An Empirical Study of Leadership Theory Preferences among Gen Y in Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

Presently there are four generational cohorts in the workplace. Born from 1977 to 1997, the youngest cohort group, referred to as Generation Y (or Gen Y) in this study. The importance of leader-subordinate relationships in the workplace has been confirmed; in recognizing this, leaders must identify and adapt to the changing era-shaped needs of employees, who cannot fully participate in organizational life if their most urgent needs are not being met. Because Gen Y employees are only now entering the workforce, little is actually known about the workplace needs of this cohort group. This study attempted to determine leadership needs of a Gen Y cohort as a means to enhance workplace relationships in the 21st century organization. To extend the credibility of this research, the data was collected from 250 respondents who are aware of the leadership theories; this is vital, as the research is about trying to understand what Generation Y perceives about the types of leadership theories and drives them therefore, they must have some form of contact with the types of leadership theories. It was concluded in the end of the research that through correlation analysis, Gen Y is behavioral approach oriented rather than Great Man theory approach.

Keywords: Gen Y, Leadership Theory, Great Man & Behavioral Theory.

1.0 Introduction

Today's workforce is more diverse than ever. Age diversity is of particular interest, as the workforce is now comprised of four generations (Kyles, 2005). Generational differences are a legitimate diversity issue that organizations need to recognize and understand (Arsenault, 2004). Each generation is distinct, to some extent, in terms of their core values and work values (Salahuddin, 2010).Generation Y is the newest generation of workers to enter the labour force. They are different from other generations in terms of work-related values and attitudes; managers need to tailor their approach to leading Generation Y in order to engage and retain this generation (Salahuddin, 2010).

Since Gen Y, or the millennials (those born in and after 1980), started entering the workforce in large numbers five years ago, their impact has been felt by employers in all sectors. Currently making up about 40% of the Malaysian workforce, Gen Ys demand more perks, faster

promotions and greater work-life balance than any other generation before them and they're getting it. "It's a fact that four in 10 of our workforce are Gen Y and that number will grow each year. As employers, you need to be able to talk and relate to them," says Andrew Lee, managing director of Deloitte Consulting Malaysia. "While the numbers are high, the competition for top talent is still fierce and companies need to appeal to Gen Y to attract them," adds Lee.

As Generation Y continues to mature and enter the workforce, it is imperative that organizations and leaders develop an understanding of how to maximize their contribution to the workplace. It is important that employers have an understanding of what this generation expects from all aspects of their employment, from leadership preferences to work-life balance. It is of particular interest to understand the impact of generational differences on preference for leadership styles as it is suggested that leaders can adjust their behaviours in practical ways to enhance subordinates' organizational commitment and performance, to increase organizations productivity (Limsila&Ogunlana, 2008).

While existing studies have examined the leadership styles of managers, there is a lack of evidence on the specific leadership preferences of Generation Y. Understanding what distinguishes Generation Y from other generations is important in order to develop current and future leaders (Arsenault, 2004). Much of the existing literature regarding the preferences of Generation Y is a number of years old since Generation Y is still maturing and continuing to enter the workplace the data is potentially out of date. Furthermore, much of the current literature examines the strategies currently employed by leaders while failing to investigate Generation Y's perceptions of the ideal leader.

The goal of this study is to examine the leadership preferences of Generation Y in order to help maximize their contribution to an organization in Malaysia. More specifically, this study aims to identify preferred leadership styles, and specific leadership attributes valued by Generation Y in Malaysia. Our research will contribute to the current knowledge by focusing on Generation Y when they are at a stage in their lives where leadership preferences are more established. This is significant because Generation Y should now have additional workplace experience and more exposure to various types of leaders and leadership styles.

1.1 Problem Statement

Presently there are four generational cohorts in the workplace. Born from 1977 to 1997, the youngest cohort group, referred to as Generation Y (or Gen Y) in this study. The importance of leader-subordinate relationships in the workplace has been confirmed; in recognizing this, leaders must identify and adapt to the changing era-shaped needs of employees, who cannot fully participate in organizational life if their most urgent needs are not being met. Because Gen Y employees are only now entering the workforce, little is actually known about the workplace needs of this cohort group. This study attempted to determine leadership needs of a Gen Y cohort as a means to enhance workplace relationships in the 21st century organization.

1.2 Research Questions

- How far the Gen Y cohort does believes in capacity for leadership is inherent?

