

Primary Study of Leader and Follower Relationship in Asia: Empirical Study on Managers at AEON in Asian Countries

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Abstract

This paper discusses the characteristics of leaders and that of followers as well as the relationship between those characteristics. Review of literature led this study to examine the degree of empowerment held by leaders and Kelley's followership style held by followers in AEON group of companies in Asia, which is one of the largest, leading retail firms in Japan. Based on the characteristics of leaders and followers, this study further examined the correlation between those characteristics. Empirical findings derived from this study led us to generate three propositions regarding of the interaction between leadership and followership. Lastly, we discuss possible influence from specific cultural issues which might influence over the data.

Key Words: Leadership, Followership, Gender, Asia

Introduction

In the era of globalization, many firms in the world would not be possible to ignore any influence from globalization; rather they pursue their internationalization process as their strategic choice. In the internationalization process, leadership is the one of the key factors in formulating strategy in the market of origin as well as in coping with the market of destination as their internationalization process would not be realized without internal facilitating competency such as leadership, functional coordination, experience, perception and attitude in the process (Alexander & Myers, 2000). In their challenge of adaptation to the market of destination, leaders of various levels have to engage people in the confronting challenge, adjusting their values, changing perspective, and learning new habit (Heifetz & Laurie 1997).

Our study purposed is to examine the characteristics of leaders and followers as well as the relationship between leaders and followers in several countries. As time goes by, the characteristics of leadership has been identified in various manner in business field as well as academic filed. However, little study has discussed whether the relationships between leaders and followers in firms influence over the characteristics of the leaders and followers. Furthermore, several variables from cultural dimensions and social status would have influenced over the characteristics of leaders and followers, which create different leadership and followership among countries.

In this study, we have selected five companies in Japan, China, Hong Kong, Thailand, and Malaysia to examine our research questions assuming that there are different

characteristics in the leadership style and the followership style among countries as well as the different relationship between the leaders and the followers.

Leadership

Many studies have discussed leadership and defined it from various perspectives; however, “none of studies has produced a clear profile of the ideal leader” (George et al., 2007, p.129). Moreover, “many theorists in the field agree that the definitions of leadership are unclear and inconsistent and that providing a unified an all-embracing definition is very challenging” (Williams, 2008, p.136).

In early days of leadership study, leadership were perceived “mystical belief” (Zaleznik, 1977) and personal traits of leaders were perceived the primary factor which decides the characteristics of leaders such as physical characteristics and attitude, and viewed the one exerting power influencing other people (Williams, 2008). Such characteristics resulted in confusions in leadership study. According to Heifetz, equating leadership with personality, equating leadership with authority, equating leadership with knowledge, and notion that its value neutral had resulted in kinds of confusion in leadership study (Senge et al. 2000). Whereas personal trait and power is one of the sources to identify the characteristics of leadership (Daft, 2008, p. 361), it is least sufficient to identify the characteristics of leaders. Managers also might hold the same characteristics as charisma.

One of key characteristics of leadership is the action to advocate changes and to engage followers toward the vision described by leader, which makes significant difference between leaders and managers. According to Kotter (1990), leadership is about coping with change while management is about cope with complexity. As leaders function is “to

produce change, setting direction of that change is fundamental to leadership motivating and aligning people” (p.104). In addition, leadership has something to do with a wider visioning or strategizing, performing and assessing (Senge et al., 2000). Furthermore, in the process to promote changes, leadership requires a learning strategy. “A leader, from above or below with or without authority has to engage people in confronting the challenge, adjusting their values, changing perspectives, and learning new habit” (Heifetz & Laurie, 1997). As such, describing vision, engaging followers, adapting new challenge are the crucial capability required to leadership.

The above mentioned implies that it is difficult to discuss leadership without considering followers. “Leadership is not only for leader but also follower. Leadership is a reciprocal process in that it occurs between people” (Kouze & Posner, 1990, p. 29). On one hand leadership study has been developed from the perspective of “organizational success through leader’s self-realization”; on the other hand leadership study has been developed from the perspective of “organizational success through the realization of growth of followers”. In other words, both “leader-centered” leadership as well as “follower-centered” leadership has been developed through leadership studies (Maslennikova, 2007). As Rost (1993, p104; 1995, p133) as well as Barker and Rost (2000) claimed, “Leadership influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real change and outcomes that reflect their sharp purpose”

