Issues in Leadership

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Abstract

Leadership interfaces with all facets of human existence. It influences all aspects of human existence from social, psychological and physical realities. The issue of leadership does not only extend to all facets of human physical existence, but it also extends to man's spirituality started many centuries ago. *On reading* Blanchard's book (2007), I have summarized who is a leader. Aleader is a person who 1) ignites, 2) motivates, 3) empowers, 4) plans, 5) comes with the foresight, 6) sets a roadmap for his/her followers, and 7) is willing to change his/her perspective in keeping with current conditions to obtain the required vision (or dream or outcome). Historically, people who have risen to the level of effective and/or heroic leaders have a similar characteristic, foresight. From Sam Sharpe, Paul Bogle, Nanny of the Maroon, Michael Manley, Bustamante, Norman Manley, Dr Martin Luther King, Jr., Barack Obama, Marcus Garvey, Nelson Mandela, Fidel Castrol, Ronald Reagan, Rex Nettleford, Margaret Thatcher, Lee Kuan Yew, Angela Merkel, Alan Mulally, Bill Clinton, Dalai Lama, Kim Jong-Eun, Adolf Hitler, Abraham Lincoln, Vladimir Putin, John F. Kennedy, Theodore D. Roosevelt, to Malcolm X all have one thing in common, foresight or a vision.

Keywords: Effective leader, Leader, leadership, leadership effectiveness.

Introduction

The leadership discourse had its genesis long before humans began documenting information on tablets, scrolls, walls, or any other material for preservation. The issue of leadership began with Yahweh, the Almighty God of the Jews, making man, Adam, and giving him dominion over all things. In Genesis 1 verse 28 the Bible says, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground." This was the instruction of Yahweh to the first man, Adam. It can be deduced from the aforementioned instruction of Yahweh, that humans were created to lead his other creation and provide guidance to those things below the heavens. The matter of leadership, therefore, began long before what we now know in the written literature. A question that arises here is whether Adam was a manager or a leader, and this commences the discourse of the former and the latter that has continued to this day. This paper, a synthesis of the course Issues in

Leadership Research, takes the discourse of leadership from long ago to the current provides information from empirical perspectives and charts a path for further work.

Leadership

Interestingly, leadership interfaces with all facets of human existence. It influences all aspects of human existence from social, psychological and physical realities. The issue of leadership does not only extend to all facets of human physical existence, but it also extends to man's spirituality which started many centuries ago. Stone and Patterson (2005) opined that

Leadership, and the study of it, has roots in the beginning of civilization. Egyptian rulers, Greek heroes, and biblical patriarchs all have one thing in common-leadership. There are numerous definitions and theories of leadership; however, there are enough similarities in the definitions to conclude that leadership is an effort to influence and the power to induce compliance (Wren, 1995). Our work, work environment, motivation to work, leaders, leadership, leadership style, and a myriad of other work-related variables have been studied for almost two centuries (p. 1).

Based on the perspective forwarded by Stone and Patterson (2005), the matter of leadership rose from the bowels of civilization and interfered with all tenets of man's milieu. Although their proposition is extensive and covers just about everything, nowhere in their general writing did they include/discuss leadership from the perspective of man and spirituality. Another limitation of Stone and Patterson's perspective is that leadership dates back to civilization. I am not in agreement with such a perspective as the English word 'civilization' is associated with 16th-century French 'civilise' (Sullivan, 2009), which comes from 'civilized conditions' and matter that came from the 1760s out of France (Adams, 1966, Haviland, 2013, Wright, 2004, Llobera, 2003, Fernandez-Armesto, 2001, Boyden, 2004, Solms-Laubach, 2007).

Simply put, civilization is the culture of a society and not merely the society itself. As such the matter of leadership beginning from civilization can be extrapolated to first man, his family and the function of that first society and/or culture. Yet, there is no consensus on an accepted definition of the terminology. Surprisingly, the discourse on leadership is not expensively embedded in spirituality as this phenomenon is critical to the functioning of all cultures, particularly in Stone and Patterson's writing; but the matter was brought into the course by Andrews University, Greenleaf, Shumaker and others. It means that this course in examining leadership brought in all tenets of man's culture including spirituality, which takes the discussion from history to definition and other areas.

