The influence of leadership quality towards community cohesion in Iban community in Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to examine the influence of the traditional leadership qualities towards to develop community cohesion in the Iban community in Malaysia. A quantitative approach was used to conduct this study, where data were collected through a self-administered survey questionnaire from 210 chiefs in the Iban longhouse at the Pakan District in Sarawak, Malaysia. A pre-tested questionnaire was administered to the respondents using a simple random sampling in the District of Pakan, Sarawak. The leadership quality was measured based on the leadership traits, leadership style, leadership behaviour, situational leadership, and transformational leadership; while the community cohesion was measured by a sense of belonging, social alienation, social support, rootedness, social solidarity, and social ties. The results of the correlation and regression analysis showed that the traditional leadership qualities had a significant correlation with the development of social cohesion. The findings proved that the traditional leadership is essential to increase community cohesion in the Iban community. The findings would be important guideline to the development thinkers, practitioners, community leaders, and development institutions.

1. Introduction

Community development is a process through which people and communities learn how they can help themselves (Community Development Academy, 1997). One of the main purpose of community development is to improve cohesion in the community. Leadership is an important element towards community cohesion of a society (Martiskainen, 2017; Wood, 2017; Decrane, 1996; Campbell, 1997). Leadership quality has led the transformation of the community development. According to Asnarulkhadi (2005), a successful community development can happen when social ties among community members strengthened so that it can form a network and apply social support among them. Therefore, it can be said that the leadership plays an important role in the community development process. Aspects of leadership have a strong influence on the formation of community cohesion in a community and contribute to the community development process. Social values and processes related to social integrity is the foundation of community cohesion. Accordingly, the quality leader is needed to form a strong cohesion with community members. Chris et al. (2005) mentioned that leadership and commitment are essential to the development of community cohesion. Someone needs to take responsibility for managing and driving through the changes required to build a more cohesive community.

The commitment of leaders towards community involvement is a key indicator in developing community cohesion. While the success of leadership in society depends on the quality of followers who are willing to contribute to the success of the leadership of the largest power (Sabran, 1999). Sabran (1999) also noted that success in community development not only the efforts of the leaders, but success is also attributed with strong support from members of the community. The quality leadership aims to lead, engage and influence and usually produce interaction with a group, organization or community. The relationship between the leader and community is very important to establish the success of community development. Therefore, the quality of leadership form is the basis of the power of the people under his/her command and become the main indicator for the success of a community to build community cohesion. Leadership quality and the formation of a strong cohesion could promote efforts in community cohesion. Thus resulting in sustainable community development takes place when it shares common values in the community working to establish certain criteria in the social attraction and establishment of friendly relations between members of the community. In addition, leaders who have the knowledge and...
abilities are also seen as more effective in helping members of the community to identify and take advantage of the development carried out. Whereas, according to Sabran (1999), leader with the criteria and characteristics of effective also contributed to the success of community development. However, community cohesion is the result of the relationship that exists to unite the community, develop harmony and a sense of community and commitment to achieve common goals.

Iban community is the largest community in Sarawak, Malaysia. Most of them live in longhouses. Kedit (1980) describes the Iban longhouse as “values of unity and communal living”. Tuai rumah is the person responsible for maintaining the harmony of Iban society in the Long house. They are the responsible leaders in the care of the affairs of the longhouse. This responsibility is inherited from generation to generation by every selected Tuai Rumah who heads a longhouse. In line with current changes, Tuai Rumah has to prepare itself with superior leadership qualities to enhance its influence among longhouse communities. Hence, maintaining the harmony of living in longhouses is the biggest challenge for the Tuai Rumah as it involves the aspect of community cohesion and requires a high commitment from the entire longhouse society. Traditional leadership practiced in the past is no longer productive and does not necessarily apply in some situations (Warren, 1998). To consider the above situation, this study is an attempt to examine the quality of leadership in Iban community. This study showed that the quality of leadership is crucial in safeguarding and forming community cohesion in longhouse communities. Hence, the focus of this study is to determine the quality of leadership among the Tuai Rumah and its influence on the formation of cohesion among Iban communities in longhouses.