As globalization proceed, the importance of “follower-centered” leadership such as “Transformational Leadership”, “Authentic Leadership”, “Shared Leadership”, and “Servant Leadership” is increasing. There still be ambiguous points in the ongoing studies, these leadership theory describes empowering followers as one of key action taken by

leaders. In a transformational leadership study, Yukl (1999) claimed “transformational leadership seems more likely to take actions that will empower followers and make them partners in quest to achieve important objective”. Like “transformational leadership”, other type of follower-centered leadership also claimed empowerment as its core action process to engage followers. (George et al., 2007; Pearce, 2004; Sendjaya et al., 2008)

While the “follower-centered” leadership is getting more important in current globalization, are the personal power and positional power of leaders reasonably unnecessary? This issue is one of the controversial points in current leadership study. In an extreme case, does a leader need to exercise position power in an organization led by shared leadership (Pearce et al., 2008)? Leader’s role to exercise position power is least emphasized in servant leadership as well (Sendjaya et al., 2008).

Giving answer to this question, Joseph S. Nye claimed that leaders need to use both “Soft power” and “Hard power” (Nye, 2008). “Smart power”, of “Hard power” and “Soft power”, is crucial in the age of globalization. “Soft power” represents emotional intelligence, communication skill, and transformational skill, while “Hard power” represents position power from Machiavellianism, organizational skill to control reward and information, and transactional skill. While “Smart power” is the integral part of both power, the balance between them are controlled according to the situations perceived by a leader. Thus, intelligence quality to understand situations inclusive of global issue as well as cultural issue is crucial for leader to exercise their “Smart Power” properly.

Similarly, in the current global business environment, it is crucial for us to take into account of the interaction between leaders and followers and the influence from followers when we consider leadership style in current multicultural and networking organization in

firms. Thus, the argument, “Leadership influence relationship among leaders and followers who intend real change and outcomes that reflect their shared purposes” (Rost, 1993) would be fundamental and the degree of “leader-centered” or “follower-centered” is the reasonable measurement to identify the type of leadership in this study.

Followership

Rost (2008) argued that “followership is the process people use to follow”. He also noted that “followership is what followers do when they follow (p.54)”. It indicates that followership is different from leadership. Followers are the other side of leadership phenomenon (Goffee & Jones, 2006). We could not find relationship and could not discuss leadership wherever followers do not exist. In addition, leadership and followership cannot be separated each other. Both are associated each other in active and energetic manner.

Followership is crucial in the analysis of leadership for many reasons. Foremost, “Without followers, there are no leaders” (Daft, 2008). Every person, involving the leaders, can be a follower at least one time. Each person can become follower more often than leader (Kelley, 1988). This indicates that leader itself is influenced by the followers in term of their perspective and way of doing to reach particular purpose. Hence, the basic characteristics of leader and follower relationships include reciprocity which means the leader and follower influences each other (Bass, 1990).

Moreover, there are so many characteristics that are necessary in leader are same character held by the effective follower. In addition to show initiative, liberty, strong belief in organization’s goals, and bravery, follower could give eager support to a leader. However, follower should point out flows of leaders when leader fails to implement the

organization's goals or leader is doing unethical. Hence, followers have obligation to tell leaders when they are doing the wrong thing or wrong way (Chaleff, 1997). Leader and follower can work together and share their vision so that both of their roles are proactive (Whiteside, 1999). Achievement of the organization, leaders, and followers are factors which can be changed on the situation that depend on each other (Daft, 2008).

Styles of Followership

Since behaviors of followers are related to leaders' behavior, there will be some difference in the style of follower depending on the style of leader in which they currently work. Chaleff (2008) categorized followers according to the dimension of "*the courage to support*" and "*the courage to challenge*" and developed four styles of followership. In accordance with Chaleff (2008), followership can be classified four types such as resource, individualist, implementer, and partner. This system of dividing the four styles is similar to another theory by Kelley (1992).

Kelley (1992) suggested five styles of followership in his theory of followership, who conducted broad study with leaders and followers. In keeping with Kelley (1992) these followership styles are categorized into two dimensions. The first dimension is "the quality of independent, critical thinking versus dependent, uncritical thinking". In compliance with Kelley (1992), the second dimension of followership style is "active versus passive behavior". The degree to which one is active or passive and is a critical, independent thinker or a dependent, uncritical thinker decides if he or she is an alienated follower, a passive follower, a conformist, a pragmatic survivor, or an effective follower, as shown in Figure 1 of Followership Styles.

Alienated follower: “the alienated follower is a passive, yet independent, critical thinker”. In general, alienated followers are effective followers who have knowledge or skill in difficulty, it may be promises broken by superiors. Hence, they have capability, but they focus totally on the weaknesses of the organization and other people.

Conformist follower: “the conformist participates actively in the organization but does not utilize critical thinking skills in his or her task behavior”. On the other hand, conformists accomplish their task eagerly without considering of the nature of that job assignment.

