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Exploring Types of Leadership Strategies Adopted During and After Crises: The Case of Women Entrepreneurs in Klang Valley

K.Sarojini Krishnan*
Universiti Kuala Lumpur, UniKL Business School, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Nazatul Shima Abdul Rani
Universiti Kuala Lumpur, UniKL Business School, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Zurinah Suradi
College of Commerce and Business Administration, Dhofer University, Salalah, Sultanate of Oman

*Corresponding author’s Email: ksarojani@unikl.edu.my

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lant 306 Savoy Residencia, Block 3 F1 1/1, 44000 Islamabad. Pakistan,
info@readersinsight.net
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Research Highlights

The significant role played by women entrepreneurs towards national economic development has prompted the growth of SMEs in Malaysia. Nevertheless, very few studies have concentrated on women entrepreneurs and leadership strategies they employed during times of crises and thereafter for business success (White, & Özkanlı, 2010). The present study attempts to identify the types of leadership strategies adopted by women entrepreneurs in Klang Valley over the period of crises and beyond crises. The sample comprised 100 women entrepreneurs of SMEs who operated in the vicinity of Klang Valley, Kuala Lumpur. A questionnaire consisting of items based on a 5-point Likert scale on strategies employed under Transformational, Servant and Strategic leadership was administered to the sample to identify their leadership style. The findings suggest that the most important strategies employed by women entrepreneurs for ensuring business success during and after crises were identified as transformational and servant leadership followed by strategic leadership.

Graphical Abstract

Research Objectives

The main aim of the present research is to identify the critical leadership strategies employed by women entrepreneurs during and after crises to ensure the success of their business. The research question of the study is:
What are the most important leadership strategies employed by women entrepreneurs in managing their business during and after crises?

The study aims to identify the types of leadership strategies employed by the women entrepreneurs in Klang Valley under three main leadership styles, namely Transformational, Servant and Strategic leadership. The types of leadership strategies employed by the women entrepreneurs will also help identify the leadership styles that they adopt in their management of subordinates in their companies.

The significance of the study is that women entrepreneurs will have the awareness of the type of leadership style that they may adopt for the survival and success of their business when they face challenges especially during times of crises and beyond crises. The findings of the study will also highlight the most appropriate leadership strategies that women entrepreneurs may employ in relation to their subordinates in their companies to overcome crises and achieve success in business. This findings will prove useful to existing and future women entrepreneurs as lack of such knowledge can lead to business failure.

**Methodology**

The study adopted the quantitative research design. A sample of 100 women entrepreneurs who were operating in Klang Valley were selected to explore the leader style style that they adopted in managing their business. This was done through the identification of leadership strategies that they employed in handling their subordinates in their company during crises and after crises. A set of questionnaire consisting of 22 items or strategies which describe the three leadership styles, namely Transformational, Servant and Strategic leadership were distributed to the sample. The items in the questionnaire are based on a 5-point Likert Scale with responses ranging from Strongly Agree (5 points) to Strongly Disagree (1 point). Data was collected over three months and analysed using descriptive statistics.

**Results**

During crises, the sample adopted Servant (overall mean=4.14), Transformational (overall mean=4.13) and Strategic leadership styles (overall mean=4.12).
The most important strategies employed under Servant leadership are empowering employee, followed by opportunities for employees to upgrade skills and giving recognition on employee achievement.

Under Transformational leadership, the most important strategies employed are Always cooperate with my customers, Always increase team spirits with my customers and Can identify every section and its value to the business.

For Strategic leadership, the most preferred strategies employed include Inspire employees, followed by Wise action for strategy implementation and Thinking process is used for strategic planning.

After crises, they adopted Servant leadership (overall mean=4.16), Transformational leadership (overall mean=4.15), and Strategic Leadership (overall mean= 4.06).

Under Servant leadership, the most important strategies are opportunities for employees to upgrade skills, followed by building good relationships with customers, and business partner.

As for Transformational leadership, they preferred to increase team spirits, followed by intellectual drive in running the business and motivated in managing the business.

Under Strategic leadership, the most preferred strategies are thinking process for strategic planning, followed by wise action for strategy implementation and inspiring employees.

**Findings**

In conclusion, the findings show that where leadership styles are concerned whether during or after crises, women entrepreneurs prefer to adopt Servant Van Dierendonck, 2011), Transformational (Allen,Moor,Moser, Neill, Sambamoorthi & Bell, 2016; Idris & Mohd Ali, 2008; Kuppusamy, Ganesan, & Rosada, 2010) and Strategic leadership styles in ensuring success in their management of business.

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References