This study has a number of rationales and importances. We believe that while the study focuses on Iban community in Malaysia, the implications are international in scope. The Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, Malaysia is responsible to determine policies and direction to achieve women, family and community development. We mentioned earlier that leadership and social cohesion are important elements for community development. The Iban community is part of the Sarawakian community of Bumiputera, which comprises the vast majority in the state of Sarawak. According to the last census, the total population in Sarawak was 579,900, and the Iban comprises the largest percentage (almost 30%) of this population (Department of Statistics, Malaysia, 2010; Hoe et al., 2018). Traditional leadership style is one of the most dominants in this community, but due to globalization and mainstream development, the traditional leadership is changing a lot over time. In the line with this argument, this study examines the styles of leaderships in Iban community. Here, the leadership quality was measured based on the leadership traits, leadership style, leadership behaviour, situational leadership, and transformational leadership; while the community cohesion was measured by a sense of belonging, social alienation, social support, rootedness, social solidarity, and social ties. By using a number of statistical tools such as correlation and regression analyses, this study showed that the traditional leadership qualities had a significant correlation with the development of social cohesion in the Iban community. The study argued that the findings would be important guideline to the development thinkers, practitioners, community leaders, and development institutions.

2. Literature review

2.1. Leadership and community cohesion

The literature gives a certain level of confusion about the definition of leadership, leadership style and qualities of leadership. These concepts may have a number of definitions but still these are very complicated and these are studied through various fields that require different definitions. For example, many theories and explanations have been developed in leadership because of their importance as a practice and research topic (Dubrin, 2010). Zaharah and Silong (2008) mention that leadership is an art or process to influence a person, group, organization responsible for achieving the stated goals. Abdullah and Ainon (2003) defined leadership as a behavior that aims to influence other individuals and encourage them to obey without pressure. Islam and Morgan (2012) emphasize natural leadership style where leadership cannot be achieved by training; rather it should be developed through group activities. Isaac Mostovitz et al., (2009) defines leadership as an interpersonal influence that is implemented in a situation and directed through a process of communication towards goal achievement. However, leadership is clearly a role that leads toward goal achievement, involves interaction and influence, and usually results in some form of changed structure of behavior of groups, organizations, or communities.

The role of leadership completely depends on the leadership style. The scholars in the field of leadership research use many and varied conceptualizations of leadership style. Most of the definitions are based on a distinction between an internally and intrinsically directed, people-oriented, and stimulating leadership style versus an externally and extrinsically directed, task-oriented and correcting leadership style (Vermeeren et al., 2014). Some definitions underpin the differentiation made between transformational versus transactional leadership (Bass and Avolio, 1994) and participative versus authoritative leadership. Islam (2016) found that Gramsci’s ‘organic’ intellectual leadership, developed through social processes, is more important to manage non-governmental organizations’ (NGOs') development projects as this kind of leader successfully shares organizational values and norms and disseminates these values and practices with his/her group members.

The leadership goals are to improve the quality of work, to transform, and to set goals to achieve success. Leadership quality is often a measure of the success of community development. This study is more focused on a community leader who is responsible to community needs. This is most effective when s/he shares its goals, values and vision in the local community.

Today, ‘community cohesion’ is more influential concept in community development. According to Ishaan et al. (2002), the integrity of the community depends largely on the social solidarity formed in the aspect of bonding, individual basic relationships, development, effectiveness and function of community that allows to thrive civic engagement. From subjective point of view, community cohesion was seen as ‘perceived cohesion’ that was referred as ‘solidarity’ (a deeply shared identity and shared values). According to Morris et al. (2011 in Hansard, 2006), there is a common vision and sense of belonging by all communities; a society in which the diversity of people’s backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and valued; a society in which similar life opportunities are available to all; and a society in which strong and positive relationships exist and continue to be developed in the workplace, in schools and in the wider community. Weinstein et al. (2015) added the nature of community cohesion as a sense of place is closely tied into a sense of community: “when the latent bond of common interest in the place...draws people together and enables them to express common sentiments through joint action”.

Improving the function and quality of local leadership is one of the ways to shape cohesion in the community (Browne et al., 2005; Tekleab et al., 2008). This is because, the institutions of leadership and unity in rural communities are elements that depend on each other. However, different communities need different approaches to unifying them with other communities (Avolio et al., 2009). Hence, the quality of leadership and the formation of community cohesion is the basis for the community development and growth of the community. Here, community development is considered as a process that enables people to take collective action to achieve their common goals; as a participatory method it leads to improved resource allocation and sustainable outcomes, to increase the negotiation power of poor people, and mobilises greater local resources (Islam, 2016). The strength of community cohesion also illustrates the ability of a community to function and develop in a harmonious atmosphere together. The community solidarity can only grow in full as they recognize each individual has the right to their social equality (Tekleab et al., 2008).
2.2. Leadership system in Iban community

Iban Dayak is one of the groups who mostly live in Sarawak, including a small represent in West Kalimantan and Sulawesi. The Iban population is about 30% of all citizens and ethnic Dayak Sarawak's largest compared with other ethnic Dayak (Department of Statistics, Malaysia, 2014; Jabatan Perangkaan Malaysia, 2014). In short, ethnic ethnographic boundaries in Sarawak can be solved being on three main categories: the coastline inhabited by Malays and Melanau, the lowlands were inhabited by the Iban and Bidayuh. While the highlands are mainly made up of ethnic minorities such as the Kayan, Kenyah, Kelabit, Murut and Punan.