- How the particular personality or behavioral characteristics does makes up a leader among the Gen Y cohort?

- What is the influence of identifying situational variables in becoming leader among the Gen Y cohort?

- How Gen Y cohort does views democratic as well as authoritative approach?

- What is the stand of Gen Y cohort on great leaders are made, not born?

1.3 Research Objectives

- To identify whether Gen-Y leaders are born with innate qualities, destined to lead.

- To explore the certain qualities and traits that make a leader

- To understand the importance of action in a given situation by a particular leader.

- To infer the effectiveness of autocratic and democratic approach.

- To investigate whether people can learn to become leaders through teaching and observation.

2.0 Generation Y

Generation Y is the term given to describe the most recent generation of entrants into the labour force. While the birth dates that have been used to define this generation vary to some extent, Generation Y can generally be described as those whose birth years fall between 1980 and 1994 (McCrindle, 2006). It is important to identify what sets Generation Y apart from other generational cohorts in an organizational context in order to determine how to best manage this new generation of workers. Past research has explored the organizational needs of Generation Y, and as a result the organizational expectations and needs of the generation have now been fairly well explained. Generation Y tend to be self-reliant, independent and like to be allowed the freedom and flexibility to complete tasks at their own pace and in their own style (Martin, 2005). They are the most technologically savvy and educated generation to enter the workforce (Lowe et al., 2011). Generation Y likes to think in the short term, expecting immediate feedback and rewards for their efforts (Lowe et al., 2011). They have developed just-in-time work habits and prefer to have smaller, shorter-term deadlines which allow them to complete projects in smaller segments (Martin, 2005). Generation Y welcomes responsibility and see it as a chance to prove their skills and show their worth within the organization (Martin, 2005).

As this generation has grown up in a rapidly changing environment, having experienced technological advances such as the Internet and mobile phones, they not only expect change but desire it (Martin, 2005). They need opportunities to grow and develop inside and outside of the organization, and if their needs are not being met they will not hesitate to find somewhere that will accommodate them (Martin, 2005). The tendencies and preferences of Generation Y create a number of problems for organizations, with one major issue being low levels of organizational commitment (Martin, 2005). In order to obtain affective organizational commitment from this generation, Generation Y values the flexibility, and quality of their work environment and desire work-life balance (Eisner, 2005). Generation Y seeks flexible work schedules in order to accommodate their other life and goals and ambitions (Yeaton, 2008). Salary and the perceived

prestige of a job matter less to this generation than to those in the past, and they give more weight to whether a job will give them the flexibility they need to pursue goals in other areas of their life (Dulin, 2008). Organizations also need to form a more personal relationship with this group, eliminating barriers to communication caused by hierarchical structures (Martin, 2005). As these employees require greater job autonomy, previous research suggests treating these employees as colleagues rather than subordinates enables employers obtain increased commitment and performance, benefiting both parties (Martin, 2005). While this generation is goal and achievement oriented, they are not overly loyal to any organization and they want a life outside of work (Yeaton, 2008).

2.1 Definition of Leadership

Although leadership has been conceptualized from various perspectives, according to Northouse (2010) central to all the conceptualizations are the following characteristics:

- Leadership is a process that involves influence; and

- Leadership occurs in groups and involves common goals and purpose.

On the basis of the above, leadership may be defined as 'a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal' (Northouse, 2010, p. 3). Further, Kelloway & Barling (2010) define leadership as a process of social influence that is enacted by individuals in formal positions of power or leadership positions within an organisation, such as managers and supervisors. Although leadership is not confined to individuals in formal leadership positions, it is argued that these individuals may have a particularly wide remit of influence within an organisation (Kelloway & Barling, 2010). Leadership is not tantamount to management although they both share some common characteristics. For instance, they are both concerned with influence, working with people and meeting goals (Northouse, 2010).

However, the functions of management may be distinguished from those of leadership. In particular, management is concerned with planning and budgeting (e.g. setting timetables and allocating resources), organising and staffing (e.g. establishing

rules and procedures) and controlling and problem solving (e.g. developing initiatives and generating solutions) (Kotter, 1990; cited in Northouse, 2010). On the other hand, leadership involves establishing a direction (e.g. creating a vision and establishing strategies), aligning people with organisational goals (e.g. communicating goals and seeking commitment) and motivating and inspiring people to achieve organisational goals (e.g. empowering subordinates) (Kotter, 1990; cited in Northouse, 2010). Despite these differing functions, leaders are also involved in planning and organising tasks in order to get the job done (i.e. management function) and similarly managers are often involved in helping groups achieve their goals (i.e. leadership function) (Northouse, 2010).

