

# LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCES OF WOMEN LEADERS IN STATE-OWNED ENTERPRISES IN INDONESIA

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*Similar to many other countries in the world, Indonesia has been experiencing the increasing number of women workers participation both in formal and informal sectors. While in formal sector the number of female employees has increased from around 10 millions in 2008 to nearly 13 millions in 2011; in informal sector the figure is even doubled: more than 28 millions in 2008 to more than 30 millions in 2011. However to date, women workers are associated with low-skilled, low-wage workers who work in precarious working environment. Women are seldom hold managerial position both in public and private sector. The proportion of women in Indonesia who sit in the board of directors is only 6% from the entire women workers. Thus, this research aims to explore their development experience along the way. In order to obtain initial information, interviews with nine women managers from State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) were conducted. SOEs were chosen for convenience reason. The research indicates the low ratio number of women in SOEs management team although there is an optimism that the number would increase. Key point discovered in this research is that development experience is mainly done by the participants own initiatives whereas organisational supports are found very limited. This findings will be further explored and confirmed by involving more women managers from various sectors.*

## Abstract



*Keywords: women leaders, leadership development, Indonesia.*

**W**omen in leadership have been acknowledged since the 10<sup>th</sup> century BC such as the leadership of Queen of Sheeba from the Ethiopian dynasty which had impressed King Solomon of Israel (Wood, 2011). Between 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century, many world political leaders are women; among them are Angela Markel (Chancellor of Germany), Hel-leThorning Schmidt (Prime Minister

of Denmark), Park Geun-hye (President of South Korea), Julia Gillard (Prime Minister of Australia), Benazir Bhutto (Prime Minister of Pakistan) and the first women President of Republic of Indonesia, Megawati Sukarnoputri (Jibi, 2012).

The condition of women leadership in business entities is somewhat different. For the past 40 years, the involve-

ment of women in business has not been identified. Although it has been widely suggested that gender equality may foster better performance for top leadership teams in the market place, the proportion of women in charge in the higher ranks within companies and firms is still considerably low. To change this, many CEOs and leaders have now encouraged more opportunities and policies that speak to more women for filling in senior positions through trainings, mentoring and other professional development programs (Ibarra, Ely, & Kolb, 2013).

By 2010, women represented almost half of the talent pool available to the United States and other economies. Their credential surpasses those of the men. The transformation of the face of business is particularly evident in the movement of women into leadership positions. Over half (51%) of all managerial and professional positions in the United States are held by women. Women are moving into the levels of leadership where they influence strategy and drive organizational direction. The number of women in corporate officers nearly doubled between 1995 and 2011, and women's presence on corporate boards grew to almost 16 percent in 2011 (Hadary& Henderson, 2013).

Data from McKinsey's most recent major corporations show that, in total there are 325,000 women had entry-level positions, and 150,000 had made it to middle management but only 7,000 had made it to Vice President, Senior Vice President, or CEO. On average, women made up 53% of entry-level employees, 40% of Manager, 35% of Directors, 27% of Vice Presi-

dents, 24% of Senior President, and 19% of Executives in the CEO level (Harvard Business Review, 2013).

The movement of women into the workforce is having a tremendous economic impact. Catalyst, a nonprofit organization focusing on the advancement of women in corporations, or example found that the companies with the highest representation of women in top management achieved a 35% higher return on investment (ROI) and a 34% higher total return to shareholders than those with the lowest representation (Hadary& Henderson, 2013).

Studies in France, Vietnam, and Australia add to the evidence by documenting that, companies in these nations with more women in leadership fared better during the recent economic crisis. These findings make a compelling business case for the value of women's contributions to organizational performance, and the business world has started to take note of this. Almost three-quarters (72%) of corporate executives in a recent global survey said that they believe there is a connection between a gender-diverse leadership team and financial performance, up to 12% from the previous year (Hadary& Henderson, 2013).

Another study published by Credit Suisse Research Institute indicated that companies which had women in the board of directors performed 26% higher than companies where all men were in the board of directors. The study itself corresponds to companies that have invested more than US\$ 10 billion within the last six years (Worldbank, 2013).

