



The value of spirituality in leadership success

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Abstract

In the modern era organizations adopt spiritual leadership to lead their employees. Spirituality considered values, honesty, integrity and humanity possess in the human beings. A leader who leads in spiritual manner can increase satisfaction and productivity level among the employees. Leaders set standards for their employees and motivate them to achieve the standards ethically. Spirituality plays an important role in smooth running of the organizations.

Keywords: spiritual leadership, effective leadership, spirituality in workplace, spiritual and motivational factors

Introduction

Spirituality is a dynamic and intrinsic aspect of humanity, it expressed through beliefs, values, traditions and practices. Leadership may be defined "as the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what to be done and how to do it and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives". Leadership establishes the relation between self and others as those in the role and position of leadership influence others to act in achieving goals. Researchers and writers in the field of spirituality in a work place found much clear connection between spiritual values and practices. An individual leader may embodied many of values and practices associated with spirituality such as demonstrative respect, caring for others but never consider in self to be a spiritual person, however an expert in the field of spirituality, using the criteria set out by many different paths, would probably evaluate that leader as an example of spiritual behavior and values. Spiritual teaching also urges the practice of treating others with love and compassion: showing respect, demonstrating fairness, listening attentively and appreciating others gifts and contribution, the purpose of these activities is to develop positive relations with others, with self and with higher power. Spirituality gives a way of looking at leadership which can integrate character, behavior, effect on followers and achievement of group goals.

Review of Literature

The study focused on relationship between spirituality and effective leadership. There are three components of leadership-the leader, the follower and the situation which requires the leader to behave in a flexible manner. Giacalone and Jurkiewicz (2004) define workplace spirituality as "a framework of organizational value evidenced in the culture that promotes employee's experience of transcendence through the work process, facilitating their sense of being connected in a way that provides feelings of compassion and joy".

According to Robert house's theory of charismatic leadership different traits used by leaders in different situations. Charismatic leaders motivate their organizations to make improvement in the present conditions.

Joseph C. Rost leadership for 21st century according to this theory it is an influence among leaders and followers who intend real changes for their mutual purpose. Real changes mean to transform purposefully with the spirit of honesty, trust, care and concern. The leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi, Margaret Thatcher, and J. Robert Oppenheimer follow spiritual paths and find an effective relation between spirituality and leadership traits. These great leaders demonstrated that spirituality play an important role in change of various aspects such as: social, political, economic etc. Leadership and leadership effectiveness are essential in the relationship between leaders and followers pursuing and achieving goals.

Hendricks and Hendricks (2003) base their leadership theory on thirty years of research involving thousands of subjects and their entire theory begins with integrity.

The dictionary (Merriam Webster, 2003) defines integrity as "firm adherence to a code of especially moral or artistic values."

Fry's (2003) seminal work hypothesized and supported this extrapolation that outcomes across the organization, team, and individual levels can be effected by leaders with spiritual awareness or understanding (e.g., positive human health, ethical and spiritual well-being, and corporate social responsibility).

Stogdill said that leadership as being about interaction and influence relationships between leader and followers.

Dent, Higgins, and Wharff (2005) ^[4] said that the concept of spirituality and religion in the workplace has gained enough strength and interest in the past decade that the Academy of Management officers created a new special interest group for its membership: The Management, Spirituality, and Religion group has grown to more than 500 members since its inception (Robbins, 2003a, 2003b) and has legitimized the study of spirituality in the workplace in academia while simultaneously introducing this emerging domain into the leadership research agenda (Academy of Management, 2004) ^[1]. Burns (1978) ^[2]; Heifetz (1994) ^[8]; Senge (2004) ^[11]; Wheatley (1992) ^[13]; Wilber (2001); Yukl (2006) ^[14]; and others seemed to understand the connection between leadership and spirituality because the respective literature base has common themes such as ethics, values, societal benefits, individual and organizational wholeness, courage,

and leadership character. These themes can be applied to the millennial face of leadership as a means of moving individuals, groups, and society into the realm of living and succeeding together.