2.2 Leadership preferences

Several articles effectively described Gen Y as a cohort group, however few describe leadership attributes and styles that are preferred by Generation Y. Sujansky (2004) discusses the need to identify the leadership styles and preferences of Generation Y and McCrindle (2006) discusses further specific leadership attributes that need to be examined. Generation Y feels the need to have a work environment that forms relationships and research suggests that this cohort desires a work environment where humour and constant challenges are present (Eisner, 2005). Eisner (2005) asserts that constructive, specific, and prompt feedback is also an integral component of leading Generation Y. Due to this relationship building environment, Generation Y is more likely to positively rate manager and leadership personal attributes as important, which is an aspect which will be further examined in our research (Eisner, 2005). An issue addressed in the literature was Generation Y's work ethic and common complaints on the generation usually stemmed from work-life balance and telecommuting (Eisner, 2005).

The literature provides limited evidence of the attributes that generation Y seeks in their leaders and managers (PR Newswire, 2004, Eisner, 2005). In her review of literature, Eisner alsonotes that a common finding was that Generation Y had a positive attitude towards work. McCrindle describes training and education as a pivotal aspect of engaging Generation Y, and upward mobility was also a recurring

theme. Eisner and Mcrindle both describe the propensity for Generation Y to want organizations to adapt to changes in their needs, use technology effectively, and have an overall flexibility provide them with them work-life balance. One issue seldom addressed is Generation Y's view on strategy, specifically how they felt about adopting and changing strategy.

2.3 Trait Approaches

Early leadership theories focused on identifying the personality characteristics associated with good leaders (commonly referred to as 'great man' theories; Northouse, 2010). The assumption was that leaders have certain innate characteristics or traits that distinguish them from others i.e. non-leaders (Northouse, 2010).

Trait research focused on identifying specific physical characteristics as well as personal attributes that may be associated with leader effectiveness. Stogdill (1974; cited in Glendon, Clarke, & McKenna, 2006) analysed and synthesized 287 studies on leadership traits conducted between 1904 and 1970 and identified several characteristics associated with effective leaders.

These included:

- Good interpersonal skills,

- Self-confidence and achievement-orientation,

- Persistence in the pursuit of goals,

- Ability to cope with interpersonal stress and tolerate frustration, and

- Ability to engage in creative problem solving.

In a later review of empirical trait studies, it was shown that other characteristics that distinguish well from poor leaders included integrity and honesty, a desire to lead and job-related knowledge (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991; cited in Glendon et al., 2006). More recently, there has been an increasing focus on identifying the relationships between leadership and the Big Five model of personality. According to this model, personality is made up of 5 factors: neuroticism (i.e. being anxious, depressed and/or

insecure), extraversion (i.e. being sociable), openness (i.e. being creative and insightful), agreeableness (i.e. being trusting and accepting) and conscientiousness (i.e. being thorough and organised) (McCrae & Costa, 1987; cited in Northouse, 2010). Judge, Bono, Ilies & Gerhardt (2002; cited in Northouse, 2010) conducted a meta-analysis of 78 trait and leadership studies carried out between 1967 and 1998 and found that the extraversion factor was most strongly associated with effective leadership followed by conscientiousness, openness and low neuroticism.

2.3.1   Strengths and limitations of trait approaches

One of the limitations of trait approaches is that they provide a reductionist and simplistic view of leadership as they imply that the presence of certain personality characteristics will enable a leader to be effective across different situations (Glendon et al., 2006). However, this assumption has not been empirically supported and a set of 'universal' traits has not been identified (Yukl, 2010). In other words, there is not a definitive list of personality traits that are likely to be equally effective across a range of situations (i.e. thus lack generalisability). Indeed, it has been argued that different situations may require a combination of different leadership qualities, which suggests that leadership effectiveness is context-specific (Northouse, 2010). For instance, leaders will have to deal differently with subordinates depending on their levels of experience or competence; it is likely that the requirement for leadership may be less pronounced where subordinates are characterised by high levels of motivation and competence (Bass & Bass, 2008).