Generally, the leadership in the Iban community can be divided into traditional and modern leadership. The traditional leadership is called TuaiRumah, while modern leadership consists of institutions Temeng-gong, Pemancha and headman. This study focused on the quality of the traditional leadership in the Iban longhouse in the formation of community cohesion among the people of the longhouse. This kind of leadership is very dominant and has a strong influence in the rural community. Normally, they are made up of parents or religious leaders and highly respected by the community. The relationship between traditional leaders and communities found to be very closely because they are seen more often interact and sit in a set of communities.

Traditional leadership role in uniting the Iban community is critical to the success of any project. TuaiRumah is the authority to appoint leadership in the longhouse only, Penghulu on the regional, and Pemancha on the county level. Tua Rumah leadership institutions have existed before the British colonial era and still remains to this day. The leader is better known as Tua works practically an institution in the longhouse. Tuai in Malay means ‘old or head’ and ‘house’ refers to the items under the authority of the tua.

Quality traditional leadership is crucial in shaping cohesion and simultaneously promoting community development processes among rural communities. According to Ozor and Nwankwo (2008), quality local leadership is essential to bring the development process as they can influence the participation of the community to be voluntarily engaged in development activities. The Iban community also has a modern level leadership institution consisting of Penghulu and Pemancha. The Penghulu Institution, and Pemancha were created during Brooke's reign, in their efforts to unite the Iban community at that time. Thus, the position of modern leadership is given only on the basis of certain or ad hoc purposes only to win the anti-Brooke's Iban community. According to Jayum (1991), Penghulu's post was created to generate power and position stability of a TuaiRumah. This institution is empowered to administer the welfare of the longhouses and the Houses of Residence.

This study aimed to examine the influence of the traditional leadership qualities towards to develop community cohesion in the Iban community in Malaysia. The basic hypothesis of this study is leadership quality in terms of leadership characteristics, behavior, styles, situation and transformational will influence the formation of social cohesion of Iban communities in longhouses.

3. Study objective and methodology

3.1. Study objective

3.1.1. Main objective

The main objective of this study was to examine the influence of the traditional leadership qualities towards to develop community cohesion in the Iban community in Malaysia.

3.1.2. Specific objective

i) To know the demographic and socioeconomic profile of the Iban community;

ii) To explore the leadership quality of the Iban community according to the leadership traits, leadership style, leadership behaviour, situational leadership, and transformational leadership;

iii) To measure the community cohesion according to the sense of belonging, social alienation, social support, rootedness, social solidarity, and social ties.

3.2. Research methods

3.2.1. Research approach and research method

This study used a quantitative approach, where a survey design was carried out to conduct this study. This design generally provided the characteristics and quality of leadership and social cohesion of the Iban community. Here, leadership quality aspects are categorized as independent variables, while social cohesion variables are categorized as dependent variables tested based on the impact of these leadership qualities. The study employed the correlation statistical tool which determined the relationship between these variables.

3.2.2. Study location, population and sampling

This study was conducted in Pakan District of the Sarawak Sarikei Division. The Sarikei Division consists of four main districts namely Sarikei District, Meradong District, Julau District and Pakan District. Based on the last Preliminary Count Report in 2010, the total number of population in Sarikei was 54,992. The composition of the Iban population in the city of Sarikei is 18, 559, Meradong 27, 676, Julau 15, 419, and Pakan consist of 15, 480 people. The Pakan district was chosen as the location of the study because of its population density factor consisting of Iban. Based on the source of census population in 2010, a total of 14, 423 people in the Pakan District are Ibanians. The people of this district are still practicing the traditional Iban community life pattern. Based on these homogenous factors and characteristics, the Pakan District is best suited for this study.

