

THE DEVELOPMENT OF TRANSFORMATIONAL
LEADERSHIP AMONGST THE IBAN COMMUNITY
LEADERS IN THE THREE RESETTLEMENT AREAS IN
KANOWIT DISTRICT, SARAWAK.

WARREN ARIS / ARIS AK. ALAP



Fakulti Sains Kognitif Dan Pembangunan Manusia
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SARAWAK
1998



ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of this study was to explore the emergence of Transformational Leadership amongst the Iban community leaders in the three Resettlement Areas in Kanowit District. The respondents were comprised of 57 Community Leaders from the study areas. The demographic characteristics chosen for the purpose of this study were: gender, age, number of years attended school, level of education, income, position, experience as leaders, previous leadership position, how they become leaders, institutionalised visit, official visit, and number of family members working as government servants as independent variables. In addition, their expected and actual roles were also taken into account as independent variable. The four characteristics of Transformational Leadership: Individualised Consideration, Inspiration Motivation, Intellectual Stimulation and Idealised Influenced were chosen as dependent variables. The data was statistically analysed using SPSS version 6.01.

The findings of this study indicate that there were low to moderate levels Transformational Leadership Characteristics amongst the community leaders in the three resettlement areas. Pearson's Correlation Coefficient 'r' revealed that there was no significant correlation between all the independent variables and the dependent variables, except for the level of education and Intellectual Stimulation.

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1

1.0 Introduction

This is a research study on the development of the transformational leadership amongst the Iban community leaders in three identified resettlement areas in the Kanowit District, Sibul Division, Sarawak. The primary purpose of the study was to explore the emergence of transformational leadership characteristics amongst the Iban community leaders in three resettlement areas in Kanowit District, Sibul, Sarawak. The three resettlement areas are : Operation Bebatang Nanga Operation Tada, Bebatang Nanga Ngungun and Operation Bebatang Nanga Jagau.

1.1 Background of the three Resettlement Areas

In 1972, the communist terrorist threat in Sarawak was a grave concern. The communist terrorists carried out their subversive activities rampantly along the Rejang basin, particularly in the then Third Division of Sarawak. The militant Communist Terrorists committed acts of atrocities and intimidation on innocent civilians suspected of working for security forces. The worsening security situation compelled the Government to declare the then Third Division a "Special Security Area". This led to the formation of Rejang Area Security Command (RASCOC) on March 26, 1972.¹

¹ Souvenir Magazine RASCOC, 1980.

This was to ensure that the Government machinery was fully geared and mobilised towards the objective of maintaining public security and safety. As a result of the wanton murder of the late Penghulu Imban of Rh. Balang, Ulu Oya, on 26.1.71 by the communist terrorist, more and more people of the longhouses in the area felt insecure.² Similar fears were experienced by the people of Sg. Kabah and people of Sg. Ngemah. After many meeting the then community leaders of Sg. Kabah and Sg. Ngemah jointly requested for protection from the government. In late 1972, RASCOM initiated Resettlement Exercises in three areas at Ng. Tada, Ng. Ngungun and Ng. Jagau. The Resettlement process was called "Operation Bebatak": The code-name "Bebatak" in Iban literally means "to pull together". This regrouping was done on a voluntary basis and came into being following the threat and intimidation by communist terrorists. The people in Sg. Kabah abandoned their longhouses to seek refuge near the Area Security Unit post at Ng. Tada. Similarly, the people in Sg. Ngemah flocked to Ng. Ngungun and Ng. Jagau. The government had to come to their immediate aid in the provision of materials for temporary longhouses and welfare assistance.

A long term plan for the resettlement of people in these three areas was finalised and approved. In each of the three locations a Civic Action Group or CAG Team was set up comprising of the following staff and under the direct charge of a Co-ordinator:-

1. CAG Leader (Civic Action Group Leader)
2. Agricultural Assistant
3. Junior Agricultural Assistant

² Souvenir Magazine RASCOM Ke-8, 1980.

4. Co-operative Assistant
5. Medical Auxillary
6. Visiting Health Personnel
7. Home Demonstrator
8. Extension Assistant

The roles of the Civic Action Group Team (CAG Team) are as follows:

- Renting land for settlers to farm.
- Supplying settlers with fertilisers and combating any outbreak of diseases in their padi farms.
- Supervising and advising settlers in the re-cultivation and planting of pepper and vegetables.
- Maintaining fishponds.
- Maintaining the general sanitation and health.
- Providing medical attention.
- Keeping settlers informed of the policy, development and working of the Government machinery.
- Distributing welfare relief assistance to supplement the need of the settlers.
- Assisting settlers in the management of the Co-operative Society.

Regrouping and resettlement involved the physical transplantation of the rural population from scattered areas onto a large community thus necessitating the provision of infrastructures, amenities and facilities apart from the main issue of security. As the general security situation improved greater efforts were devoted to helping the settlers in the Schemes to be economically viable.