History of leadership

According to Stone and Patterson (2005):

One major contributor to this era of management and leadership theory was Max Weber, a German sociologist who "observed the parallels between the mechanization of industry and the proliferation of bureaucratic forms of organization" (Morgan, 1997, p. 17). He noted that the bureaucratic form routinized the process of administration in the same manner that the machine routinized production" (pp. 1 & 2)

Although Stone and Patterson were writing on the matter of early studies in leadership, the matter was on management and not leadership; but this offers a position on the evolution of leadership. It can be deduced from their writings, that early studies on management and leadership were primarily concerned about management from works in the areas of 'Classical Management Theory and Scientific Management' -Frederick Taylor, Hawthorne, Maslow, and Herzberg. The readings and writings on classical management theory and scientific management were just that management and not leadership. Since those early writings, many scholars including DuBrin, Winston and Patterson, Sheridan and Smith, and Bernard Bass and/orRuth Bass have entered the discourse of leadership and forwarded that there is a disparity between management and leadership.

In addition to the emergence of leadership from management, the issue also has blossomed from traditional leadership styles to transformation and servant leadership. Like leadership styles that have expanded from what was obtained in the 1970s, the definition of the discipline has travelled and still, there is no consensus on conceptualization.

Definitions of leadership

DuBrin (2013) defined leadership "… as the ability to inspire confidence and support among the people who are needed to achieve organization goals"(p. 2). Winston and Patterson (2006), instead of defining leadership, speak of a leader as an individual who inspires, trains and influences followers into action in pursuit of organisational objectives (see also, John Hopkins School of Education, 2016), indicating that leadership is intertwined with followership and that the definition changes with the scholar. On the other hand, Andrews University (2016) instead of looking at the broad concept of leadership narrowed it to Christian leadership and opined that "… [It] is a dynamic relational process in which people, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, partner to achieve a common goal - it is serving others by leading and leading others by serving", which is in keeping with the interrelation of leadership and followers in a definition of leadership. While there are similarities among the definitions of leadership, again, there is no standardized conceptualization that is agreed upon by all scholars. The concept of people in partnership does not readily intimate leadership and followership. In collaborative endeavours, anyone may be the one responsible….In the concept of how ordinary persons perceive leadership, this is reserved for those with special unique characteristic traits or external possessions.

Bass and Bass forward that:

Leadership is an interaction between two or more members of a group that often involves a structuring or restructuring of the situation and the perceptions and expectations of the members. Leaders are agents of change, whose acts affect other people more than other people's acts affect them. Leadership occurs when one group member modifies the motivation or competencies of others in the group. Leadership can be conceived as directing the attention of other members to goals and the paths to achieve them. It should be clear that with this broad definition, any member of the group can exhibit some degree of leadership, and the members will vary in this regard (Bass and Bass, 2008, p. 25)

On reading Blanchard's book (2007), I have summarized who is a leader. A leader is a person who 1) ignites, 2) motivates, 3) empowers, 4) plans, 5) comes with the foresight, 6) sets a roadmap for his/her followers, and 7) is willing to change his/her perspective in keeping with current conditions to obtain the required vision (or dream or outcome). He contends that "It becomes clearer to me all the time that leaders today have to start being cheerleaders, supporters, and encouragers, rather than judges, critics, and evaluators" (p. 123) because "Unfortunately, it's almost impossible for people to play these new roles if they don't feel good about themselves" (p. 123). In keeping with Blanchard's and Kim's perspectives as well as Greenleaf's, there are two critical tenets of leadership 1) foresight and 2) change, which are the bedrock for effective leadership. Like Kim (2002) and Greenleaf(1977), I support the perspective that a leader, who lacks foresight and willingness to change, cannot be effective and will lead his/her people into the abyss. Hence, this paper examines the matter of foresight and change simply because there can be no effective leadership without these two elements.

Definition of leadership and leader

Ulrich (ud) opined that:

We've been on a journey for the last fifteen years to resolve leadership concept clutter by approaching leadership from a unique perspective. Most leadership authors of the last fifty years draw on the discipline of psychology- the leader must understand what is inside oneself. From fish to cheese, from habits to conversations, from self-empowerment to servitude, most leadership thinkers have struggled to distil the essence of what makes an effective leader. We appreciate this psychological tradition but believe that other disciplines like marketing and finance may inform and synthesize how we think about leaders. Simplistically, these perspectives are more outside/in than inside/out because they are based on business logic (Ulrich, ud, p. 2)

It can be deduced from Ulrich's perspective that effective leaders are servants, self-empowered; visionaries, and insightful. A critical issue that emerges from Ulrich's viewpoint is self-empowerment, which will be titled in this paper as 'effective leadership commences from the inside'. He recognized servant hood as a critical component of effective leadership and espouses that leaders who serve are always self-empowered, or simply put, are first servants who are called to leader based on a self-serving vision and are not driven to lead. According to Blanchard, Hybels, and Hodges (1999), "Leaders who are servants first will assume leadership only if they see it as the best way they can serve. They're 'called' to lead, rather than driven because they naturally want to be helpful" (p. 42). Another way that this can be expressed is that when an individual has developed an inner passion for a vision, foresight will drive the person to serve others rather than be empowered by the power of leadership or the materialism that can evolve from leadership.