Finally, another important limitation of the trait approach is that it is not possible to train or develop individuals to become leaders, given that traits are considered innate and relatively stable over time (Northouse, 2010). In addition, no studies were identified that attempted to link specific personality traits with effective safety leadership. Therefore, the applicability of the trait approach for the effective management of safety is limited.

2.4 Behavioural Approaches

Given the limitations of the trait approach, in the 1950s there was a shift in focus towards identifying the types of leader behaviours that good leaders exhibit i.e. what it is that good leaders do. Thus, unlike the trait approach, the behavioural approach focuses on the leaders' behaviours and actions (Den Hartog & Koopman, 2001).

Early research on this approach was conducted in the 1950s by researchers at Ohio State and Michigan Universities. In particular, researchers at Ohio State University identified two types of leadership behaviours: consideration and initiating structure (Fleishman and Harris, 1962; cited in Glendon et al., 2006). Leaders who exhibit a considerate leadership style tend to focus on building good relationships and two-way communications with subordinates and are attentive to subordinate needs and feelings. On the other hand, leaders that exhibit initiating structure behaviours tend to focus on planning, communicating and allocating tasks and expect tasks to be completed to deadlines and to certain standards. Thus, they are task rather than relationship-focused (Fleishman & Harris, 1962; cited in Glendon et al., 2006). Early research carried out on these two types of behaviours showed that considerate supervisors were more effective, in terms of reduced levels of employee voluntary turnover and fewer grievances (Fleishman & Harris, 1962; cited in Yukl, 2010). The opposite effects were observed for supervisors who used initiating structure behaviours i.e. had higher voluntary turnover rates and a higher number of grievances. However, it has been suggested that both types of behaviours, whereby leaders both nurture employees and provide the appropriate structure for tasks, are important for effective leadership (e.g. Northouse, 2010).

Parallel research carried out by researchers at Michigan University identified two types of leadership behaviours: employee orientation, which focuses on being attentive and considerate of employee needs, and overlaps with the considerate leadership style discussed earlier (e.g. Bowers and Seashore, 1966; cited in Northouse, 2010), and production orientation leadership behaviours, which share

much in common with an initiating structure leadership style as they focus on behaviours targeted towards getting the work done (e.g. Bowers and Seashore, 1966; cited in Northouse, 2010).

Several studies were conducted in an attempt to identify the best combination of both relationship and task-oriented behaviours that would be effective across different situations and thus generate a universal theory of leadership. However, the findings from these studies were inconclusive and consistent associations between task and relationship-oriented behaviours and outcomes, such as employee performance or satisfaction have not been established (e.g. Yukl, 1994; cited in Northouse, 2010).

Finally, drawing on findings from the behavioural approaches, Blake & Mouton (1964; cited in Northouse, 2010) developed one of the best known models of managerial behaviour called the Managerial Grid. The model focused on two leadership behaviours: concern for production that assessed the extent to which leaders are concerned with getting the work done (overlaps with task-oriented leadership behaviours) and concern for people that assessed the extent to which leaders attend to interpersonal relationships within the organisation (such as developing trust and ensuring good working conditions; overlaps with relationship-oriented behaviours). The grid portrayed five leadership styles depending on whether leaders emphasised a concern for production or a concern for people. According to the model, the most effective leaders are those that exhibit a 'team management' leadership style, which involves focusing on getting the work done but also being attentive to interpersonal relationships within the organisation (i.e. maintaining a balance between a concern for production and a concern for people) (Blake & McCanse, 1991; cited in Northouse, 2010).

2.4.1   Strengths and limitations of behavioural approaches

The value of the behavioural approach was that it helped shift the focus of leadership research towards understanding what leaders do and the impact of their actions. In addition, it helped describe leadership behaviours depending on whether they were task or relationship-oriented, and

highlighted the need for leaders to balance effectively these two types of behaviours (Northouse, 2010).

Behavioural approaches have several limitations. First, the empirical evidence regarding their effectiveness tends to be inconclusive in so far as studies have failed to identify consistent relationships between task and relationship behaviours and work outcomes, such as performance (Yukl, 1994; cited in Northouse, 2010). Second, behavioural approaches suggest that the most effective leaders are both task and relationship-oriented, combining both a high concern for production and meeting deadlines as well as for employee needs and growth (Blake and Mouton, 1964; cited in Bass and Bass, 2008). However, it has been argued that high levels on both types of behaviours may not be necessary depending on follower and/or situational factors. For instance, for complex tasks, leaders may need to provide both task direction and be attentive and supportive towards employees. However, for tasks that are simple or routine task leadership may not be necessary (Northouse, 2010).