Pragmatic survivor: “the pragmatic survivor has qualities of all four extremes—depending on which style fits with the prevalent situation”. These types of followers use any style which benefits their position and reduce risk. Pragmatic survivors usually appear when an organization is facing bad situation, and they find themselves doing everything which is needed to get them through the difficulty.

Passive follower: “the passive follower exhibits neither critical, independent thinking nor active participation”. Nature of passive and uncritical followers, they will not take any obligation or initiative. This type of passive followers allows decision and consideration to his or her superior.

Effective follower: “the effective follower is both a critical, independent thinker and active in the organization”. The effective followers perform and act the same to everybody without considering of their positions in the company. They want to take any risk or conflict if require for company.

Insert Figure 1 about here

Leadership and Followership Relation

Several studies had been done to examine about leader and follower relation based on the Leader-member exchange theory (LMX). LMX model was first developed in 1975 by Graen and Cashman (Dansereau, 1995). LMX theories -focus on the relationship between supervisors and subordinates with the belief that supervisor and subordinates are building such unique relationships that influence the performance of the organization (Minsky, 2002). While this theory has been extensively used to measure the relationships between leader and follower, it is quite different with the framework that we hold. We believe that the future leaders are followers at this moment; therefore, it is essential to look at the leadership point of views from the current follower. One of the untested framework that are similar to our model is the model suggested by Bjugstad et al. (2006), may provide one framework in examining leaders and followers relation. In their paper, Bjugstad, Thach, Thompson, and Morris, (2006) presents a model for matching leadership and followership styles. For followership styles, they took Kelley's (1992) model of followership. The model that Kelley proposes categorizes follower according to dimensions of thinking and acting. The model for the leadership style is taken from Hersey and Blanchard's (1982) situational theory which categorizes leadership based on the degree of relationship-oriented and task-oriented behavior. Based on these models, Bjugstad et al. (2006) had proposed an integrated model of followership and leadership styles.

The research paper that Bjugstad et al. (2006) made was only focusing on the model, without further use in the real research. Therefore we could say that this model has not been proved yet. Our research would try to propose and may result in a different model based on our approach in viewing leaders-followers relationship. In this research, our view of the leadership theory is evolving and also argues that there is no right or wrong theory. This evolution, which already explained further in leadership parts, will complement the others.

Research Question 1

To what extent the characteristics of leadership and followership differ in each country?

Research Question 2

To what extent the relationships between leadership and followership characteristics differ in each country?

Cultural Argument

In this research study, one of the important questions was that there is an effect of country-specific culture to the leadership style and followership style. Many studies have examined the relation between culture and leadership. Hofstede (1985) examined one study, so called cultural dimension. In his study, he examined the value in 40 countries' culture that is grouped into four significant dimensions. The result is that the four values (Power distance, Uncertainty avoidance, Individualism or collectivism, and masculinity) affect the organizations and the integration between them. Other study called the GLOBE study (House et al., 2004) use nine cultural values to examine the difference in 62 cultures around the world. One interesting findings in the GLOBE study research is that two big clusters in

Asia, Confucian Asia (includes Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan, China, South Korean and Japan) and Southern Asia (Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, India, and Thailand) have different characteristic in viewing leadership based on their culturally endorsed implicit leadership theory (CLT).

Going back to our research framework, we therefore conclude that in the interaction of leaders and followers, to some extent, country culture also affect that relation. Furthermore, cultural values is definitely could effects on someone's view on leadership. Therefore, we would argue in answering our questions that for leadership and follower relationship, to some extent, culture would also effect those relations and shape the view of followers about their leadership style.

Gender

Many studies have been conducted in examining whether gender gives advantage on leadership area, in terms of their behavior and style. Studies conducted by Archer (1996) and Eagly (1995) found that men tends to be more aggressive, self assertive, and coarse in their behavior compare with women. On the contrary, Simmons (2002) found that women tend to be more expressive on emotion and compassion rather than men. Other study conducted by Eagly and Johannesen-Schmidt (2001) from a female and male managers respondents imply that male held more transactional style, while women held more transformational style. As described by Bass (1985) transformational means establish oneself as a role model for followers by creating trust and confidence among them. Even the organization already achieving success, transformational leaders state future goals and keep innovating to achieve the goals. In contrasts to transformational leaders, other

researcher like Avolio (1999) explains transactional leaders as leaders who establishing relationship with followers to understand more about their interest. Summarizing past studies about leadership behavior and style, in certain way, we could summarize that gender factor might have a significant effect in shaping leaders behavior.