Kim (2002) wrote something that summarizes the value of leadership, 'Answering the call to service', which is infrequently the capstone for some leaders. Many people who have answered the call of service such as politicians, entrepreneurs and scammers have not done so from the perspective of servant-leadership. Kim (2002) opined:

As I said at the outset, answering the call of servant-leadership is a humbling experience. I hope that each of us remembers who we are and that we will be ever vigilant in continually developing our foresight so that we stand ready and able to answer the call to be true stewards of our children's future. Answering the call will require us to ask to rediscover who we are as individuals and connect with the highest aspirations in ourselves and our organizations. Answering the call requires us to ask the deeper question "Who am I?" and answer it repeatedly until we have stripped the layers and layers of varnish we have applied over ourselves and revealed the beauty of the natural wood that is our true self (Kim, 2002, p. 20)

Kim's view of foresight was not that of vision or a mission that an individual is desirous of accomplishing in the future; but rather of 'answering the call of servitude'. He believed that merely wanting to provide a service, or accomplish a vision, goal or aim based on the organizational requirement is not 'answering the call of service'. Hence, for Kim, it is about true servitude in which the individual serves others in deed, action, thought, and intent and this is accomplished by way of servant-leadership. Servant-leadership means that the individual follows the example of Jesus Christ, where there is no self; but developing a foresight of servitude to humanity.

Foresight is simply not about servitude as is ultimately seen by Kim. He was limiting foresight to servant hood simply because of being a follower of Robert Greenleaf. What I concur with Kim, the leader is intertwined with egoism and that this is what drives many leaders instead of service. It can be deduced from Kim's and Greenleaf's works that foresight is the core of leadership and is more in keeping with self-fulfilment rather than human service. For this paper, foresight is not constricted by the Christian perspective; it is more of having a vision, believing in that vision, instituting plans to accomplish the vision, and inspiring (or motivating) others to buy into the vision. This means that the leader must first be internally motivated by his/her vision, self-determine to accomplish the vision and like Blanchard et al. opined "effective leadership starts on the inside" (p. 38), which was expressed by Daniel Kim, John Maxwell, and Stephen Covey.

Historically, people who have risen to the level of effective and/or heroic leaders have a similar characteristic, foresight. From Sam Sharpe, Paul Bogle, Nanny of the Maroon, Michael Manley, Bustamante, Norman Manley, Dr Martin Luther King, Jr., Barack Obama, Marcus Garvey, Nelson Mandela, Fidel Castrol, Ronald Reagan, Rex Nettleford, Margaret Thatcher, Lee Kuan Yew, Angela Merkel, Alan Mulally, Bill Clinton, Dalai Lama, Kim Jong-Eun, Adolf Hitler, Abraham Lincoln, Vladimir Putin, John F. Kennedy, Theodore D. Roosevelt, to Malcolm X all have one thing in common, foresight or a vision. It is this vision that was embedded in their heart that frames their choices, decisions, and foresight of the future. They were self-determined (or internally motivated by a vision line the founder of Kentucky Fried Chicken.

It should be noted that there is a difference between a vision that drives an effective leader like a cart to a carriage and his/her foresight. Foresight is previous knowledge, judgement, intuition or past experiences of future events that guide current knowledge or actions. Like Jesus of Nazareth with a vision (the saving of humans from sin), all effective leaders employ their previous knowledge, experience, futuristic plan and intuition to motivate others to accomplish a stated vision. Hence, the vision is the destination and the foresight is the roadmap that gets you to that

place. There is a consensus among leadership scholars that foresight is the core attribute of effective leadership and this was extensively argued by Kim (2002), Covey (1990, 2004a, 2004b), Maxwell (2007), and Greenleaf (1977).

For a leader to become great or immortalized into society's social consciousness, he/she must be willing to change his/her initial perspective in keeping with current realities, and foresight to accomplish the vision. Lee Kuan Yew and Nelson Mandela had a vision of making their nations great and they did so through their knowledge, intuition, past knowledge, and self-determination in keeping the reality of their vision. Outside of being willing to change attitudes, perspectives, paradigms and actions, effective leaders are pioneers as it relates to being change agents, which was articulated by Bass and Bass (2008). They are not followers like many other people; rather they are abstract conceptualizers who are 'outside of the box' people and as such their vision initially comes across as piped dreams.