2.5 Contingency approaches

Contingency approaches gained prominence in the 1960s and 1970s and focused on understanding the circumstances or situations where leadership behaviours will be effective. The basic premise of these approaches is that different leadership styles will be effective depending on the situation. In other words, the basic tenet of this approach is that the effectiveness of leadership is context-specific (e.g. Yukl, 2010). Two of the most well-known contingency theories are Fiedler's (1967) Least Preferred Coworker (LPC) contingency model and House's (1971) path-goal theory.

2.5.1   Strengths and limitations of contingency theories

One of the strengths of the contingency approach to leadership is that it draws attention to the importance of matching specific leadership styles to specific situations and the need for leaders to adapt their behaviours depending on the nature of the task and subordinate characteristics.

Although some contingency theories (such as Fiedler's LPC theory) have received considerable empirical support, in some cases evidence tends to be mixed (e.g. Schriesheim et al., 1994; cited in Glendon et al., 2006). For instance, although the path-goal theory has been extensively researched, reviews and meta-analytic studies indicate that the findings for the theory tend to be mixed (e.g. Wofford and Liska, 1993; cited in Yukl, 2010).

Further, another criticism of contingency theories is that, due to their complexity, they may be of limited practical value in enabling managers to become more effective. Yukl (2010) cites some of these criticisms; in particular, contingency theories suggest that different leadership styles will be most effective depending on situational and/or subordinate characteristics. However, the hectic and fast-paced nature of managerial work means that it may be difficult for managers to apply different behaviours depending on the situation to ensure optimal performance (McCall, 1977; cited in Yukl, 2010). In addition, contingency theories fail to provide some general guidelines for managers to use in different situations and for different types of problems (McCall, 1977; cited in Yukl, 2010).

Another limitation of contingency theories for the purposes of this review is that they have not been sufficiently tested within a safety context. Therefore it is unclear how effective a contingency approach to leadership is in relation to safety outcomes (Glendon et al., 2006).

3.0 The Approach of this Study

This study is based on empirical investigation of the preferred leadership theory by the Generation Y in order to help maximize their contribution to an organization in Malaysia. More specifically, this study aims to identify preferred leadership styles, and specific leadership attributes valued by Generation Y in Malaysia. The specific research question of our work is, "Empirical Study of Leadership Theory Preferences among Gen Y in Malaysia".

While existing studies have examined the leadership styles of managers, there is a lack of evidence on the specific leadership preferences of Generation Y. Understanding what distinguishes Generation Y from other generations is important in order to develop current and future leaders (Arsenault, 2004). Much of the existing literature regarding the preferences of Generation Y is a number of years old since Generation Y is still maturing and continuing to enter the workplace the data is potentially out of date. Furthermore, much of the current literature examines the strategies currently employed by leaders while failing to investigate Generation Y's perceptions of the ideal leader.

3.1 Sample size and sampling method

To extend the credibility of this research, the data will be collected from *250 respondents* who are aware of the leadership theories; this is vital, as the research is about trying to understand what Generation Y perceives about the types of leadership theories and drives them therefore, they must have some form of contact with the types of leadership theories. Moreover, the research should contribute to the current knowledge by focusing on Generation Y when they are at a stage in their lives where leadership preferences are more established; which requires at least a feasible amount of sampling. As compared to the previous research done in leadership theories on Malaysia, this research sampling proves to be feasible as the earlier research sampling ranging from 50 to 100 respondents. To avoid parallax error while selecting the respondents, the method of *purposive sampling* will be used for this research. All the respondents are students persuading Masters in Business Administration (MBA) specialized in leadership management. The questionnaire used for this research was specifically developed in addressing the research objectives and research questions. In order to take every single data into account, *likert scale* have been used to avoid neglecting respondents view. The *likert scale* used here will be ranging from 1 to 5 to give an optimum choice of options for the respondents whereby, 1 being the least disagreed while 5 being strongly agreed.

3.2 Analysis of data

All the data are entered into IBM SPSS Statistical software to analyses the likert scale result in finding the correlation between the factors to deduce conclusion. This will

aid in finding which suggested hypothesis have a strong relationship with the Gen Y Leadership Style.