While our research tries to find relationships between leaders' characteristics and followers' characteristics, in consideration with past studies that have been conducted in gender and leadership issues, we have come up with the next question:

Research Question 3

Does gender factor affect the relationship between leadership and followership style?

Research Methodology

To investigate correlation between variables, the questionnaire constitutes 74 items. Two-point scales were used for leadership and followership questionnaire while five-point scales are used for the human resource management and job satisfaction questionnaire. In addition, mostly true and mostly false are determinant of two-point scale, while in five-point Likert type scale, answer choices used 1 to 5 such as totally disagrees, disagree, undecided, agree and strongly agree to determine the rank. For example, 1 equals totally disagree, 3 means undecided, and 5 indicates strongly disagree.

To make the questionnaire understand and clear, measurement scale is described and clearly explained at the beginning of every part of the questionnaire. Considering the respondent convenience, we divided 74 items into five parts such as questionnaire for

respondents, questionnaire for leadership, questionnaire for followership, questionnaire for Human resource management, and questionnaire for Job satisfaction.

We have selected AEON Co., Ltd (AEON) as our database under this study. AEON is one of the Japanese successful huge retail firms in Asia, whose headquarters is located in Chiba. Its revenue was (47) billion USD in the fiscal year of 2008, which is the second largest to Seven & I Holdings in Japan. AEON's core business includes the large shopping centers General Merchandise Store (GMS), supermarkets (SM), drugstores, home centers, convenience stores, specialty stores, development of shopping-malls, financial services, food services etc. AEON has 169 affiliated companies in the world. Furthermore, AEON has an expansion strategy and focus on Asian countries, research group decided to choose AEON as sample selecting company of this study.

Survey questionnaire packets were sent to potential participants of AEON through delivery services to 24 stores of AEON Japan and also subsidiaries at China, Hong Kong, Malaysia, and Thailand respectively. Total of 1440 survey questionnaire packets were sent to them and 1111 of the packets returned us with a response rate of 77.15 %. Of them, 114 replied questionnaires were eradicated not utilizing instruction of questionnaire or due to imperfection. Hence, the number of utilizable questionnaires was 997.

In Japan, China, Malaysia, Thailand and Hong Kong this study investigate to people in the positions of store managers, deputy store managers, line managers, and assistant line managers/group leader. The store manager is the top of the management of store overall operations. The deputy store managers also have responsibilities to maintain the overall service level of stores and develop the relationship with local communities. The line managers are responsible for planning, management, and operations of each line. Under the

line managers, each group leader/section managers deal with the plan, maintenance, replenishment, and education of subordinates in each sales department.

We selected 24 stores from east of Japan considering the number of target samples that we want to achieve. In overseas, we allocate the number of samples based on the number of stores available in each country. In China, Malaysia, Hong Kong and Thailand the number of our target managers was not as many as Japan.

To obtain respondent's profile, survey questionnaire includes gender, age, marital status, nationality, ethnic group, religion, number of family members, number of children, spouse, working experience, and current position. To be secured for respondent and to avoid bias, questionnaire did not include name of the respondent and employee code.

Daft (2008) leadership style and Kelley's followership style was used in this research to examine the styles of leader and follower in AEON managers. Leadership style questionnaires have four types of subscales which represent four types of leadership. For the four dimensions of leadership, question 4,8,12 and 16 (authoritarian); question 2, 6, 10, and 14 (participative); question 3, 7, 11, and 15 (stewardship); and question 1, 5, 9, and 13 (servant) leadership styles respectively. While this questionnaire is used to determine what kind of leadership type that someone holds, our research will modify the use of this questionnaire. The original questionnaire is used to find the style that leaders hold the most, but our intention is to find to what extent empowerment is exercised in the organization. We assume the questions that being asked in the questionnaire require respondents to evaluate their leadership style in multiple occasions, therefore as the result, more than one style of leadership would probably arise. Referring to four dimensions in above explanations, we give some weight based on the questions type to measure the level of

empowerment exercised by leaders. For example, authoritarian questions (1), participative (2), stewardship (3), and servant (4), which would give a range of scores from 0 until 40. This weighting gives clear boundaries about leaders' movement in empowerment and its control towards followers. Finally, we made new categories based on the scoring result, for 0-4 score is called leader focus, for 5-12 score is called intermediate leader focus control, for 13-24 score is called intermediate follower focus, and for 25-40 is called follower focus. For Followership questionnaire, it has two categories; independent thinking and active engagement. Independent is the first dimension to describe the quality of independent of followers, Independent critical thinkers are aware of the impact from people's behavior on achieving organizational goals respecting vision set by their organization and offering contrastive criticism, creativity and innovation. On the other hand, a dependent, uncritical thinker does not consider simply accepts the leader's ideas without thinking. Active is the second dimension to explain the participation and engagement of followers in the organization. Active individual participates commit themselves in the organization beyond their responsibility with the sense of ownership and initiate problem solving and decision making while passive individual need for constant supervision by superiors. Question 1, 4, 9, 10, 12, 14, 15, and 16 measure independent thinking; question 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 11, and 13 measure active engagement. The scores were set from zero to (8) for both independent thinking and active engagement to determine five styles of followers.

