

Organizational Behaviour Module (BM-5102)

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CONTENTS

- I. Before Experience**

- II. During Experience**

- III. After Experience**

I. Before experience

My reflective report in Organizational Behavior class focuses on the group case analysis work. Originally, our group was short of members which only consisted of two members including me, and then our group merged with other group members who had a different case study topic. We chose other topics since we have four number of group members. However, one of our group members left the master course and then we only had the number of three people. Therefore, our group determined to choose the topic, “Brunei perspectives on culture and leadership: A case of Public Sector Organizations”. The reason to have chosen that topic was that Brunei public sector takes an importance position in overall Brunei society and many of the Bruneian people are working in the public sector. Hence, we would like to know about the culture and leadership style of the Brunei public sector, and it was also an interesting topic and great chance for me to know more about the Brunei public sector, since future goal is to become an administrative officer in the Korean government. I believed that this case study research would give me a chance to compare the governmental differences in the public sector between two countries and know the working stance of the Brunei public sector workers. Honestly, Since I am a foreigner student from Korea, I was a bit worried whether I could deal with this topic well even though I would do the research with my Bruneian colleagues. Also, I swore myself that I would not be a free rider and do my all the best to draw out the great result from the research though I am a foreigner student.

II. During experience

First, we started to do literature review to find any research gap or interesting topics to deal with. There were some articles dealing with the culture and leadership of the Brunei public sector in terms of the MIB affecting the culture and leadership in the public organization. For

me, I needed to understand what the MIB means first and read the articles. It was somehow not that much easy to understand readings at first since I had to understand the basic native culture with Malay and Islamic culture, but after reading related articles several times, it was getting better and better to understand than before. After finishing the literature review, our group decided to set the project goal to get to know about the general culture and leadership style of the Brunei public sector with more specific topics such as the timeliness of attendance of personnel and nepotism. The specific topics like the timeliness of attendance of personnel and nepotism were drawn out from the articles like *Public administration in Brunei Darussalam* written by Dr. Sainah Saim in 2000. For these specific topics, our group thought at first that those topics might be sensitive to deal with, but we decided that since those are one of the cultures of the Brunei public sector, it is worthwhile to deal with them.

After deciding the topic and literature review, we needed to think how we proceed our case study research. The questionnaire and semi-structured interview ways were suggested for the research method. It was for both quantitative and qualitative method through each for questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. I suggested to use the semi-structured interview way to get to know the general culture and leadership culture with specific topics including the timeliness of attendance of personnel. Other two group members agreed with my suggestion, and they decided to make questionnaire questions by demographic, GLOBE dimension method and leadership style. We put our best efforts to draw out the best result and answers from our expected public sector respondents. After making the questionnaire and interview questions, our group members put a lot of effort into finding the interviewees. We contacted to many ministries and departments to collect as much as samples and interviewees for our research. Also, other two Bruneian members contacted their acquaintances who are working in the public sector, but the number of their acquaintances in the public sector was so low and all of them denied to become the sample of our research since they worried about their identities though we told them we guarantee the confidentiality. I also asked for helps to my Bruneian colleagues whether they know or have any family members or acquaintances near them working in the public sector. However, unfortunately, even though we tried our best to find our respondents and interviewees, we could not find any of them.

As the expected deadline of the data collection got near, I was quite nervous since our group could not find any respondents or interviewees so far. About maybe 4 days left before the tentative deadline of data collection, I determined to directly request a help to a person in the division 1 in the public sector. I got to know him personally since I could have a chance to have a dinner with him introduced by my Korean friend in Brunei. Fortunately, I could have one more chance to meet him at that time. I politely asked for a help to him explaining our urgent situation and difficulty to find research respondents and interviewees in detail. He understood our situation and willingly accepted my proposal to do a group research in his department. I was so much thankful to his permission to do a research. He also introduced me the woman in his office who has the doctoral degree. She contacted me to come to her office to talk about the research. Since I do not have a car in Brunei, I asked for a help to my group member to drive me to her office. Azzy, one of my group members fetched me up and drove me to her office. She revised and gave a feedback to our group questionnaire and interview questions which were needed to be changed to make a better research since she also had experience how to do research when she was in the doctorate degree. Following her advice and feedback, our group

changed our questions and visited the department with making an appointment. Two days later, our group visited the department in the morning and there were many respondents from division 1 to 5 in the designated office. The department manager arranged the timetable and interview places for us to do research. First, we introduced ourselves and our research in front of people and then shared the questionnaire papers first. After collecting the questionnaire papers, our group members went to designated separate rooms to do interviews. Each of us interviewed the public sector employees from division 1 to 5. The interview started from the morning and ended almost 4pm at the first day.