Leadership and spirituality

According to Shumaker (2009)

In The Making of a Christian Leader, author Ted Engstrom says; The world needs men [and women] who cannot be bought; whose word is their bond; who put character above wealth; who possess opinions and a will; who are larger than their vocations; who do not hesitate to take chances; who will not lose their individuality in a crowd; who will be honest in small things as in great things; who will make no compromise with wrong; whose ambitions are not confined to their selfish desires, who will not say they do it "because everybody else does it"; who are true to their friends through good report and evil report, in adversity as well as prosperity; who do not believe that shrewdness, cunning and hard headedness are the best qualities for winning success; who are not ashamed or afraid to stand for the truth when it is unpopular; who say "no" with emphasis, although the rest of the world says "yes." (120)[In Shumaker, 2009, pp. 33 & 34]

On scrutiny of Schumaker's previously mentioned perspective, it is clear that the making of a leader, be it Christian or other, should be predicated upon character ethic, which was extensively examined by Stephen Covey. In this course, the matter of leadership included the area of spirituality and not religion, which was extensively reviewed by Shumaker, and Andrews University, which must be extended to Robert Greenleaf and Daniel Kim. The matter is spirituality is a part of all societies and so leadership must include the issue. The reality is, that character ethics as outlined by Stephen Covey in "7 Habits of Highly Effective People" such as honesty, trustworthiness, and kindness are just some of the issues embodied in spirituality. It is for this very reason that Schumaker wrote that society needs people who are grounded in character rather than personality ethics. This is aptly captured in the writing of Andrews University:

Spiritual leadership is grace in motion. It is living from a sanctified heart. Spirituality is the connection of a human (the branch) to the Vine (Christ) in a sanctifying relationship that empowers a leader to live a life of consecration and to do God's will on earth as it is done in heaven. Spirituality is fruit-bearing it bears the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, and self-control (Gal. 5:22-23). Spiritual leadership is not so

much something that one does. It is a thing of the heart-a state of being born again and allowing the Spirit of God to lead one's life and produce the very fruits that are found on the Vine-Jesus Christ (p. 98).

Those character ethical issues outlined by Andrews University are not merely needed for Christians as they are general attributes that guide human interactions, including in schools. Because school leaders have to socialize young minds that are coalesced from different social classes, they are called upon to utilize character ethics in the teaching-learning process, as well as impart these to the young in their care. To be effective people, school leaders like others in society are normally measured based on their effectiveness in empowering others to greatness. Allison summarizes that succinctly this way "It is clear to me that leadership—strong, bold and courageous leadership—is the key to helping all students to learn, and learn at high levels. Transformative leadership, supported by leadership for learning, have the power to ensure that all students will learn at high levels" (Allison, 2012, p. 169). In and outside of the classroom, effective leaders acquire their greatness or effectiveness by way of the character that people have come to trust and will work with. Those character ethics are captured among the 28 leadership core competencies- Integrity/Honesty; Credibility; and selflessness (i.e., Developing Others).

All leaders who are edged in social history were never like their predecessors; they were solely motivated by a vision and they serve it with humility and a singular focus. It is not surprising; therefore, that Kim (2002) brought ethics into the discourse of servant-leadership. While ethics allow for the usage of a different paradigm in decision-making and choice selection, effective leaders can be unethical, immoral, and non-religious in thinking as is the case of Kim Jong-Eun, and Adolf Hitler. It is on this message that ethics should not be associated with foresight as was discussed by Daniel Kim. The issue is, that it is easy to understand why ethics is brought into the discourse of leadership; the matter is more a social imposition than a central theme in leadership.

Effective/great leaders do not subscribe to established templates, ethical standards and traditional paradigms as these are more restrictions than formulas for greatness. As such, they are change agents as they depart from traditional culture, paradigms and ideologies. Although their foresight is guided by past experiences, knowledge, and cultural realities; they are more driven by a vision than established standards. Sometimes they depart from established ethical standards to create a platform for their vision. Jesus of Nazareth is a perfect example of someone who departed from the traditional/established culture of the day, and the establishment thought he was unethical and was creating a paradigm. It is upon this premise that I depart from Stephen Covey and Daniel Kim's inclusion of ethics in leadership. However, I concur with them that society must have some agreed ethical standard for the protection of humans from exploitation from unscrupulous people; but, that ethics is a fallacy that should not be used as a guideline or roadmap for behaviour.