3.3 Hypothesis

H1: Generation Y will have a strong preference for "Great Man" leaders

H2: Generation Y will have a strong preference for Trait leaders

H3: Generation Y will have a strong preference for Contingency leaders

H4: Generation Y will have a strong preference for Situational leaders

H5: Generation Y will have a strong preference for Behavioral leaders

4.1 Results and Data Analysis

The inter-item consistency reliability or the Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients of the five independent (5 Factors) and dependent variable (Gen Y Leadership Style) were obtained. They were all above 0.80.

The result indicates that the Cronbach's alpha for the six-item Demographic Profile measure is 0.93. Secondly for the twenty-five item Five Factors measure is 0.99. Thirdly is for the Gen Y Leadership Style measure is 0.94. Hence, the closer reliability coefficient gets to 1.0, the better. Next, the general which reliability less than 0.6 are considered to be poor, those in the 0.7 range can be, acceptable, and for those over 0.80 are considered the good. Hence, the internal consistency reliability of the measures used in this study can be considered as to be the good. The following table shows the details.

Table 4.1: Reliability Analysis

Section	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha based on Standardized Items	Number of Items
Demographic Profile	0.932	0.935	6
Five Factors	0.997	0.998	25

Gen Y Leadership Style	0.945	0.957	5

H$_1$ = Generation Y will have a strong preference for "Great Man" leaders.

As a first step the first variable focuses on the "Great Man" leaders' preference among the Gen Y. There are numbers of respondents are responded positively for the first variable. Around 25.50 percentages and 10.5 percentages of respondents agree and strongly agree with the statement. This could be consumers' view the reliability of "Great Man" factor is fundamental cause for an entrepreneur/non-entrepreneur to transcend towards business. Furthermore, "Great Man" factor could divert the course of one becoming a leader or a follower in an organization. Moreover, around 37.5 percentages of respondents are somewhat strongly disagree and only 18 percentages of respondents disagree with this statement as well. This is due the fact that, the consumers believes leadership is not specific attribute to certain people. About 9.5 percentages of respondent took a neutral stand which implies that they are not very much convinced that this factor in fact plays a role in leadership.

Table 4.2: Descriptive Statistics for "Great Man" Antecedent

	"Great Man" 1	"Great Man" 2	"Great Man" 3	"Great Man" 4	"Great Man" 5
N Valid	250	250	250	250	250
Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean	3.45	3.53	3.4	3.75	3.93
Median	3.5	3.5	4	4	4
Mode	4	4	4	5	5
Std. Deviation	1.065	1.085	1.165	1.87	1.35
Sum	690	710	680	750	786

Table 4.3: Correlation of "Great Man" vs Gen Y Leadership Style (H1)

Correlations		
	"Great Man"	Gen Y Leadership Style

"Great Man"	Pearson Correlation	1	.817**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	250	250
Gen Y Leadership Style	Pearson Correlation	.817**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	250	250
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

The above table represents the results of the correlation test. It highlighted that there is strong and positive correlation between "Great Man" and Gen Y Leadership Style. The "Great Man" antecedents does act as a factor when it comes to leadership theories among the Gen Y. The correlation test also demonstrates t test on r value whether significant or insignificant; in this case it is significant at $r = .858$, $p < .01$. Therefore this hypothesis is accepted.

H_2 = Generation Y will have a strong preference for Trait leaders

The second variable focus on the trait antecedent and there were 5 question used to justify. The finding suggest that in totality around 27.2 percentages of respondents are strongly agreeing along 14 percentages saying they agree. This could be Gen Y cohort' view the reliability of traits factor is fundamental cause for an entrepreneur/non-entrepreneur to transcend towards leadership quality in a business organization. Furthermore, 38.8 percentages of respondents strongly disagreed together 12 percentages of disagreement. This is due the fact that, the Gen Y cohort believes trait antecedent alone can't make a person leader as there are more to it. About 7.5 percentages of respondents took a neutral stand on the basis of deducing whether this factor is related to leadership or not.