This study applied a multi-stage sampling procedure. First, selected the Pakan District for the study. Secondly, considered six main longhouse areas such as Enkamop, Wak, Pedanum, UluJulau, Lemunjan, and Entabai. and then three areas such as Wak Area, Lemujan/Entabai Street Area and Entabai were randomly selected. Thirdly, selected thelonghouses from the three longhouse areas where 10% of the longhouses from the three areas were randomly selected. Total nine longhouses were selected. Fourthly, selected a total 210 household heads “tuaiilik” as respondents from nine longhouses for the study.

3.2.3. Inclusion and exclusion criteria

The study followed the following inclusion criteria to select the respondents. All other were excluded from the study.

i. head of longhouse household “tuaibilik” either male or female,

ii. (ii) living in the selected longhouse, and

iii. (iii) recognize tuairumah as a leader for the longhouse

3.2.4. Profile of the respondents

Overall, the respondents involved in this study were between 20 years and the maximum age of 80 years with an average age of 46 years (Table 1). 61% of them were males. This group was considered valiant in speech and has a strong influence on the organization in a longhouse. Men were actually functioning as head of the room for each family. While women were more than male assistants and do housework. 74% of the respondents were married and the average household size was five. 35% of the respondents did not attend school. A few of the respondents (1%) had diploma and 2% had Bachelor Degree. Due to their low level of education, they were employed as farmers (74%) with less than RM500 monthly income (77%).
Table 1. Respondents’ socio-demographic information.

| Socio-demographic information | N   | %   |
|-------------------------------|-----|-----|
| Age                          |     |     |
| <30 years                    | 38  | 18.1|
| 31–40 years                  | 28  | 13.3|
| 41–50 years                  | 69  | 32.9|
| 51–60 years                  | 39  | 18.6|
| ≥61 years                    | 36  | 17.1|

| Sex                           |     |     |
| Male                         | 129 | 61.4|
| Female                       | 81  | 38.6|

| Marital status               |     |     |
| Single mother or father      | 23  | 11.0|
| Married                      | 156 | 74.3|

| Family size                  |     |     |
| 2–4 people                   | 82  | 39.0|
| 5–7 people                   | 91  | 43.3|
| 8–11 people                  | 34  | 16.2|
| ≥12 people                   | 3   | 1.4|

| Education level              |     |     |
| No formal education          | 73  | 34.8|
| Primary School               | 54  | 25.7|
| Lower Secondary School/SPR/LCE | 30 | 14.3|
| Secondary School/SPM/MCE     | 35  | 16.7|
| Upper Secondary School/STPM/HSC | 11 | 5.2|
| Diploma                      | 2   | 1.0|
| Bachelor Degree              | 5   | 2.4|

| Primary occupation           |     |     |
| Farmer                       | 155 | 73.5|
| Gardeners                    | 15  | 7.1 |
| Housewife                    | 11  | 5.2 |
| Public Sectors               | 7   | 3.3 |
| Private Sectors              | 3   | 1.4 |
| Not Working                  | 20  | 9.5 |

| Income                       |     |     |
| < RM500                      | 161 | 76.7|
| RM501 - RM1000               | 40  | 19.0|
| RM1001 - RM1500              | 5   | 2.4 |
| RM1501 - RM2000              | 1   | 0.5 |
| RM2001 - RM2500              | 1   | 0.5 |
| >RM2501                      | 2   | 1.0 |

3.2.5. Data collection methods and data collection instruments

Data were collected through a face-to-face interview method. There were a number of justifications to use this method for data collection. First, the respondents’ education level was low and this face-to-face interview method was more effective to them. Secondly, this data collection method has a number of merits such as accurate screening, capture verbal and non-verbal meanings, keep focus, and capture emotions and behaviours (DeFranzo, 2014). All of these advantages promoted to collect data efficiently. A structured interview schedule was prepared for this data collection procedure.

3.2.6. Ethical approval

The researchers used the research ethics provided by the University of Malaya Research Ethics Committee (UMREC). The researchers submitted an application in a prescribed form with the research proposal and other relevant documents to the UMREC. The committee undertakes ethics review of all research involving human participants and approved this research.

3.2.7. Data analysis techniques

The data obtained from the distribution of questionnaire were analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, version 22.0). To ensure the reality and validity of the study, the pilot test and the Cronbach Alpha test were used. Based on pilot study, Alpha Cronbach values for each element as follows; community cohesion = 0.867, leadership characteristics = 0.823, leadership style = 0.896, leadership behaviour = 0.789, situation leadership = 0.932, and transformational leadership = 0.947. In order to facilitate the data analysis, procedures frequencies, product-moment correlation and multiple regression were employed.

