

A Cultural Experience

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Abstract

In my cultural assignment, I decided to adopt the shadowing option of a leader from a different cultural background. I carried out the observation from 9.00 am to 6.00 pm on Wednesday, June 17, 2020. I visited coach Wildrika, an American whom I have known for two years and developed a relationship with the family. He is a teen football coach for the past twenty years. He is passionate about coaching and mentoring teen boys. In the course of our interaction, I observed the special love and passion he has for teen boys and football. The drive to help them to be responsible sportspeople and citizens. He is a visionary and a transformational coach. (Bass and Avolio1995)) As a visionary coach he sets the standard of a compelling vision, he sees beyond today for each member of the team and believes with he appropriate mindset and attitude they can very much achieve their individual and collective dream as a team. (Yukl,1981).Although there is no leader without a weakness. One of them is his overbearing nature which I could see its effects on the team.

As a transformational coach, he places a lot of emphasis and importance on developmental processes. Such as empowering followers and helping them become autonomous and competent individuals who reach self-actualization and high levels of morality as sportsmen. He regards these processes as critical for distinguishing transformational leadership from other

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leadership(Burns,1978).I called to inform them I will be visiting on Wednesday, June 17, 2020. They had no objection to it, but they are a bit surprised I was visiting on a week's day.

I got to coach Wildrika's house at about 9.00 am, but none of them were awake. The husband, wife, and three children, a boy and two younger sisters. I tried to find out why it took that time for them to be awake. However, Informed it was because of the pandemic. So they are generally taking things easy, and the children are on vacation since February when the pandemic took a severe turn.

The family woke up at 9.30 am did their morning devotion; the children read from the book of(Proverb:3-1-3)).Which talks about children obeying the laws of their parents and the benefits they will get thereof. At the same time, the mother also counseled and prayed for five minutes. I also joined in giving words of encouragement and why we have to be close to God. This is especially so when everything seems too bleak and blank and why children need to obey their parents and other responsible adults and leaders God has placed over them for example, their teachers. God is the only answer the world has to its numerous challenges.

After prayers, we all had breakfast at 10.30, and the parents set out for works. While the mother works with a Government hospital, we dropped her off at 12.00 when her shift started. I decided to go with Coach Wildrika to watch his remaining activities for the day further. At about 2.00pm, the teen boys that he coaches and mentors were already waiting for his arrival, although they were able to maintain social distancing for the one hour, he spent with them. He said he just wanted to see them physically to ensure that they are doing great and happy. He was able to do some exercises with them to keep them in shape and fit. He also asked if any of them will want

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to see him in private to discuss issues bothering them. One or two excused themselves to talk to him in private.

He also encouraged them to keep hope alive as these times and season will pass. He told them to be of good behavior and also ensure they are serious with their academics, as they will not be allowed to keep playing football if there are adverse reports from their parents or guardian.

They are encouraged to do well academically as well as in sports. That way, they will be an all-round human being. The coach was trying to stay positive and prepare his team mentally and physically as if there was no pandemic, and the situation was normal. However, they will not forget to obey all the rules of using a face mask, keeping social distancing, and all others at this crucial delicate time.

I asked how he has been managing his team all along. He said this was a difficult period for them all. However, as a leader, he needs to keep pushing and encouraging his boys to stay focused and positive as possible. He said this was a difficult period for them all. However, as a leader, he needs to keep pushing and encouraging his boys to stay as positive as possible. He said they are staying in touch with their players via the internet. It would be easy for complacency to creep in, giving them workouts to do and generally keeping them focused during an uncertain time.

He said the only challenge they have right now is that they do not have a definitive plan for when we are coming back" There are many question marks on that. The only way to keep our sanity is to stay busy," that is what coaches are doing.

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He said teams stay together with some form of workouts passing camp and competitions throughout the summer and their take a week off before recovering for the start of the heat power for August,20,2020 this year.

He said but with the regional social distancing restrictions in place. Coaches can only communicate with their players through communication applications such as zoom, Band, google, meet.