Table 4.4: Descriptive Statistics for Trait Antecedent

	Trait Theory 1	Trait Theory 2	Trait Theory 3	Trait Theory 4	Trait Theory 5
N Valid	250	250	250	250	250
Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean	2.75	3.45	3.78	3.34	2.87
Median	2	3	4	3	2
Mode	2	3	4	3	2
Std. Deviation	0.723	0.687	0.982	0.698	0.745
Sum	565	759	745	798	675

Table 4.5: Correlation of Trait vs Gen Y Leadership Style (H2)

Correlations		Trait	Gen Y Leadership Style
Trait	Pearson Correlation	1	.835**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	250	250
Gen Y Leadership Style	Pearson Correlation	.835**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	250	250
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

The above table represents the results of the correlation test. It highlighted that there is strong and positive correlation between Trait and Gen Y Leadership Style. The trait antecedents does act as a factor when it comes to creating leaders in a business organization as viewed by the Gen y. The correlation test also demonstrates t test on r value whether significant or insignificant; in this case it is significant at r = .863, p < .01. Therefore this hypothesis is accepted.

H_3 = Generation Y will have a strong preference for Contingency leaders

The following questions focus on the contingency antecedent will help to create leaders. Around 29.7 percentages of the respondents are agreed and 16.5 percentages of the respondents are somewhat agreed. The reason could be because Gen Y cohort believe that contingency is what makes a leader. Besides, only 23.8 percentages of the respondents are disagreed with the statement along with 25 percentages somewhat disagreed. Respondents also believes that contingency alone don't create leaders as there are more to it when leading through business; not just situation.

Table 4.6: Descriptive Statistics for Contingency Antecedent

		Contingency 1	Contingency 2	Contingency 3	Contingency 4	Contingency 5
N	Valid	250	250	250	250	250
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0

Mean	3.87	3.65	3.76	3.98	3.54
Median	4	4	4	4	4
Mode	4	4	4	4	4
Std. Deviation	0.934	0.76	0.834	0.965	0.922
Sum	798	709	735	765	776

Table 4.7: Correlation of Contingency vs Gen Y Leadership Style (H3)

Correlations			
		Contingency	Gen Y Leadership Style
Contingency	Pearson Correlation	1	.914[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	250	250
Gen Y Leadership Style	Pearson Correlation	.914[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	250	250
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

The above table represents the results of the correlation test. It highlighted that there is strong and positive correlation between Contingency and Gen Y Leadership Style. The Contingency antecedents does act as a factor when it comes to creating leaders in a business organization as viewed by the Gen Y cohort. The correlation test also demonstrates t test on r value whether significant or insignificant; in this case it is significant at r = .873, p < .01. Therefore this hypothesis is accepted.

H$_4$ = Generation Y will have a strong preference for Situational leaders

This question focus on the Situational antecedent will help further contribute to creating leaders as viewed by the Gen Y cohort. Furthermore, mostly many participants are believed that the Situational antecedent is the second main factor for leaders' creation. Only around 35 percentages of the respondents are disagreed and somewhat disagreed, 65 percentages of the respondents are agreed and somewhat agree with the statement. The reason could be because respondents feel that, one need to adjust behaviour based on situation and without it, you can't

move anywhere. One's ability can only be put the test provided he or she proves it in action given a particular situation.

Table 4.8: Descriptive Statistics for Situational Antecedent

	Situational 1	Situational 2	Situational 3	Situational 4	Situational 5
N Valid	250	250	250	250	250
Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean	3.87	3.45	3.34	3.76	3.59
Median	4	4	4	4	4
Mode	4	4	4	4	4
Std. Deviation	0.837	0.849	0.848	0.765	0.887
Sum	735	798	646	728	776

Table 4.9: Correlation of Situational vs Gen Y Leadership Style (H4)

Correlations		Situational	Gen Y Leadership Style
Situational	Pearson Correlation	1	.932[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	250	250
Gen Y Leadership Style	Pearson Correlation	.932[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	250	250
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

The above table represents the results of the correlation test. It highlighted that there is strong and positive correlation between Situational and Gen Y Leadership Style. The situational antecedents does act as a factor when it comes to creating leaders as viewed by the Gen Y cohort. The correlation test also demonstrates t test on r value whether significant or insignificant; in this case it is significant at r = .975, p < .01. Therefore this hypothesis is accepted.

H_5 = Generation Y will have a strong preference for Behavioural leaders

The final question focus on the behavioural antecedent that will help further contribute to creating leaders. This is the added antecedent to the model to test its credibility. Besides, around 49.5 percentages of the respondents of the behavioural antecedents agreed and provided positive feedback which is the highest as compared to the situational antecedent. The reason could be because that respondents believe great leaders are made, not born. Rooted in behaviourism, this leadership theory focuses on the actions of leaders not on mental qualities or internal states. The Gen Y cohort believe that people can learn to become leaders through teaching and observation.

