through content creation. To understand the situation from the women leaders themselves, this paper uses data from in-depth interviews, discussing the characteristics and contributing factors for women to rise as leaders in the creative media industry as well as their influence on content development. The extent of their decision-making process was also assessed. The data presented here is important because it provides access to the internal voice of stakeholders in the industry. The research surveyed nine industry leaders and identified the challenges faced by women in the media creative industry. However, this paper extracted the data from two interviews with two selected informants. These informants were also asked about their views on how to increase the potential of more women at the managerial level. Preliminary findings from two informants selected in this detailed interview revealed that digital transformation plays an important role in giving female creators a voice and influencing their followers. When it comes to creating content, gender consciousness is mentioned by both informants as a critical factor towards the success of women's leadership. It can be concluded that despite effort to inject empowerment and break the cultural stereotypical role of women's role in the media, the effort is often diminished by popular culture, ratings, and revenue. The audience acceptance is highly regarded, and often media houses will give them what they want. Another crucial key finding from this research is that a support system is a major key success indicator for women leaders to thrive. The support system can be divided into two, internal which included support from family members, parents, and spouse, while external support highlights superior's buy in and subordinates' trusts and encouragement.

Keywords: Creative Industry, Women, Leadership, Decision-Making, Broadcast, Digital