

Abstract

Before you are a leader, success is all about growing your-self. When you become a leader success is all about growing others (Mr. Ba Thach, 2011).

The purpose of this research is to explore leadership style in civil-societies of Rakhine state, western Myanmar. This research focuses on three leadership styles such as democratic leadership style, autocratic leadership style and delegative leadership style (Kurt Lewin, 1939).

The study designed a quantitative research through survey questionnaires, group discussion, and interviews were done with civil society leaders and second line leaders. It enables that the study explore what leadership styles are being practiced in each civil society of Rakhine state, western Myanmar.

According to kyaut phyu CSO conference statement (2015), there are 107 civil-societies existing in Rakhine state. 65% of the local civil societies participated were based in Sittwe, the capital city of Rakhine state, western Myanmar. Around Myanmar country, 85% of civil societies were existing in Yangon and the rest was first started in Ayeyarwaddy Division, Bago Division and Kachin State respectively. As a result, most local organizations have their project areas in Yangon Division. The second most project-crowded area in Myanmar is Ayeyarwaddy Division where 65% of the local organizations have their projects that followed by Shan State, Mandalay and Bago Divisions then Rakhine state, western Myanmar.

75 leaders and second line leaders from 35 civil societies were identified and find that Authoritarian or Autocratic leadership style was showed 9% percentage out of 100% percentage, democratic leadership style was showed 72% percentage and delegative leadership style was used 19% percentage according to survey questionnaires. Given percentages was what civil society leaders have been belief and practicing in civil societies of Rakhine state, western Myanmar.

Most society leaders prefer democratic leadership style in democratization process of country. In the reality of ground situation in Rakhine, leadership culture is still practicing authoritarian leadership style due to controlling by those who came from traditional societies rather than modern societies.

In the conclusion, the study explored 35 civil society organizations which researcher studied their profiles, 15% was faith-based organizations and 60% is Non-Governmental Organizations while the rest 25% is Community Based Organizations. Gender: 94.6 % leaders were males leading their civil societies and 6.4 % leader were females. Age: More than half (About 56%) of the board members are within the age of 25 to 55 and elderly persons are always considered to give higher positions in the board in line with Rakhine culture that 15.6% of the board members were above 20 years old, 65.3% of the board members were above 30 years old, 44.8% of the board member were above 40 years old, and 11.3% the board members were above 50 years old.

Education: 18% of leaders in civil societies are higher education level, 46% of leaders in civil societies are Bachelor degree graduates, very few leaders are master and Ph.D. as well as Dhammacariya degree holders. And 12% of leaders are others.

Most leaders in civil societies are still using autocratic leadership style even though some are prefer democratic leadership style and delegative leadership style. New generations are willing to practice democratic leadership style in order to develop community.

To be effective key players, leaders need to attend vocational training, capacity building class, work-shop, seminars, and conferences in and out of the country which ensure to learn and promote leadership quality. Leaders are driving force whether his or her society develops or not.

In 21st century in which criteria of civilizations comes together as one at all, leaders must learn it as well as multi-societies, multi-culture, and socio-economic development. In fact, self-change is all change to build modern and liberal society culture. It is awareness that mutual respect, rational understanding, and institution culture are main factors to survive civil society in short and long term.

Key Words- Leadership Styles, Civil societies, Rakhine State, Myanmar