Compared to European countries with 17% and United States with 15% which have the proportion of women who sit in the board of directors out of the entire women work force, Indonesia falls far behind with only 6% (Worldbank, 2013). Thus, this research aims to explore the development process of female leaders in Indonesia.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Women Leaders in Indonesia*

A survey done by SWA magazine (one of the leading business magazines in Indonesia) in 2005 and 2006 to employees showed that they did not have objection if women get important roles in business, including if they were lead by women managers (Tjahjono & Palupi, 2007). The research by Tjahjono and Palupi (2007) also showed that according to subordinates, female managers have different characteristic compared to male managers. Female managers have more favors compared to male managers in such they are more in detail, have multitasking and communication abilities, are good listeners, and are able to see and exploit business opportunities. Another important strength is that female manager can create efficiency at work. On the other hand, the weaknesses of female managers are fussy and put feeling above all. Compared to male managers, female managers have better interpersonal abilities but prefer to use intuition and feeling when it comes to conceptual works.

Although Indonesia is considered to have moderate feminine culture dimension, empirical evidence shows that work environment tends to be masculine culture. Furthermore,

within masculine culture (patriarchic culture) women suffer from greater resistance from their male colleagues (Hofstede, 1995 in Sumarto and Permanasari, 2013). This resistance may take a form of "glass ceiling" as the barrier against upward mobility of female career. Therefore, the motivation of women to lead is lower than that of men (Sumarto and Permanasari, 2013).

For the case of women leadership in Indonesia's CEOs, the glass ceiling does likely occur: there were only 5 of the women CEOs from 140 SOEs when the research was conducted, or only 4%.

SOEs are now trying to compete with private firms to capture business and profit as private firms do. In correlation to that, SOEs attempt to look more appealing in business and workplace culture in order to recruit and retain talents, including women. Thus, one of the ways is by minimizing gender parity gap at top positions so that they provide opportunity for female leaders to excel and perform along with their fellow male leaders.

### *Talent Management*

Female executives are leaving organizations at significantly higher rate than their male counterparts and because of this, a number of challenges exist for corporations in attracting and retaining them (Berger & Berger, 2004).

With women constituting half of society and half of the workforce, it is impossible to tap into the existing talent and the future labor pool without including them. The benefits offered through the addition of women

are vital and cannot be overlooked by business (Berger & Berger, 2004). It is clearly important to have a talent development plan that outlines how organizations will retain and develop their female talent at different levels (Garcea, Linley, Mazurkiewicz & Bailey, 2011).

Research by McKinsey & Co. (Desvaux et al., 2010) has also proven how having an increase of women in leadership positions has a positive impact on organizations. This research shows correlations between a company's performance and the proportion of women serving on its executive board. The report, "Women Matter", found that companies with the highest level of gender diversity in top management posts outperform their sector in terms of return in equity, operating results and stock price growth.

All of the above research demonstrates the importance of having a talent development plan that clearly outlines how organizations will retain and develop their women talent at different levels (Garcea, Linley, Mazurkiewicz & Bailey, 2011). Thus, human resources departments will become more concerned to providing all kinds of employee services from training, coaching, and counseling to implementing innovative work-life programs in order to attract and retain key employees (Berger & Berger, 2004).

#### *Leadership Development*

Yukl (2010) mentions that leadership development is defined as personal leadership training and development activities that consist of two different approaches: formal training programs (e.g., MBA programs, leadership de-

velopment seminars) and developmental or experiential activities (e.g., coaching, mentoring, special assignments, action learning). Moreover, Day (2001) and McCauley, Moxley, and Van Velsor (1998) in Stetler-Flett (2005) indicated the purpose of these efforts is to increase the capacity and skill of an organizational member to successfully take on both informal, or formal leadership roles, and processes.

Coaching involves working with organizational members, such as managers and executives, on a regular basis to assist them in clarify goals, deal with potential roadblocks, and improve their performance. It is a skill that anyone, particularly manager, can develop. Involving the use of guided inquiry, active listening, reframing, and other techniques to help individuals realize new or different possibilities and to direct their effort on what matters most to them (Cummings and Worley, 2009).