"We are trying to make the best of the situation, trying to stay patient even though we are very anxious to get back to normal. I cannot wait to get back to the team, school, and the kids.

He said he spent much time preparing our team for a reason, and I miss that, and just having that meeting gave me a lift" He said they like the online meetings. We are trying to maximize what they can do right now. We went back to pick the wife, who was not mainly doing a full day's job today because of other commitments. I stayed with them until about 6 pm. I, therefore, decided to leave for my home.

It was an exciting and educative moment for me because I was able to observe how he relates to his family and work. I see a man who loves his family dearly and wants to be there to meet their needs and make them happy. The children were so excited having him around the relationship was worth emulating for a leader who can balance his home with work. He deserves some kudos," nothing missing; nothing is broken"(Ishiah:26

3-4)

I was able to relate his excellent parenting with his transformational leadership, which has a lot in common. What good parents do with their children and how transformational leaders behave to their followers are closely related. "This similarity is obvious in several unique domains (a) Both are sensitive and responsive, showing individual consideration for their proteges (b) both reinforce the protegee's autonomy in a supportive, nonjudgemental way and by actively providing opportunities, promoting relevant experiences, giving explanations, and the like (c) both set limitations and rules which are flexible: and finally (d) both are positive examples to identify with and look up to" (Poppe and Mayseless, 2003, para. 44)

Further, there also is a close correspondence between good parents and transformational leaders in the outcomes for their proteges specifically, both promote (a) trust in others (b) self-confidence and self-esteem (c) self-realization (d) achievement orientation and a tendency to become similar to them. From all indications; it becomes clear that the two phenomena, leadership and parenthood, bear a strong resemblance. (Popper and Mayseless, 2003)

The issue of love and the heart also comes into play. I see a man who is committed to what is doing with his whole heart. He has fallen so much in love with what he does that it has become an obsession. According to (Kouzes and Posner, 2010), leadership is an affair of the heart. They said there is nothing good that can come forth nor achieved without the heart; to them, also love is the soul of leadership. I love to want to see subordinates happy and thriving and love to see subordinates achieve success. I love to want to see people at their best. I saw that he was able to exhibit the qualities of leadership as set out by Kouzes and Posner in their book "The truth about leadership which are

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A leader should make a difference.

A leader should exhibit credibility.

A leader should have values which inturns drive commitment.

Focus on the future set leaders aside

Believing that one cannot do it alone

A leader should have trust in the subordinates

Challenges in the crucible for greatness

Leadership by example is very crucial

Learning as a leader

Leadership is an affair of the heart.

He was able to exhibit the majority if not all of these leadership traits, and I see his team members and family becoming the better for it.

. I was able to learn that in all that we do prioritize and time management is essential because they help take much pressure on us. Planning is also an essential quality for a leader. If you fail to plan, then you plan to fail. Leading in football is also like leading an organization where you have set goals and targets. It is essential to set realistic goals, and ways of meeting up with the goals have a lot to do with planning and time management Yukl (1981)

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One of the flaws I see in his leadership style is time management. He wants to do too many things at the same time, and he gets overwhelmed and uneasy in trying to do that. A leader should be able to plan, envision challenges, and try to overcome them before getting too late.

(Kouzes and Posner,2010)

One other notable challenge is talkativeness. The talk is cheap. Doing is more important than talking. Followers tend to emulate what they see, not what they are asked to do. At times, his talkativeness gets people confused that they tend not to know the next line of action.

I also feel that he is too confident and assertive. Confident about his abilities and capabilities. It is also essential to know that the best learner is the best leader. It is also perfect to learn from subordinates and others around the feeling of self-sufficiency. No one can do it alone; one needs others to succeed and build a reliable team. (Kouzes and Posner,2010)

I enjoyed my day and the new leadership tips I learned. Leadership is a journey that will have its ups and downs, but how we deal with our successes and challenges will determine how far we can go to make our impact on our followers and those who look up to us for direction and insight.

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