The Leader's Characters

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How a leader has ethical and moral standards while leading followers and making the best decision is also considered as one of the way to define characteristic of ethical leadership. Character refers to moral qualities, ethical standards, principles and the like (Wright & Goodstein, 2007). Like sentence from Wright and Goodstein, characters of the leader are related to an individual's personalities to be standard of either mental or ethical qualities as a leader among people. Regarding the leader's characters, Aristotle questioned "what is the good of a person?" He argued that ethical decisions are the natural outcomes of individual character and that good people with high moral characteristics and standards can make good moral decisions. Aristotle insists that virtue and character have a social component of ethical aspect, and virtue is an essential trait through the tedious process of trial and error (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). This research paper identifies the leader's characters which are essential and necessary to be a good leader morally and ethically. To identify whether a leader has positive leadership, ethics and morality considers as the most important aspects for the characteristics of a leader, how a leader engage followers to achieve common goals, and the affect a leader has on the organization's values (Fields, 2007). The paper also describes the reason of why each character is important to be a good leader in ethics and morals.

A Character of Leader

The characters are courage, temperance, wisdom, justice, optimism, integrity, humility, and compassion, and each virtue is needed to be practiced because of its importance to leaders (Johnson, 2017). The article by Wright and Goodstein proposed an initial conceptualization of character related to virtue and values, showed how character has been considered over decades, and explained the strength of character and the organizational virtue (Wright & Goodstein, 2007). The virtues and values may vary depend on each other's personality regarding what each

considers the most important in one's life. If a leader thinks honesty is the most valuable and important in the interpersonal relationships, then the followers of a leader will also consider honesty as the major standard to keep their group. Thus, the characters of leader involve with each virtue and value of its organization and followers.

Courage and Integrity

Courage is overcoming fear to do the right thing (Comte-Sponville, 2001). Courageous leaders already understand or expect the dangers what they will face in future while completing their duties for community's goals. They don't stop or give up despite the risks and disadvantages in the situations what they are meeting. This major character of leaders can be also applied to followers in the group. For example, if the leader is brave and courage with his actions to achieve the goal, but unlikely, his followers are afraid of failures and loss that can be happened while moving forward to goals. Achievement of goal is team work. A leader should be a good listener with strong belief on himself, and followers should have their responsibilities and should believe what their leader decides. Courage is deeply related to integrity. Integrity is often used to test the assertion that behavioral courage is perceived consistent action under conditions of adversity. High behavioral integrity on the part of a leader is a strong indicator that the leader can be trusted at his or her word. Thus, as Simons et al defines that integrity provides a sense of certainty and enables followers to make sense of situations, the integrity is honesty and truthfulness (Simons et al., 2007). For example, Palanski et al. (2015) tested the relationship between behavioral manifestations of leader behavioral integrity and courage. Their studies found that direct effect of integrity on the outcomes of performance and executive images were not significant with courage. This result suggested that the extent to which integrity predicts boss or superior members' ratings of a target-executive's performance is fully explained by the

courage the target-executive displays (Palanski et al., 2007). Their implications are that behavioral integrity does cause perceptions of behavioral courage in some situations, especially with adverse aspects against goals, and showing proactive leader's courage makes other people to follow the leader actively.

Temperance and Humility

Temperance is controlling emotions and pleasure (Comte-Sponville et al., 2010). The temperate person controls self against enjoying food without falling into gluttony, drinking but not becoming addicted to alcohol, enjoying sex without becoming trapped by desire. Temperance also means recognizing one's limits and living within one's means (Johnson, 2017). Some historically famous leaders failed to control themselves due to alcohols, drugs, or other addictive chemicals. In fact, they lost their fame and got the social disadvantages. The other character of leadership is humility. Humility on the individual level has been empirically fostered higher performance in both work and academic contexts. It is the concept to improve individual performance because admitting weaknesses highlights growth opportunities, appreciating others' strengths highlights growth exemplars, and being teachable enables personal growth to occur (Owens et al., 2013). Leader humble behavior is perceived by followers as modeling how to grow and leads followers to feel that their own growth and improvement processes are legitimate and necessary (Owens & Hekman, 2012).