Identical to coaching, mentoring involves developing a relationship between a manager or someone more experienced and another organization member who have less experience. Different with coaching, mentoring is often more directive, with the mentor intentionally transferring specific knowledge and skill and guiding activities, perhaps as part of a career development process (Cummings and Worley, 2009).

Kram (1985) in Karacay-Aydin (2009) identifies two types of mentor functions: psychological and career mentoring. Psychological mentoring focuses on enhancing a protégé's self-esteem and confidence. This type

of mentoring includes providing counseling, friendship, and role modeling. On the other hand, career mentoring is to help the protégé progress in the organization by learning the ropes of organizational life through the mentor's experience and position.

Kram (1985) and Aryee and Chay (1994) in Karacay-Aydin (2009) mentions the benefits of mentoring to the organization are numerous. They include higher organizational commitment; the ability to identify future leaders and improve succession planning; higher career satisfaction; a higher level of cooperative work and participation; improved recruitment, induction, and retention; enhanced communication; improved organizational learning; improved change and culture management; enhanced productivity; and cost effective development.

Day (2001) in Stetler-Flett (2005) mentions that part of a mentor's role is to provide the trainee with increased contacts within and outside the organization, often referred to as networking. Networking can help break down social barriers and increase a trainee's social quality of reality-check new ideas while building a support system for future leadership endeavors. In addition, informal networking is an important resource to become a leader (Harvard Business Review, 2013).

Day (2001) in Stetler-Flett (2005) comments that job rotation and special assignment is a commonly practiced leadership development technique. Providing job rotation or special assignment opportunities consists of making stretch assignments and goals

for participants of leadership development and can encompass changes to their roles, functions, and geography to target skills development and an increased understanding of the business and industry. The more relevant to skills building a special job or project assignment is, the more likely leadership learning can be accelerated.

Another of the most popular components of the experiential mode for learning leadership is gaining self-awareness through assessment of current skills sets and emotional intelligence. Conger (2001) in Stetler-Flett (2005) describes assessment and feedback as being one of the most essential aspects of leadership development as long as it is aligned with other developmental activities and supported by on going follow up. Smith (2001) in Stetler-Flett (2005) uttered that reflection and feedback can help to challenge assumptions about self-efficacy which can help to improve self-awareness overall and motivate behavior, make self-concept more explicit, and change attitudes and attributional processes.

Indvik (2001) and Yukl (1998) in Stetler-Flett (2005) argues that women may have less opportunity for leadership and career development as a result of cultural and values' biases. Where these gender perceptions and values are regarded as less than, research has suggested that women have a more difficult time accessing opportunities for leadership development.

Harvard Business Review (September, 2013) expresses that culture in general as well as organizational culture created gendered career paths and

gendered work, which resulted in lack of leadership role model for women. Even so, aspiring leaders need role model whose styles and behaviors they can experiment with and evaluate according to their own standards and other's reactions. Fewer female leaders means fewer role models and can suggest young would-be leaders that being a women's liability – thus discouraging them from viewing senior women as credible sources of advice and support (Harvard Business Review, 2013).

Women in leadership have grown so much in the past decades. Women these days do not only manage domestic chores successfully but they have managed and led multibillion and multinational high-profile corporation and even a nation. The stereotype of women in the old days has evaporated and new stereotype has come that women have challenged and proven themselves that they are as capable as men. It is a challenge for organizations to have a talent development plan that outlines to attract, retain and develop their women talent at different levels. Even so, selections of leadership development program such as formal leadership program and experiential leadership development, give opportunities to organization to develop their women talents.

## RESEARCH METHOD

In many social sciences, quantitative orientations are often given more respect. Dabbs (1992) indicates that the notion of quality is essential to the nature of things. On the other hand, quantity is elementally an amount of something. Quality refers to what, how, when, and where of a thing its essence

and ambience. Qualitative research refers to the meanings, concepts, definitions, characteristics, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of things. In contrast, quantitative refers to counts and measures of things (Berg, 2001).