Interviewing people from diverse divisions was so much interesting to me because every single interviewee had different views and thoughts based on their divisions and working atmospheres. I could know that the positions where interviewees work affect their minds and attitudes in their works. There were other interesting points I found during the interview. Before interview, I guessed that the higher the divisions, the more conservative about the culture or leadership in the organization. However, my expectation was a bit wrong. When I interviewed with the interviewees in the division 1 and 2, they mentioned an importance on the open-minded attitude and trying to listen to lower division people. Especially, the answer from one of the interviewees in division 1 impressed me. That interviewee told me that the person should be assessed based on his merit not other things including nepotism and cronyism like that and the Brunei public sector has been getting changed for example, a person in 40s becoming a ministry. Also, it was a quite obvious that interviewees in the young generations of the age of 20s or 30s moved to the public sector even though they had gotten a job and worked for a few years in the private sector, since they aspired to have a kind of prestigious and stable job in the public sector as mentioned by Musa, S. F., and Idris, D. S (2020). For the questions for timeliness of attendance of personnel, we expected that the public sector workers would be impossible to do extra overtime work to compensate their absent hours or tend not to compensate the missing time according to the literature review of writing by Sainah Saim (2000). However, following the expectancy theory of the employee motivation theories, the workers tried to compensate the missing times from their Islamic faith, 'Amanah' which imposes the meaning that they have to do their own work since it is current duties to be accomplished. Also, like a Maslow's need hierarchy theory, the workers tried to compensate missing times because they can get more money if they fulfill the time. Those two employee motivation theories are dealt in Sunil Ramlall (2004) article that expectancy theory exerts people are motivated to behave in ways that produce desired combinations of expected outcomes and Maslow's need hierarchy theory holds that after the basic needs are satisfied, the next step needs are concerned. Since the interview was a semi-structured way, our group could get the candid and honest answers for the general culture and leadership style in the public sector with specific topics including the timeliness of attendance of personnel and nepotism. With promising the confidentiality and anonymity, our group tried to catch and know the candid opinions of our interviewees. It was my first interview experience in my life and from the beginning of making the questions to the end of the interview, I could learn how the questions should be made such as not to be biased and how the interviewers have to do to make the interviewees feel free during the interview time.

After collecting the research data for a few days since there were some missing interviewees who could not participate in the first day, our group started to do a data analysis. Each of us

divided works into their own positions. I took the position analyzing the interview answers from our interviewees. First, I reviewed all the answers and simplified them by making a table to see clearly in terms of how they responded. Other members, Azzy and Nizzy analyzed the questionnaire for the questions of demographics, GLOBE and leadership. Both of them contributed a lot to make a quantitative data more visibly. Azzy, she counted every single answer to make sure there would be no errors for the data research. Nizzy contributed his abilities for data analysis by using the computer programming to draw out the p-value or any related numbering values to show whether the result of our research is significant to be believed or concerned. Combining each of our analysis, we made a teaching note and submitted to the Canvas. After that, we started to make the final paper for our group research. Following the indicative form of the paper, we put the contents of our research results. Each of us took in charge of different parts of the writing. I took the part of summarizing the interview parts. After everyone finished their parts, we proofread all of the writing and gave the feedback to each of us about which parts need to be improved or deleted for the better completion. All of us tried to contribute as much as we could do. The completed form of the final report was quite successful considering our past difficulty to conduct our research. We cheered up each other during the time of writings and helped each other to make a better report.

III. Completion of experience

In my point of view, the outcome of the research has both the successes and failures by reviewing the research. For the successes, I can say our group completed our research at the end without any quarrels or disputes among the group members. But we dared to share each one of member's honest opinions and ideas to make a better research process. Even though there was a truly difficulty to find an appropriate research samples or interviewees for our research, we could make it done with cooperation. For example, even though I am a foreigner from Korea, I tried to find the interviewees until the end of tentative data collection date, and when I asked for an urgent help to drive me to the government department to meet our expected interviewees since I do not have a car, my group members drove me there although they had a work to do. Without cooperation and dedication for the group research from each member, it might have been impossible to complete our research.

Second successful one, I can mention that each of us could improve the research methodology processes through the course. It can be what we learned from the course or through the research. During my bachelor's degree, I have never experienced to do my own or our own research from constructing the process to doing the analysis to make a conclusion for what we find. Thanks to this group research, I could at least make myself get accustomed to how the research process should be made or constructed to draw our what I want to get from the research.