Results

Leadership and followership differences in each country

The present study examines the empowerment exercised by leaders, the independent thinking and active engagement by followers and the relationship between leaders and followers. The first question wants to tell us if there is a difference in the degree of empowerment (Empowerment), independent thinking (Independent) and active engagement (Active) in each country. To resolve this question, ANOVA test would be used and the results of ANOVA test would be explained in Table 1.

Insert Table 1 about here

ANOVA result shows that there is a significant difference between each country in terms of Empowerment, Independent, and Active. For Empowerment, the result is $df = 4$; $F = 10,669$; $p < 0.001$ while for Independent factor the result is $F = 4$; $F = 48,833$; $p < 0.001$ and for Active factor the result is $df = 4$; $F = 59,782$; $p < 0.001$. As a post hoc test, we used the Bonferroni test, showing the results that there was significance difference in Empowerment factor between Malaysia and the following 4 countries such as Japan, China, Hong Kong, and Thailand. Empowerment factor ties closely with the hierarchical system in Malaysia, which eventually gives the opportunity to empower people and whether people like to be empowered or not. Based on this argument, cultural factor is one of the ways to explain this result. From the past cultural research, Hofstede's (1980) Power Distance index for Malaysia is the highest among other countries observed in the research, as can be seen in table 5. In his paper, Kennedy (2002) also mentioned about how in Malaysia the emphasis of hierarchy being placed through the correct use of protocol and how honorifics to indicate social status and levels of authority on connections with royalty, religious

standing, and awards service in the state. GLOBE study (House et al., 2004) also observed how religion could be one of the influence factors of high power distance index. Again, GLOBE study (House et al., 2004) argues that most of the countries that embrace Islam as their religion tends to have high hierarchy. Because of Malaysia itself known as an Islamic country, this could be also one of the reasons why they have high power distance index. In actual, 81.3 percent of total respondents from Malaysia, which is equivalent to 148 persons, were Muslim. This might explain why all respective country could be divided into two major groups; Japan, China, Hong Kong, Thailand are in the same group while Malaysia is in the different group.

 Insert Tables 2, 3, & 4, and Figures 3 & 4 about here

For Independent factor, all of the respective countries would be divided into four major groups, with first group consist of Thailand, second group consist of Japan, third group consist of Hong Kong and China, and the last group consist of Malaysia. For Active factor, all the respective country could be divided into three major groups, with the first group consist of Japan, the second group consists of Hong Kong and Thailand, and the third group consists of China and Malaysia. While the above grouping results are clear, we could not find argument from cultural perspective to answer why the groups were formed as abovementioned. Comparing each of the significance value is 0.00 which is smaller than 0.05, and also F value also the results of the grouping; this result shows that there is a significant difference between Empowerment, Independent, and Active in each country.

Relationship between Leadership and followership

The second question talks about whether there are any relations between the characteristics of leadership and followership. To test this hypothesis, we test the correlation between Empowerment, Independent, and Active samples from all countries as well as of respective country.

Insert Table 5 about here

From the correlation result, we could see that there is a significant correlation between Empowerment, Independent and Active factor. Empowerment and independent correlation value is 0.262 while Empowerment and Active correlation value is 0.384. This value shows a significant correlation at the critical level of 0.01. This indicates if leader increase the degree of empowerment, both Active and Independent would also increase in followers' side. Most of the country shows similar result in the correlation test; however, only Thailand does not shows any correlation between Empowerment, Independent, and Active. This result could be traced by the working culture in Thailand itself. Fieg (1989) argued that Thai supervisors are generally not interested in taking opinions from their subordinates since the traditional view of decision makers is in the leaders and they do not need to consult with their followers. Although there is a possibility that this behavior already changed due to the time difference in Fieg research with the present time, other argument perhaps because of the past experience of this specific company's in Thailand branch. They have suffered from a bankruptcy in 2005, which might lead to a severe control by supervisors as well as sense of fear from followers to propose opinions. Whereas

we found an exceptional case in Thailand, we can conclude that there is a relation between Empowerment with Independent and Active.