Van Manen (1977) refers that qualitative data can bring out the realism happening to social environment. One of its characteristic among others; their wide value and holism, is the capability to describe a well-clear data based on real phenomenon thus giving a strong impact for the reader. Qualitative data are fundamentally the best tool to explain events, processes and structures of people's life. It connects the meaning of perceptions, assumptions, prejudgments and presuppositions to the social world (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

The sample size of this qualitative study is reasonably small to manage data collection and analysis. As with any qualitative study, it doesn't have any purpose to represent or generalize the results (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

Phenomenological research method was selected to explain the living experience of several individuals; from identifying a shared experience, locating a universal nature of experience, identifying the sharing experience among various individuals experiencing shared phenomena, locating an essence of experience, also identifying the experience itself and how participants experienced it (Ballad and Balawan, 2012).

Phenomenological method is applied to explore and describe the cognitive

content of participating women leaders. In psychological research, phenomenology is a method that allow researcher to adopt a perspective and a system of assumptions in examining and describing a phenomenon from the point of view of those who have live it (Giorgi and Giorgi, 2003) in Stetler-Flett (2005). In contemporary leadership development research, the theory has developed into finding the answer of how, when, and why leadership development programs or activities should be introduced into an organizational human resources strategy (Collins, 2002; Yulk, 2002) in Stetler-Flett (2005), there also have been few attempts to address the individual, personal considerations for leaders-in-training. In conclusion, significant difference (Patton, 2002) in Stetler-Flett (2005) can be drawn from perceptions of leadership development relating to genders.

To the researcher to use phenomenological research method as being women leaders in Indonesia's SOEs is part of a phenomenon, and the researcher wishes to explore their live-experiences and gain insights of their personal knowledge, motivation and actions.

#### *Participants of the Research*

The identified participants for this research were the women CEOs, women Directors, women EVP, women VP, and women Managers of the selected BUMNs. This criteria was selected under the presumption that they have experienced leadership development and they will continue to be a future leader in SOEs. It was important that the participating women had experienced some form of leadership development

and its context, whether formal or informal, during their careers (Stetler-Flett, 2005).

There were nine women leaders from six SOEs participated in this research. Two participants were President Directors (CEO), one participant was a Director, two participants were Executive Vice Presidents (EVP), one participant was a Vice President (VP), and the rest four participants were Managers.

The participants of this research came from different background and experiences. All of participants were married with or without children. The age range was between 35 and 55 years of age. The educational level of the participants was Bachelor and Graduate School. The length of service in the current SOE was between 1 year and 29 years of service. As many as four participants (from CEO, Director, EVP and Manager Level) previously contributed their professional services in other SOEs and/or private corporations. The rest of five participants had been contributed their professional services in the current SOEs.

#### *Data Collection Methods*

This research utilized a semi-structured, interview format and protocol to allow more flexibility in participant responses while maintaining a structured questioning approach (Patton, 2002 in Stetler-Flett, 2005). Each participant received the same questions in the same order which improved study reliability. Because of the structure in this approach, variations in interviewer skill and other interviewer effects were minimized which improved study. Furthermore, the secondary data

was also gathered from books, corporate documents, journals, printed media, and internet.

Interviews with identified participants or purposive sampling (homogenous sample) (Ballad and Balawan, 2012) were conducted with the purposes of: (1) to assess the composition of gender in the management of the selected SOEs and how the SOEs retain and develop their women employees to be groomed as future leaders; (2) to confirm existing assumptions which were built around theories; and (3) to identify new findings.