4. Results

4.1. Correlation analysis

Percorrelation product-moment correlation were employed to determine the relationship between leadership quality element (independent variable) and community cohesion among the Iban community (dependent variable). Five leadership quality (independent variables) were included in the following correlation analysis. The former comprised: leadership traits, leadership style, leadership behaviour, situational leadership and transformational leadership. While the dependent variable is community cohesion among Iban community. Table 2 presents the correlation analysis.

Data showed that the correlation coefficients (r) for the five leadership quality variables were highly significant. These observations indicated that positive relationships existed between five variables and community cohesion among Iban community. An analysis of leadership quality influence to community cohesion level was also done by using Multiple Linear Regression Analysis using ‘enter’ method. Table 3 presents the multiple linear regression tests between leadership qualities (independent variables) with levels of community cohesion (dependent variable). The results of multiple linear regression tests against the five independent variables analyzed are leadership qualities (leaders’ characteristics, leadership styles, leadership behaviors, leadership situations and transformational leadership). The five leadership qualities are significant in contributing to the formation of community cohesion in the Iban community in the longhouse.

The findings of the study show that (R) for this study is 0.64. The value of R (0.64) explains that there is a high correlation between independent variables with dependent variables. While Adjusted R² Square value analysis (0.396) shows that about 40% of variants in community cohesion can be explained together by 5 independent variables for this regression test. The results of the analysis show that leadership practice of transformation (sig 0.001), leadership style (sig 0.018), leadership behavior (sig 0.019), situation leadership (sig 0.045) and characteristic of leader (sig 0.001) significantly explaining the formation of Iban community cohesion in the longhouse. The study found that the transformational leadership factor (sig 0.001) and the characteristic of the leader (sig 0.001) were strong factors in contributing to the community cohesion of the Iban community. This finding illustrates that the level of community cohesion is increasing as Tuai Rumah has the practice of transfiguration leadership in his government. Hence, the quality of the Tuai Rumah regarding individual consideration, motivation and inspiration, the ability of intellectual simulations and showing superior influence to longhouse residents will have a high tendency in the formation of community cohesion of the Iban community. Meanwhile, Tuai Rumah which has the characteristics of leaders such as skilled and taboo and customary, educated, caring, responsible, honest and having a stable economic background will give the advantage to increase its influence among the communities in longhouses.
Table 2. Correlations between leadership quality variables and community cohesion among Iban community.

| Leadership quality variables       | Correlation coefficient (r) |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Leadership traits                 | 0.506***                   |
| Leadership style                  | 0.477**                    |
| Leadership behaviour              | 0.465***                   |
| Situational leadership            | 0.431**                    |
| Transformational leadership       | 0.590**                    |

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

5. Discussion

The objective of this study was to determine the influence leadership quality toward the community cohesion in the Iban longhouse. Based on a quantitative analysis, the study found that all elements of the leadership qualities such as leadership characteristics, behavior, styles, situation and transformational have relationship and contributing factor to the formation community cohesion in the longhouse of the Iban community in Malaysia. The article contributed a dynamic and multi-dimensional understanding of how the leadership quality influential were shaping within the community cohesion in the Iban community in Malaysia. The findings showed that transformational leadership variables and characteristics of leaders were two major contributors to the formation of community cohesion in the Iban community. Transformation leadership emphasized the aspect of moral values, ethics and leaders’ insights in influencing and transforming individuals, organizations and communities (Lussier and Achua, 2009). According to Avolio et al. (2009), transformational leadership is a behavior that transform and inspire followers to perform beyond expectations while transcending self-interest for the good of organization. Therefore, leadership in transformation requires that a leader have characteristics idealized influence, individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation and inspirational motivation.

Idealized influences owned by TuaiRumah can be seen through their personality that shows a high commitment to things related to community life, easy to approach the population, can make judgments in decision making, mutual values, gain people's confidence and selflessness. This is in line with the assertion that the Iban people served the collective interest of the group. In addition, the superior influence of TuaiRumah also shows that they have their own charisma in leading the longhouse residents. This is in line with the assertion made by Bass & Riggio (2006). They said that transformational leadership has much in common with charismatic leadership, but charisma is only part of transformational leadership. The shared values here refer to the living space that exists between leaders and members of the community. This situation can explain that the Iban community adopts an egalitarian way of life as the Iban community has the rights of equality and served the collective interest of the group.