Third one is, each one of our group members showed their own leadership and contribute their own abilities for the group research. To make a research to proceed, no one should not be hidden behind others like a free-rider or only waited for others' opinions. At this point,

leadership is important to make it progressed. For example, Azzy as the oldest member in our group, she organized and led group members with the soft and charismatic leaderships depending on the situation. She led us for overall group work how to share the works among us considering strong points of each one of us. Also, when every member was busy for doing other urgent assignments or could not share time, she voluntarily helped us and shared her time for our group work in the head of our group. Nizzy, the other group member, he showed a strong leadership when we prepared a quantitative data collection. Based on his knowledge on mathematics and computer science, he stood at the front of us to lead how the questionnaire formats should be like to make a better result and helped us understood the statistical results of our group research since we had a difficulty to understand the meaning of the result. His knowledges on mathematics and computer science really helped us a lot. Lastly, I can say that I did a leadership when our group needed an urgent help and arranged the appointment with our interviewees. I did not want to be a free-rider or hide behind my group members as a reason for a foreigner. I wanted to contribute anyhow for my group. Therefore, when our group had a difficulty to find a interviewee, I directly contacted to the division 1 person to ask for a help and visited the department to arrange the appointment to do our research. The manager in the department was honestly impressed by my request to do a research in the department. We have learned the concepts of the leadership during the lecture and what the leaders should be for their group work. Our group members had their different types of leadership style but it was beneficial to our group works.

On the other hand, we also had a few things which need to be improved next time. The first one is growing activeness and aggressiveness to find interviewees or respondents for the research. To find the interviewees or respondents in the government department, our group members including me asked their family members, relatives or friends whether they know or have any person working in the public sector and sent e-mails to departments whether we could do our research at their offices. However, it was somewhat very naïve way to get the chance to do research. We should have visited directly to the service desks in the department whether we could get any help from them. Since our group thought sending emails is only acceptable and official way to get the chance of doing research, we could not have any appropriate chance to do our research. Our group members through this research recognized that sometimes activeness and aggressiveness are needed to do for our jobs to do. If we did more actively as we got the chance to do research, we might have gotten more research interviewees and respondents for our research samples and made a more significant result.

Second, we should have met more in a real face to face to make a better research. It is true that each of our member live far from each other and had an individual issues to deal with. Therefore, we could not meet many times in a real to talk about our research. We usually communicated on the messenger apps. It might be okay to communicate through the messenger, but there still exists a quality gap between meeting in a real and through the messenger. Since we almost talked through the messenger, we sometimes had miscommunication about our research. For example, we sent two final papers by Nizzy and I. It should not have happened again. Also, the process of the research would be much faster if we had communicated in a real. There must be pros and cons of talking through the app, but through this research, I learned that face to face meeting is needed for better communication directly.

Thirdly, our group should have made a more constructed and specific topic for what we wanted to research. We started our research with a bit abstract viewpoint. Therefore, during the process we had some distractions for what we really wanted to get from our research. For example, what kind of specific interview topics we would add to the interview questions was the one of the things that we were distracted. Fortunately, after sharing the opinions among the members, we could overcome the distraction, but it somehow needed to be better. Since our case topic was wide, the perspectives on culture and leadership on the Brunei public sector, we tended to have a much wider topics which made us more abstract. From next time, we need to specify from the starting point to choose what we are going to search deeply.

Through the research process, I could know some of my personal strengths and weaknesses. For the strengths, I knew that I am somewhat good at talking with the strangers and helping them be comfortable when I was interviewing others. When I was in military service in Korea, I took the position as counselling newbies to the military. I really liked to listen to their thoughts, draw their opinions and help them to adapt to the military. From that time, I recognized that I am good at talking with strangers. This communication strength helped me make a better communication with interviewees for our research and draw out candid answers from our interviewees. Second strength is not giving up until the end. We were almost depressed and desperate since we could not find the appropriate interviewees for our research. However, I never gave up searching for the interviewees and finally could get the chance to conduct the research. I always believe myself that I can do unless I give up. It was also lucky to me to know a helper from the division 1, but also it was possible to get a chance to do since I did not give up. Lastly, I was good at time management. I always thought about the due date for submission and tried to make a plan to make it possible to submit on time. Therefore, by scheduling the time, I could make it much easier and be helpful to my group works.

The weakness that I found was the need for improving the academic writing skills. Through the research, I recognized that academic writing skills are the foremost important and required things with other research methodologies. Compared to professional papers, my writing needs to be improved to be more like academic and scholastic to become at least similar with those papers. Since I have been studied in Korea where English study is more focused on reading and listening for the university entrance, I did not have many chances to study academic English writings. During the master's degree, I promise to improve my academic writing skills to make a better paper.

Based on my experience from the group research, I determine several things I will do differently next time. First one is that as mentioned above, I will specify the topic to make the research much easier and productive after finding the research gap. From this group research experience, I could learn the importance of the specifically defined topic. Without this, every single point of the research can be distracted, and the result of the research would not be that much good as we expect from the first time. Second, I would be more active than this time. I can say that I also did actively for this research, but I was a bit naïve. If I need a help to do a research, I will directly contact to the designated office or person to get a help. Third, after getting more insights and improving the academic writing skills, I will try to write much better improved academic writings next time.

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