Objectives

- To study the relationship of spiritual factors with leadership traits.
- To analyze the effectiveness of spiritual values in leadership success.

Research methodology

The study is secondary in nature based on exploratory analysis of various dimensions of spirituality and leadership. For this purpose extensive quantitative review of literature has been conducted from various research papers, journals and books and the idea have been conceived then.

Relationship of spiritual factors with leadership traits

Spirituality

Spirituality is the aspect of humanity that refers to the way individual seek and express their connectedness to the moment, to self, to others, to nature and to the sacred. It is an ultimate inner path enabling a person to discover the essence of their deepest values which relates to evolution of consciousness. Spirituality involves practices that are undertaken to increase self-awareness, consciousness, presence, empathy, and compassion for others. The word spiritual does not refer to religious matters. All activities which derive the human being forward towards some form of development – physical, emotional, mental, social or intuitional are spiritual in nature.

Leadership

Leadership defined as “the power or ability to lead other people”. Leadership is ability to understand and utilize innate talents and also effective leverage of the team strength to accomplish the mission. Leadership is being bold enough to have vision and humble enough to recognize achieving to take the efforts of many people- people who are most fulfill when they share their gifts and talents, rather than just work. Leaders create that culture, serve that greater good and let other soar. True leader is secure in creating a framework that encourages other to tap into their own skills and ideas and freely contribute to the whole of the project.

There is a strong relationship of spirituality and leadership. It taps into the fundamental needs of both leader and followers for spiritual survival so they become more organizational committed and productive. It is defined as comprising the values, attitudes common factors between spirituality and leadership are Courageous, trustworthy, motivation, empowerment, inspiration and influencing others leads to organizational success. Leadership and spirituality is a personal quality which influences the behavior and beliefs of the subordinates. It provides necessary motivation to the workers by ensuring their participation. Trust and confidence is also created resulting in job satisfaction and improved moral of workers. Successful leaders have inner urge to keep on accomplishing something all the time the positive spirit. When leader influence followers with spiritual intelligence, the motivation level among the followers increase and there will be tremendous change in their personality.

Effectiveness of Spiritual values in leadership success

Spiritual values are qualified by ever widening horizons, synthesis, growth and wholeness as well as greater vision, understanding and integration. Reave (2005) concurred the domain of spirituality and leadership “Leadership effectiveness has been measured in many ways: by subjective evaluation from and behavior which motivates one’s self and others so they have sense of spirituality. Some followers, peers and superiors, by effect on followers, or by achievement of organization goals such as profit and productivity.” If the spiritual development of individual leaders can be added to other accepted leadership skills, such as job specific technical skills, emotional intelligence, and physical fitness, then there is an exponentially greater possibility that both the ineffective and the already effective leader will improve their effectiveness by including an overlooked aspect of leader development, spirituality.

Implications of Effectiveness:

From the study it is implied that the spiritual leadership involves the application of spiritual values and principles to workplace. The spiritual leader understands the importance of the employees. Spirituality in leadership more concerned with the development of employees as “a whole people”- people who exhibit compassion to other employees, superiors, subordinates and customers. From the prospective of the followers, incorporating spirituality into leadership has the potential to create a workplace that is more humane and which provides a sense of community and shared purpose. From the organization prospective, incorporating spirituality in leadership may lead to greater perceptions of trust, organizational support and commitment among employees, which could have positive effects on organizational performance.

Conclusion

Spirituality plays crucial role in success of leadership. Leaders must serve as the main role model for his followers. He provides the vision, values and motivation to his followers and makes them able to adopt changes; the changes may be related to technology or working environment. Organizations can only succeed if faith and trust exists among the leader and followers. Leader must able to understand the follower’s needs and emotions. Spirituality in leadership helps the leader to enhance the productivity level among the followers. Spirituality in leadership not means that both the leader and followers belong to same religion, but it considered that each religion teaches some values; norms which they follow throughout the life, in the same manner spirituality in leadership create values and norms which are followed by leaders to lead the followers. Increasing spiritual intelligence in workplace creates a healthy organization in which; People and relationships flourish, Employees are engaged and creative, Productivity and innovation grow.

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