Individualized consideration is a factor that describes the role of the leader as a mentor to his followers. It is the attitude that a leader must possess by giving an example of high ethical behavior, being pride, and adding one's trust and respect. This leader also has the characteristic charisma of a leader who seeks to develop a great symbolic power to influence his followers (Lussier and Achua, 2009). On the other hand, TuaiRumah Leadership with good inspirational motivation was successful in contributing to the longhouse community's readiness to work continuously and optimist about their future. Leadership with inspirational motivation is a leader capable of attracting and empowering his followers.

The second element of leadership qualities influencing the community cohesion in the Iban community in the longhouse is the character of the leader itself. These leadership features are also seen as an important factor in the TuaiRumah’s social resources and influence over the Iban community in the longhouse. Even according to Brown & Nylander (1998), the role of leadership personalities may be very crucial in the early stages of community leadership formation. Findings showed that TuaiRumah in this Iban community mostly have a stable economic background. The study also found experienced leaders as well as characteristics that influenced the leadership aspects of the longhouse community. The vast experience of a TuaiRumah has been found to help a lot in strengthening its leadership credibility. Among other features owned by the TuaiRumah are such as caring, responsible and honest.

6. Conclusion

Based on a quantitative research approach, this study explored the leadership quality based on leadership traits, leadership style, leadership behaviour, situational leadership, and transformational leadership; while the community cohesion was measured by a sense of belonging, social alienation, social support, rootedness, social solidarity, and social ties. This study acknowledged the limitations of the study that data were collected fully depend on quantitative approach that would facilitate the triangulation. A further study can be suggested that could captured many qualitative aspects about the leadership and community cohesion in the Iban community. Results showed that the quality of traditional leadership has a very significant relationship with the formation of community cohesion. This explains the increasingly high quality of the Leadership of the House, the higher the community cohesion that exists in the community.

The importance of the traditional leadership of TuaiRumah is seen bringing a new dimension in the field of community development. This study has emphasized the quality of traditional TuaiRumah leadership to shape community cohesion in the Iban community. The importance of leadership in the Iban community is not something new in the world of scientific research and has acquired a wide range of critical views from local researchers or outside researcher. Early institutional leadership in Iban society can be seen clearly in the longhouse social organization ‘TuaiRumah’. The Iban community also has various other ‘Tuai’ titles such as ‘TuaiKayau’, ‘TuaiSabong’, and ‘TuaiBurong’. According to the findings of this study, to improve the quality of traditional leadership should be given special attention to future research. The importance of improving the quality of leadership in the Iban community also has a positive impact on the development of rural communities.

The findings of this study has a greater policy implication. Malaysia is a multi-racial country. At the policy level, the government acknowledges that national unity would not be possible without a greater equity and balance among Malaysia’s social and ethnic groups (Tenth Malaysia Plan, 2011–2015). Cohesion and social unity are important elements in maintaining the security of the country and the well-being of its people. There are various factors that can contribute to the promotion of community cohesion among the people. Based on this study, it is found that the community leadership factor is an important element that needs to be taken into account in enhancing cohesion and unity in society. Therefore, policymakers need to be aware of the need to involve community leaders in planning and implementing programs related to national unity.

The result from this study also helped to reveal that the success of the community cohesion programme was not depended solely on how much

Table 3. Multiple regression of independent variable on community cohesion.

| Independent variables       | Standardized Coefficients | Sig. T |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|-------|
|                            | Beta (β)                   |       |
| Leadership traits          | .270                       | .001  |
| Leadership style           | .199                       | .018  |
| Leadership behaviour       | -.251                      | .019  |
| Situational leadership     | .145                       | .045  |
| Transformational leadership| .397                       | .001  |

R = .641*, Adjusted R² = .396, F = 28.430, Sig. F = .000.
money, skills and efforts that were allocated, but most important was to exist a strong and clear connections and linkages between effective leaders and other existing factors in the community. In general, community-level leaders are either officially or unofficially selected by the authorities. The findings exposed that all of the elements of leadership qualities, which are the characteristics of leaders, leadership behaviors, leadership styles, situation leadership and transformational leadership contributed to community cohesion in the Iban community. Therefore, the party responsible for appointing community leaders should ensure that those who are appointed have the characteristics of a quality leader, good behavior, and acceptable style of society and practice transformational leadership.

Declarations

Author contribution statement

M. Rezaul Islam: Performed the experiments; Analyzed and interpreted the data; Contributed reagents, materials, analysis tools or data; Wrote the paper.
Haris Abd Wahab: Conceived and designed the experiments; Wrote the paper.
Laying Anggun: Conceived and designed the experiments; Performed the experiments.

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Competing interest statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Additional information

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