Leadership, Followership and Gender

The third question discuss whether gender factor influence over Empowerment, Independent and Active. From Table 6, it could be said that there is no influence of gender factor with Empowerment, Independent and Active. From this result we could conclude that gender factor have no correlation and not affecting Empowerment, Independent and Active.

Insert Table 6 about here

However, as Table 6 shows, it should be noted that in Japan, gender factor would negatively influence Empowerment, Independent and Active factor. Gender correlation value with empowerment is -0.234; Gender with Independent is -0.214; and Gender with Active is -0.195. This means female recognizes less empowerment, or less independent, or less active. This negative result shows that there might be some gender gap in Japan. Based on the result, we could conclude that for question 3, there is no relation between gender factor with characteristic of leadership and followership.

Discussion

This study has confirmed the relationship between leaders and followers would affect followers' satisfaction in an organization. From all the countries that we examined,

we found a significant relationship between the characteristics of leaders and followers. General results show a positive correlation between the characteristics of leaders and followers. From the above findings, we will generate the following three propositions for future studies:

Proposition 1: Degree of empowerment as a leaders' characteristic is likely to depend upon followers characteristics.

Proposition 2: Followers' characteristics are likely to be influenced by leaders' characteristics.

Proposition 3-a: There will be a different pattern about a relationship between the leaders' characteristics and the followers' characteristics among Asian countries.

Proposition 3-b: In Japan, China, Hong Kong, and Malaysia, the degree of empowerment is likely to be positively related to the degree of independent thinking and the degree of active as followers' characteristics.

Proposition 3-c: In Thailand, there will be neither relationship between the degree of empowerment and the degree of independent thinking nor relationship between the degree of empowerment and the degree of active.

We assume the difference resulted from AEON's international business strategy, market condition and their position in the business cycle/growth model. AEON's international business strategy had been so disintegrated that each company pursue their localization process in establishing their business model in respective country. This strategy has result in different organization structure, Human Resource System, and other operation systems. Even though AEON announced to change their organization structure from regional organization structure to matrix organization structure, the norm and the culture in

respective country are assumed to be remained when we collect the data from respective countries.

Market condition also affects the different pattern of the correlation. In daily business operation, retail business must interact with local community. Therefore, localization is one of the key success factors in the business and retailers are unable to avoid localization, which might cause different pattern of business model in respective countries. In addition, the competition in respective country might influence over the business model in respective countries.

Another reason is their positioning in business cycle or business growth model might have caused different pattern in the correlation. For example, companies in Japan and Hong Kong are assumed to be in the mature stage in the business growth model since the market in Japan and Hong Kong has been matured and saturated for current business model.

Perhaps, we assume the different pattern of correlation among the characteristics might come from the cultural difference among countries. For example, high masculinity culture in Japan (Hofstede, 1985) would have resulted in lesser empowerment for female respondent. However, we do not have enough evidence to prove such assumption.

We assume that integrated strategy brought by AEON might create different pattern of correlation. However this study does not provide enough evidence to discuss the cause of different pattern in respective countries. We encourage further study to investigate the major cause of different characteristics between leader and follower and believe more concrete study on the issues related to the relationship between leadership and followership would give better picture to understand how we can improve the performance of organizations by influencing leaders and followers in the era of globalization.

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Table 1 ANOVA result for Empowerment, Independent, and Active of all country

	N	Empowerment		Independent		Active	
		Mean	S. d.	Mean	S. d.	Mean	S. d.
All Country	997	28.70	10.31	6.17	1.59	6.59	1.75
Japan	246	26.49	11.40	5.59	1.88	5.28	2.32
China	325	28.13	10.26	6.60	1.17	7.08	1.19
Hong Kong	122	29.02	9.28	5.00	1.67	6.88	1.32
Thailand	122	28.26	10.19	6.24	1.44	6.66	1.33
Malaysia	182	32.77	8.31	6.93	1.10	7.24	1.17
D.F.		4		4		4	
F		10.67**		48.83**		59.78**	