#### *Data Analysis Model*

There are 4 steps of analyzing phenomenological data which done in this research (Ballad and Balawan, 2012): *First*, the researcher reads the whole transcript more than once, record some observations and reflections about the interview experience in a separate reflective notebook, and conducts the textual analysis. *Second*, the researcher returns to the transcript to transform the initial notes into emerging themes. The main task is to formulate concise phrases that contain enough particularity to remain grounded in the text and enough abstraction to offer conceptual understanding. *Third*, the researcher examines the emerging themes and clustered them together according to the conceptual similarities. The task in this stage is to look for patterns in the emerging themes and produces a structure that will be helpful in highlighting converging ideas. *Fourth*, in the final stage the table of themes is produced. The table shows the structure of major themes and sub-themes. An illustrative data extract or quote is presented alongside each theme, follows by the

line number, so that it is possible to check the context of the extract in the transcript.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The following five core themes were identified, after conducting four steps of analyzing phenomenological data: (1) Networking. (2) Reward & recognition, (3) Being a role model, (4) Job rotation and special assignment, and (5) Mentoring.

#### *Networking supports leadership success*

Participants in this research described their experiences towards different kinds of aspects of their careers, including networking. They expressed positive experience and practices towards networking, which has helped them completed their tasks and developed their teams. One of them mentioned that she learned and used her network to develop her team. Another one commented that she socialized with practitioners in her industry, and from them she learned to manage the company. Other participant expressed that she had various activities and she was offered different kind of leadership role because of networking. Moreover, she expressed that people from her network recognized her work, and she confessed that for her, networking is also refreshing.

Hadary & Henderson (2013) specifically mentions that most successful business-women join more organizations than other women and have a more diversified set of networks. They join professional, industry, and community organizations both to learn and to gain visibility and personal net-



works for support and fellowship. Networks are vital sources of information while also serves as sources of mentors and sponsors. Building business networks across the entire company helps people understand the goals of the company and make the connections necessary to build their career.

The participants confessed that having and expanding their networks really support their leadership success. The researcher found the significance of this particular theme towards the accomplishment of these women leaders. In the world of vast communication and connection, it is a common practice that networks play an important part. Networking can help breaking down social barriers and increasing a trainee's social quality of reality-check new ideas while building a support system for future leadership endeavors (Day, 2001 in Stetler-Flett, 2005).

Furthermore, informal networking is an important resource to become a leader (Harvard Business Review, 2013). Internal networks include mentors from across the business spectrum which the women leaders experienced while the mentoring activity is one of the examples of developmental or experiential activities in leadership development (Yukl, 2010).

#### *Reward and recognition acknowledge women leaders' achievement*

The participants of this research of this research had experiences in being acknowledged from their success in a project or in their work, rewarded and recognized by their superiors or the organizations.

One participant specified that she received many awards and recognition from her company such as Innovation Award. She joined many projects and showed outstanding success. Another participant indicated that she completed her target and got recognition from her company as one of the experts in her field.

A different participant remarked that she received acknowledgement from her company, and she thought acknowledgement from others was important. Another participant expressed that her superior was surprised that she received recognition from another organization and subsequently awarded her with recognition from the company.

The last participant interviewed in the research mentioned that she accepted recognition from her previous company for addressing and taking necessary action to a fictitious transaction, and as a result the Company presented her a reward.

The notion of recognizing and rewarding other people's contributions was mentioned in Hadary and Henderson (2013) as one of women's strengths. Women enjoy shining the spotlight on others, and indeed, one of their strengths is recognizing and rewarding performance. Many women still want to believe the business world is a meritocracy, and if they do a good job, they will be recognized, rewarded, and promoted. They focus on doing their current job as well as possible in anticipation of recognition and promotion (Hadary and Henderson, 2013).

Gaining self-awareness through assessment of current skills sets and emotional intelligence was another component of the experiential leadership learning. Smith (2001) in Stetler-Flett (2005) further described reflection and feedback can help to challenge assumptions about self-efficacy which can help to improve overall self-awareness and motivate behavior, make self-concept more explicit, and change attitudes and attributional processes. The participants of this research had the experience in being awarded and recognized by the organization and they recognized it was a sign of good reflection and good feedback from the organization. Additionally, they also regarded that reward and recognition will create a motivating work environment and behavior. Hence, this will lead to better individual, groups or teams, or even organization performance and accordingly contribute to the team and organization's success.

*Being a leader is being a role model*

Many participants of this research experienced and expressed that being a leader means being a role model. One participant mentioned that a leader had to be consistent including toward her children. She believed that when she becomes a good role model to her children, she acts as a leader.