Wisdom and Justice

Wisdom is one of the important components as leader's characters. It means knowledge and experience to solve the problems what the group is facing at the moment. Wisdom can be enhanced over time or learned from others' experiences. Wise organizational leaders involve with six practices, such as thinking, high emotional capacity, collaborations, proactive and

experiments, reflectively demonstration, and aspiring (Intezari & Pauleen, 2013). Wisdom can

make the situation easier to resolve. Historically, many leaders like Warren Buffett, Steve Jobs,

and Franklin D Roosevelt succeeded in their fields using wisdom and prudence. All of these

people changed their situations such as poverty or political struggles. For example, Warren

Buffett invested for undervalued companies, and their uncountable assets are planning to go to

charitable foundations. Steve Jobs also changed his poverty by himself using his knowledge and

creating new techniques as iPhone. His knowledge and intelligence made him known as one of

the most successful scientist and CEO of Apple. Franklin D Roosevelt is known by his successful

policy, New Deal. He promised a new deal for the American people who faced to Great

Depression. His right decision for the policy saved Americans and helped to resolve crashed

economy. These successful leaders knew what they are doing and what they have to do in right

ways. This historical fact means that the leadership also requires justice not only wisdom or

prudence. Justice usually has several meanings. It means a sense of obligation to the common

goal, and it also means the fair and equal treatment of others. The people feel a sense of duty and

responsibilities, and they support rules and policies in right way (Comte-Sponville et al., 2010).

The rules made by leaders and followers should be fair and benefit everyone equally. The

followers often complain about injustice, and their performance suffers when they believe they

are being treated unfairly (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001). If the leader did not have justice

and morality, then he would only follow the profits what he could make without considering

other people. Thus, justice will be the mandatory virtues with wisdom for leadership.

Optimism

Optimism is the essential character for leaders because it expects positive outcomes in the

future even if optimists are experiencing disappointments and difficulties (Carver & Scheier,

2005). Every people might experience the hard time while being part of society as either

followers or leaders. However, this type of challenges will bring the lessons to people how to

acknowledge the reality of the situation and to move forward to goals. Smith et al. (2012) tested

how positive leadership influences to followers and its environments. Positive leadership is

defined as either transformational or authentic leadership, and the transformational leadership

was commonly positively correlated with a plethora of employee attitudes. This study by Smith

et al. (2012) established positive relationships among flow, positive leadership, employee

attitudes, and safety climate. As result of the study, positive leadership and leader's attitudes

predicted employee attitudes positively as well (Smith et al., 2012).

Compassion

Compassion is an expression of sympathizing and caring to alleviate the suffering of

others, such as pain, loss, challenges, and failure, which threaten a person's life and work.

Compassion has an essential influence on leadership and organizing in the groups. For example,

more compassion is positively related to less turnover, more prosocial behavior, and increasing

organizational attachment and commitment (Wei et al., 2016). Unlikely, unethical leaders think

their personal benefits first instead of common profits and goals.

Conclusion

This paper proposes the leader's characters, such as courage, temperance, wisdom,

justice, optimism, integrity, humility, and compassion. Each character means overcoming fear to

do the right thing, self-control, drawing on knowledge and experience to convince the common

good, practical wisdom, obligation to the common good and treating others equally and fairly,

expectation of positive outcomes in the future, wholeness and consistency, self-awareness, and

kindness with love (Johnson, 2017). The most important trait of the leader's characters are

recognizing each virtue as the right meanings and doing actually after finding what leader's

virtues are at each moment. According to Johnson (2017), a good leader never underestimate the

power of a good example, understands that hardships are an inevitable part of life and leadership,

has positive habits to foster virtuous behavior, and sets an ultimate destination to stay on ethical

track (Johnson, 2017). Despite the fact that people understand how to be a good leader in their

groups or environments, they are not acting really due to difficulty of implements and practices.

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