Bonferroni test		Empowerment		Independent		Active	
		m.d .	s. d.	m.d .	s. d.	m.d .	s. d.
Japan vs.	China	-1.63	0.85	-1.01 *	0.12	-1.80 *	0.13
	Thailand	-2.53	1.12	0.59 *	0.16	-1.60 *	0.17
	Hong Kong	-1.77	1.12	-0.65 *	0.16	-1.38 *	0.17
	Malaysia	-6.28 *	0.99	-1.34 *	0.14	-1.97 *	0.15
China vs.	Japan	1.63	0.85	1.01 *	0.12	1.80 *	0.13
	Thailand	-0.90	1.07	1.60 *	0.15	0.20	0.17
	Hong Kong	-0.14	1.07	0.37	0.15	0.42	0.17
	Malaysia	-4.65 *	0.94	-0.33	0.14	-0.16	0.15
Thailand vs.	Japan	2.53	1.12	-0.59 *	0.16	1.60 *	0.17
	China	0.90	1.07	-1.60 *	0.15	-0.20	0.17
	Hong Kong	0.76	1.29	-1.24 *	0.19	0.22	0.20
	Malaysia	-3.75 *	1.18	-1.93 *	0.17	-0.36	0.18
Hong Kong vs.	Japan	1.77	1.12	0.65 *	0.16	1.38 *	0.17
	China	0.14	1.07	-0.37	0.15	-0.42	0.17
	Thailand	-0.76	1.29	1.24 *	0.19	-0.22	0.20
	Malaysia	-4.51 *	1.18	-0.69 *	0.17	-0.59 *	0.18
Malaysia vs.	Japan	6.28 *	0.99	1.34 *	0.14	1.97 *	0.15
	China	4.65 *	0.94	0.33	0.14	0.16	0.15
	Thailand	3.75 *	1.18	1.93 *	0.17	0.36	0.18

Hong Kong	4.51	*	1.18	0.69	*	0.17	0.59	*	0.18
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* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Table 2 Results of Homogeneous Subsets for Empowerment by Tukey HSD Test

Empowerment

Country			N	Subset for alpha = .05	
				1	2
Tukey HSD(a,b)	Japan	246		26.492	
	China	325		28.126	
	Hongkong	122		28.262	
	Thailand	122		29.025	
	Malaysia	182			32.775
Sig.				0.138	1.000

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 172.236

b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group size is used

Table 3 Results of Homogeneous Subsets for Independent by Tukey HSD Test

Independent

Country			N	Subset for alpha = .05			
				1	2	3	4
Tukey HSD(a,b)	Thailand	122		5.000			
	Japan	246			5.589		
	Hong Kong	122				6.238	
	China	325				6.603	6.603
	Malaysia	182					6.929
Sig.				1.000	1.000	0.138	0.234

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 172.236

b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group size is used

Table 4 Results of Homogeneous Subsets for Active by Tukey HSD Test

Active

		Country	N	Subset for alpha = .05		
				1	2	3
Tukey HSD(a,b)	Japan		246	5.276		
	Hong Kong		122		6.656	
	Thailand		122		6.877	6.877

China	325	7.080	7.080
Malaysia	182		7.242
Sig.		1.000	0.090 0.198

a. Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 172.236

b. The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group size is used

Table 5: Correlation between Empowerment and Independent / Active

Empowerment	All		Japan		China	
	Ind.	Act.	Ind.	Active	Ind.	Act.
Pearson Correlation	0.262**	0.384**	0.276**	0.477**	0.270**	0.339**
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
N	997		246		325	

Empowerment	Hong Kong		Thailand		Malaysia	
	Ind.	Act.	Ind.	Act.	Ind.	Act.
Pearson Correlation	0.214*	0.269**	0.084	0.161	0.306**	0.377**
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.018	0.003	0.355	0.077	0.000	0.000
N	122		122		182	

Ind. = Independent

Act. = Active

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 6: Correlation between gender and Leadership / Followership

		All	Japan	China	Hong Kong	Thailand	Malaysia
Empowerment	Pearson Correlation	-0.019	-0.234**	0.027	-0.011	-0.145	0.047
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.552	0.000	0.629	0.908	0.111	0.533
Independent	Pearson Correlation	-0.052	-0.214**	-0.049	-0.112	-0.121	-0.035
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.099	0.001	0.377	0.220	0.183	0.635
Active	Pearson Correlation	0.047	-0.195**	0.018	-0.057	-0.088	-0.023
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.134	0.002	0.741	0.530	0.335	0.761
N		997	246	325	122	122	182

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Descriptive Statistics

Country	N	Gender		Empowerment		Independent		Active	
		Mean	St Dev.	Mean	St Dev.	Mean	St Dev.	Mean	St Dev.
All Country	997	1.482	0.500	28.698	10.307	6.172	1.594	6.588	1.747
Japan	246	1.244	0.430	26.492	11.403	5.589	1.877	5.276	2.317
Hong Kong	122	1.607	0.491	28.262	10.192	6.238	1.443	6.656	1.328
Thailand	122	1.607	0.491	29.025	9.278	5.000	1.666	6.877	1.321
Malaysia	182	1.577	0.495	32.775	8.308	6.929	1.103	7.242	1.169
China	325	1.517	0.500	28.126	10.261	6.603	1.168	7.080	1.194

Figure 1. Followership (Kelley, 1992)