Another participant expressed that she was taught by her parents to be a role model for her sisters. By experiencing that, she had the practice of being a leader since early age. She believed that being a leader means being a role model. She regarded that the idea was the start of being a leader. One more participant pointed that the most im-

portant thing in being a leader was how to motivate oneself and to be a role model to others. Other participant seemed to agree to the same value and notion.

Inspiring leaders need role model whose styles and behaviors they can follow and evaluate according to their own standards and other's reactions. Fewer female leaders means fewer role models and can suggest young would-be leaders that being a women is a liability – thus discouraging them from viewing senior women as credible sources of advice and support (Harvard Business Review, 2013).

The participants have a highly regard over the concept of a leader is a role model, and shows by example. Most of them had had mentors that taught and showed them good values and how to be a good leader. In corresponding to that, having a role model from their mentors to provide them with mental benefits is what the participants believed to having contribution to their success.

They hold the conviction that their team will follow their behavior and actions. Therefore, setting and doing the behavior and actions that they wish their team or children to have, is relevant.

*Job rotation and special assignment experiences*

Almost all of the participants in this research experienced job rotation and special assignments. One participant stated that special assignments are part of her daily work as a leader. Another participant even had experiences both in special assignment and job rotation.

She mentioned that she had been assigned in several task forces to complete special tasks for the Company.

A different participant had had international assignments in France and Italy, even though she was only been with the company for 2 years. Prior to the assignments she had to do presentation in front of the Minister. Her job rotation experience was when she was rotated from one SOE to become a President Director to other SOE just after 2 to 2.5 year service.

Similarly, one participant had had job rotation and special assignment in the same SOE. She started from clerical job, to sales executive, then to Public Relations Officer. Afterwards she got promoted to be Public Relations Manager which handled Public Relations and Promotion. Now she holds the position of Marketing Communication Manager. Her special assignment experience was when she assigned to lead a marketing task force in Padang.

One more participant experienced job rotation in Finance department for different kind of roles and responsibilities. The other participant was assigned in a task force for 1.5 years which consisted of several assistant managers to do preliminary research and analysis on a certain program the Company wanted to release. And the last participant confessed that she had a special assignment experience in several cities in Indonesia such as Bandung, Manado, and Bali.

According to Day (2001) in Stetler-Flett (2005), job rotation and special assignment is a commonly practiced leadership development technique.

Providing job rotation or special assignment opportunities can encompass changes to their roles, functions, and geography to target skills development and an increased understanding of the business and industry. The more relevant to skills building a special job or project assignment is, the more likely leadership learning can be accelerated. Having experience job rotation and special assignment, the participants admitted that they received immense benefit from this kind of leadership development. They also stated that they learned more comprehensive knowledge about the company's business and industry and industry, and that through this leadership development technique they learned to acquire and practice their leadership skill.

#### *Learn and share experiences from mentors*

The last theme emerged is mutually learn and share experiences as leaders. All of the women leader participated responded and had experiences towards this particular theme.

One participant mentioned that to her belief, there was no academic learning specifically taught to be a leader, she learned from experiences and from her mentors. Another participant expressed that she learned from the experiences of her lecturers and classmates during discussions in her graduate school. Those experiences really inspired her to develop herself as a leader.

A different participant uttered that she had experiences being thrown into "dying" companies but she thrived and drove the companies into success. She shared those experiences to her team

and her colleagues. One more participant specified that in the company's system they were led to share their experiences to motivate the team. She believed that experience is the best teacher.

Even Hadary and Henderson (2013) indicates that professionally, the teams members may want to gain experience, develop new competencies, and advance in the business. Moreover, Rath and Conchie (2008) specifies that share stories of previous successes make others realize that your confidence is based in experience. That would calm people when a leader choose a huge goal and say, "We can do it". A leader naturally takes ownership of every project she involves in. A leader is expected to be her follower's champion, and proactively guide them through the opportunity to experience the challenges of ownership. In doing so, a leader would contribute to their growth and development.

