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LEADERSHIP COMMUNICATION PRACTICES OF A SUCCESSFUL FEMALE FASHION ICON: BELLE AL-YAHYA FROM BELLA AMMARA SDN. BHD

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This case was written by Joyce Cheah Lynn-Sze, Universiti Utara Malaysia. It is intended to be used as the basis for class discussion rather than to illustrate either effective or ineffective handling of a management situation.

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Introduction

The growing interest and the rise of modest fashion have redesigned the fashion trend. Muslim designers and social media influencers have decided to fill the gaps that they have spotted in the market, using their platform to gain influence and set up online stores. Sharifah Nabilla Al-Yahya Syed Sheh, or better known for her glamorous name Belle Al-Yahya, the founder of Bella Ammara Sdn. Bhd. was able to develop and ran Bella Ammara brand, had become a well-established brand among Muslim fashion fans in Malaysia. At the age of 34, she had already owned a business empire with seven boutiques across the country just after eight years of operation. A great achievement and such an inspiring role model to anyone who dreams to become entrepreneurs like her.

Amidst the presence of more established local competitors like Naelofar Hijab, dUCk Scarves and Sugarscarf in the Malaysian market, Bella Ammara has achieved fairly well. Bella Ammara has become one of the leading brands for the hijab industry in Malaysia with the aim of bringing the latest fashion trends to the doorstep. Bella Ammara uniqueness was due to providing a variety of online products under one roof. Her customers were not just mainly in Malaysia but also from Singapore, Brunei and Indonesia. The strength of the fashion brand's goods was due to the personal touch of Belle who designed the hijabs. She incorporated her architectural experience into every design of robes and brackets to create something new and fresh. As a result, the combination of these ideas has made each of the designs looks elegant and stylish.

The focus of the case study was to examine Belle's leadership communication. This was because she learned to manage the business since she became the founder of Bella Ammara. Graduated in architecture, but it was fashion that she was passionate about and inspired her to venture into the fashion industry. A woman with exceptional communication skills and determination, Belle knew how to connect with people. As a fashion icon and also a lady boss, she was highly admired by her fans, followers and her subordinates, thanks to her ability to communicate respectfully, in a way that people could relate to, and understand.

Early Life

Belle Al-Yahya, the second child from six siblings, was born in 20 December 1986. She was famous for being a fashion designer who founded the Muslimah-inspired fashion label, Bella Ammara. She was synonymous with women of high moral character and attractive personality.

This figure was often seen on her Instagram, Facebook and official website wearing Bella Ammara fashion brands. She was beautiful with a smooth and fair-skinned, gentle-eyed, and with *tudung* exactly like Arab women. No wonder as she has mixed Arabian blood thanks to her grandmother.

She attended Sekolah Kebangsaan Taman Keramat and Sekolah Menengah Seri Keramat for her secondary school. To be honest, Belle had pursued an education in architecture at Universiti Teknologi Malaysia.

She continued to expand her business because she likes being her own boss. That is why people dubbed her as 'Lady Boss'. Do not be too alarmed by the nickname. Based on her employees' feedback, Belle was as humble a person can be. She was not bossy at all.

The sweet girl admitted that she had being working so hard to be what she is today. Effortless efforts were made without knowing the meaning of despair to be the secret of her success. All the hardships were shared with her husband who has been her greatest pillar for so long. In fact, they had

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