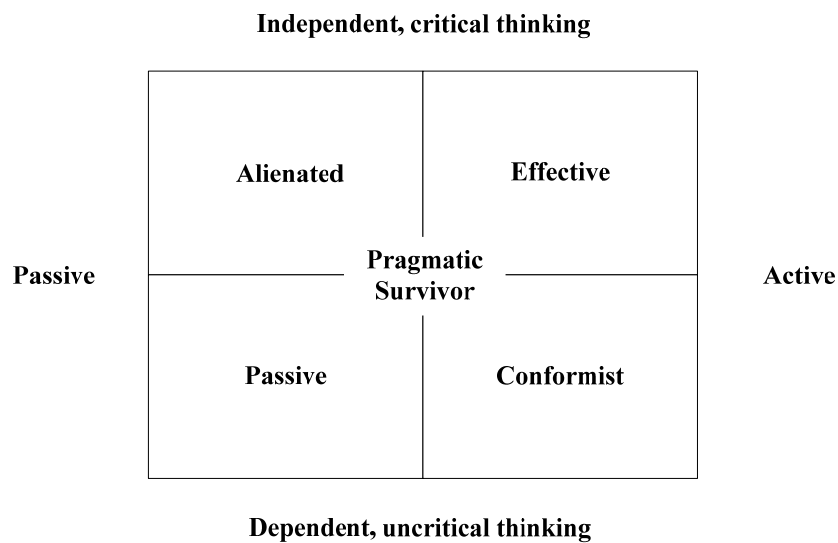


Figure 2. Integrated Model of followership and leadership styles (Bjugstad, Kent; C. Thach, Elizabeth; J. Thompson, Karen; Morris, Allan ,2006)

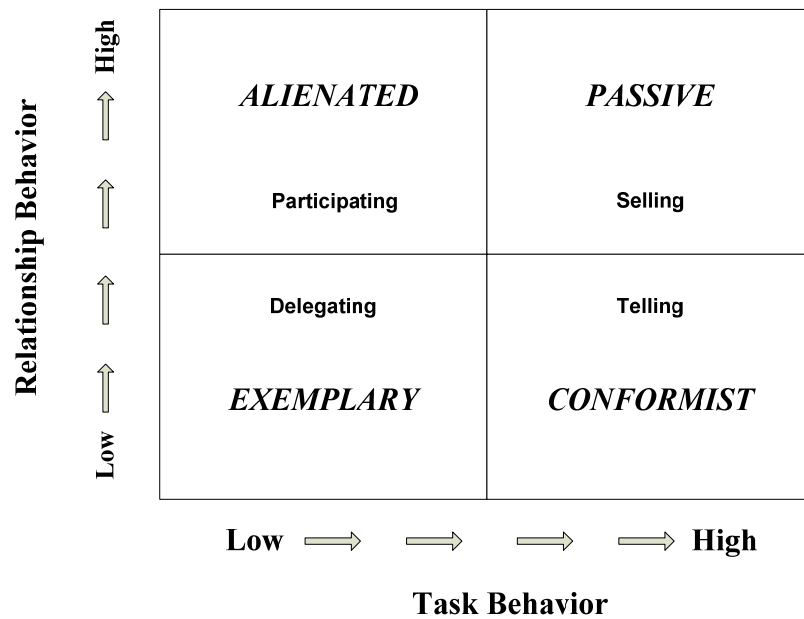


Figure 3 , The degree of Empowerment and Leadership style

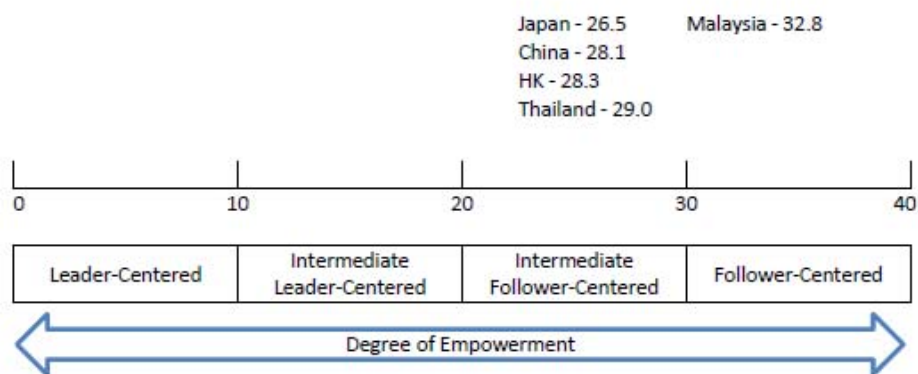


Figure 4, The degree of “Independent”, “Active” and Followership Style