Christians norm/pattern their behaviour after that of Jesus Christ. This means that change must be the central theme in effective leadership and that while foresight plays a role in choices; it is foreplay to the vision, and only sets the framework for the change agent. Leaders ought to have some moral code of conduct that guides their behaviour. These must be standards that are agreed

upon by the general populace. If that is not the case then leaders could not be charged with sexual misconduct or misappropriation of funds or the like.

Undoubtedly, highly effective people, and leaders, are change agents in many respects from 1) how they see and interpret things-their paradigms; 2) their characters-they are of high integrity, humility, modesty, simplicity, justice-oriented, patience, courage, fidelity, temperate, 3) high image of self (personality), 4) how they change their social space by being steadfast to their inner-vision, and 5) how they see the problem in their social settings. These individuals, effective leaders, recognize that they cannot solve the current problems in the social system with the same thinking, and paradigm and that a change in paradigm holds the key to addressing social ills. This is aptly argued by Stephen Covey (2004) using a statement made by Albert Einstein, the renowned Theoretical Physicist, "The significant problems we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them" (Covey, 2004, p. 42). This means that there must be a paradigm change, in thinking, before we can address social ills (or social problems) as the action that created it cannot be used to solve them. Such a reality, therefore, accounts for why all the effective leaders including Jesus of Nazareth, Marcus Garvey, Nelson Manley, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., had the position that a new paradigm must be used to solve the social challenges that were a paradigm built on love for people as equals and deserving of good).

Leadership versus management

According to Sheridan and Smith (2009)

It has been stated that the study of leadership has never been the same since 1977, when Abraham Zaleznik, a Harvard Business School professor, challenged the notion that management and leadership are not the same. Much has been published on this topic since then, most notably by John Kotter, a retired Harvard Business School professor and accomplished author who introduced a new way of thinking about management and leadership in the early 1990s that permeates the leadership literature today. Kotter suggests that while managing and leading are different, they are complementary and both are needed. He purports that most organizations, however, are "over-managed and underled."[2] While leadership is acknowledged as critical to success, organizations unintentionally undermine the effort to build leadership capacity because of their focus on management. Understanding that "management is about coping with complexity and leadership, by contrast, is about coping with change"[3] is essential to developing are silient organization and one that embodies a culture of leadership accountability throughout the organization (pp. 1 & 2)

The literature is filled with distinctions between management and leadership as well as empirical research on different areas in the field. The manager is the individual who is paid help for four important functions of management planning, organizing, leading, and controlling. The leader, on the other hand, is marked by followership. Simply put, he/she is able, by personality and character ethics, to have people follow him/her because of his/her articulated vision that has been bought into by people.

Leadership research

The literature has done extensive work on the matter of leadership, and research in the field can be classified into seven categorizations: 1) Ancient Approaches to Leadership; 2) Classical Approaches to Leadership; 3) Transactional Approaches to Leadership; 4) Transformational and Charismatic Theories; 5) Integrative Theories; 6) Miscellaneous Approaches to Leadership, and 7) Recent Developments. Among the recent developments in leadership research are 1) health and leadership, 2) gender inequality, and spirituality.

Conclusion

This course, Issues in Leadership Research, has provided yours truly with a comprehensive understanding of some issues in leadership, and current gaps that are yet to the explored. The issues that arose in this course have brought me to a better understanding of not only the concepts, history and past focus in the discipline; but the platform has been set that is guiding me into my area of interest.

There is no denying that highly effective leaders have a different foresight, and inner drive, driven by a completely different vision, and their thinking is radical from their counterparts' perspective. Their vision for the most part is based on an ideologically new paradigm, which is what drives them to act. Irrespective of the geo-political space in which they reside, effective leaders are servants to their inner vision, slaves to their desire to see a change in the old paradigm, navigate others into seeing the need to change the old paradigm, interpret from a different foresight from their counterparts, and chart a path that has never been navigated before. The undeniable fact is, that foresight is only one aspect of the lenses of effective leaders; but that they are not slaves to the old paradigm. Their futuristic thinking is radical and they are change agents to their inner-vision.

On reviewing the various materials on leadership, I have realized that even in the recent development in leadership, the matter of the health status of particular leadership styles is sparse in the literature. This limitation in the literature will be my area of interest of study, as the matter will provide invaluable insights in understanding people, leadership and health.

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