Table 4.10: Descriptive Statistics for Behavioural Antecedent

	Behavioural 1	Behavioural 2	Behavioural 3	Behavioural 4	Behavioural 5
N Valid	250	250	250	250	250
Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean	3.85	3.35	3.98	3.63	3.78
Median	4	4	4	4	4
Mode	4	4	4	4	4
Std. Deviation	0.837	0.965	1.109	0.987	0.824
Sum	765	678	765	787	776

Table 4.11: Correlation of Behavioural vs Gen Y Leadership Style (H5)

Correlations			
		Behavioral	Gen Y Leadership Style
Behavioral	Pearson Correlation	1	.951[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	250	250
Gen Y Leadership Style	Pearson Correlation	.951[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	250	250
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

The above table represents the results of the correlation test. It highlighted that there is strong and positive correlation between Behavioral and Gen Y Leadership Style. The Behavioral antecedents does act as a factor when it comes to creating leaders as viewed by the Gen Y cohort. The correlation test also demonstrates t test on r value whether significant or insignificant; in this case it is significant at $r = .951$, $p < .01$. Therefore this hypothesis is accepted.

4.2 Summarizing the findings

This section provides a short summary of the findings to wrap up the analysis:

- *Behavioral Theory*: have been found to be major key element deciding to become a social entrepreneur in Malaysia from the perception of Gen Y. This also reflects the fact that Gen Y belief that great leaders are made, not born. Rooted in behaviorism, this leadership theory focuses on the actions of leaders not on mental qualities or internal states.

- *Situational Theory*: have been found to be second key element deciding to become a leader in Malaysia from the perception of Gen Y. Gen Y perceive that, in a situation where the leader is the most knowledgeable and experienced member of a group, an authoritarian style might be most appropriate. In other instances where group members are skilled experts, a democratic style would be more effective.

- *Contingency Theory*: have been found to be third key element deciding to become a leader in Malaysia from the perception of Gen Y. Gen Y cohort feel no leadership style is best in all situations. Success depends upon a number of variables, including the leadership style, qualities of the followers and aspects of the situation.

- *Trait Theory*: have been to be fourth key element deciding to become a social leader in Malaysia from the perception of Gen Y. However, if particular traits are key features of leadership, then how do we explain people who possess those qualities but are not leaders?

- *"Great Man" Theory*: have been to be the fifth key element deciding to become a leader in Malaysia from the perception of Gen Y. Some proportion of Gen Y believes that great leaders are born, not made. While the others believe that, the term "Great Man" was used because, at the time, leadership was thought of primarily as a male quality, especially in terms of military leadership.

5.1 Discussion & Conclusion

The results of our study indicate that Generation Y's leadership preferences reflect the profile of Generation Y; Generation Y prefers leaders that are competent, hardworking, determined, and accountable of their action. These traits coincide with the high preference for idealized influence under the transformational leadership style. Thus, our study indicates that generation Ys profile of attributes should be reflected in the leadership style of their managers or leaders. These results suggest that leaders/managers should modify their style of leadership when leading those in the Generation Y cohort group. Our findings indicate that leaders have to show a degree of personal accountability and incorporate moral aspects such as honesty into their leadership style.

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The finding that honesty is a key factor in leadership is important in generation Y is further highlighted by the personal accountability trait preferred in leaders. One of Arsenault (2004) major findings is that generation Ys highest ranked trait is honestly, this is reflective in the preferred leader of generation Y. Judge and Bono (2000) found that transformational leadership style was generally preferred by other leadership cohorts, therefore in conjunction with our results, this suggests that Gen Y also prefers a similar leadership style.

As seen from the empirical evidence, it's observable that Generation Y cohort welcomes all the types of leadership styles within the organization; which reflects there are no adverse resistance to any specific approach. This goes along to our earlier literature evidence of the Generation Y cohort is the fastest adapting to changes and less resistance to changes. This applies to organization as well. With that consideration in mind, the best leadership approach can always be more than one or a combination of all. The results have proven that the Generation Y cohort doesn't feel that one particular leadership theory is the supreme to another. This reflects the positive sign when this Generation Y cohort take over the leaders of the world, making the world a better place; specifically in Malaysia.

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