Unanimously, all of the women leaders participated in this research agreed that learn and share experiences as leaders would create their teams' success towards the team's and company's goals.

In terms of leadership development activities, mentoring is one of the developmental or experiential activities in leadership development program (Yukl, 2010). Mentoring involves developing a relationship between a manager or someone more experienced and another organization member who have less experience. Mentoring is often more directive, with the mentor intentionally transferring specific knowledge and skill and guiding

activities, perhaps as part of a career development process (Cummings and Worley, 2009). Conclusively, mentoring involves sharing the mentor's experiences to the mentee. Through sharing experiences, they developed relationship and provide motivation on best practices to be a successful leader.

## CONCLUSION

All SOEs presented in this research had women in the management team. Although the ratio number is still low (varied from 1:2 to 1:10), but there is an optimism among the women leaders that the number will grow. Despite of the low representative of the gender, some women leaders in the management team considered they were being offered the same opportunity and the same treatment as the men. They knew they had work twice or even five times more than their male counterparts.

There were five core themes were identified in this research. Prior to the interview, the researcher assumed that themes would emerge were in the theme of formal training programs which were commonly conducted in organizations. In contrary, informal leadership development such as the experience of networking, reward and recognition, being a role model, job rotation and special assignment, and mentoring were raised by the participants.

There are three other subjects that the researcher discovered while conducting this research surrounded the issue of the participants' experiences. First, only less than half of the participants of this researched had ever experienced this formal training programs such as MBA or education programs, leader-

ship development trainings, and leadership development seminars (Yukl, 2010). This theme seems appropriate to be encouraged inside the SOE programs as it relevantly integrates with the Ministry of SOE's aim to raise the number of women employees and top management in SOEs.

Secondly, the theme of developmental or experiential activities, such as coaching, mentoring, job rotation, special assignments, and action learning (Yukl, 2010) were a common practice of the women leaders in SOEs. What the women leaders joined this research experienced in developmental or experiential activities were mostly initiated by them and were not initiated by the organizations. Unanimously the participants expressed the desire to keep receiving and performing these kind of activities. Coaching and mentoring were the most desirable activities happened during some of the women leaders' leadership development experiences. Positive response over the activities was noted which some of the participants, affectionatively invested in conducting coaching and mentoring, or were being coached and mentored themselves. Additionally, among those women who experienced these activities, job rotation and special assignment were being rated as the second informal leadership development activities that the women leaders joined this research - received a great deal of personal and professional advantages.

Lastly, another discovery this research revealed was the importance of significant others of the participants, such as children and family. Although only some of them disclosed this theme, the

reaction towards this theme was somewhat overwhelming. This reaffirms the concept that was being reared by Hadary and Henderson (2013) presenting that women leaders lead holistically. They realize employees do not park their personal goals and responsibilities at the door when they come to work, in which achieving professional goals for the company results in employees also achieving their personal aspirations and goals.

Thus, it could be argued that the participants had informally learnt through experiential development with their own initiatives. This research also found a strong reaction and the needs of the participants to both formal and informal leadership development programs. Their eagerness in leadership development programs was believed with the assumption that it will leverage and incorporate with new skill sets and behavior that will eventually equip them to be successful women leaders.

In conclusion, this research found that SOEs participated in this research, had not yet put sufficient investment on the leadership development of their women employees, both in formal leadership development and experiential development programs. To some extent there was an indication that SOEs participated in this research did not give the same opportunity between men and women employees as some of the participants admitted that they had to work twice or even five times more than their male counterparts.

Moving forward, this research suggest the need to include a bigger number of participants of this research and conduct a thorough research both in quan-

titative and qualitative manners. This will capture a more comprehensive analysis upon the leadership development of women leaders in SOEs.

In the end, this research represents a hopeful posing of more questions to the leadership development field. Despite the small number of participants,

this in-depth exploration of women leaders lived experiences of leadership development provides us with more opportunities and an invitation to explore further and to ultimately refine the important social and organizational practice of women's leadership development (Stetler-Flett, 2005)

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