The personality traits in ethical leadership management essay

\n[toc title="Table of Contents"]\n

\n \t

\n[/toc]\n \n

Ethical leadership is mostly about leadership integrity. This statement has triggered much controversy and is widely discussed. According to Ciulla (2004), Philosophers views ethical leadership, as how the ethical leaders should behave like. Leadership integrity of a leader is shown through the consistency of values, aims and behavior (Bloskie 1995). Leadership is defined by (Wiess 2003) as a shared process, although the values and behaviors of company founders and CEOs often frame and set the cultural tone for organization. One way to recognize a leader's value is through the vision and mission statement of a company.

The personality traits in ethical leadership include integrity, trustworthiness, honesty and forthrightness or candor (Trevino et al. 2000).

(Trevino & Brown 2004) argues that statement as a myth and argued that the coverage of ethical leadership was too vague as it only concentrated solely on individual's character and qualities such as integrity, honesty and fairness. Recent research shows the qualities of a person contributes to the establishment of ethical leadership but it is not substantial to establish an effective ethical leadership (Trevino & Brown 2004). Therefore, in this essay I will touch on the ethical concepts and theories, and the occurrence of leadership and the dimensions that is related to ethical leadership and it will thus bring about a better understanding of whether is ethical leadership is mostly about leadership integrity.

With much ethical scandals evidently existing in most organization, it is comes to show that ethical dimensions is crucial to explain what is ethical leadership.

What is Ethical leadership?

Studies were conducted by Brown, Trevino & Harrison to understand the qualities that is linked to ethical leadership. Base on the interview that they held during 2002, they defined ethical leadership as a display of normatively appropriate conduct through individual activity and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two way interaction, reinforcement and decision-making (Brown et al., 2005).

Figure 1: The matrix of " moral person" and " moral manager" dimension (Trevino, Hartman &Brown 200)

Unethical leadership style

Hypocritical leadership

Leaders who passes down influential ethical messages across to the followers(who are ethical manager) but who is recognized to be ethical themselves (they are not ethical persons) are referred to as hypocritical leaders as shown in figure 1. Hypocritical management are about ethical pretense. The problem is that by giving much emphasiz to reliability only heighten objectives of ethical problem. If a leader talks about integrity and ethical values all time but doesn't adhere by it, followers cant place trust in the leader because he fail to do what do say.

Ethically silent leadership

The last combination is call the legally quiet authority. It relates to leader does not belong to either strong ethical nor strong ethical zone. They may be ethical person but their stand is not clear. They don't provide obvious leadership in terms of ethics. It may be due to the leader has no awareness on how important is ethical leadership relates to organization ethical culture, or they simply just do not care about ethical issues.

Ethical leadership style

To establish a reputable ethical leadership successfully, it requires the executive to display the qualities of a moral person as well as a moral manager. It is essential for a leader to possess characteristics of integrity and also to be able to inculcate this quality into others in the organization. As a leader, they portray images of a role model to others in the organization, so if they set guidelines for employee to adhere by but leaders themselves

don't adhere to it; employees develop negative feelings and feel the reluctance to adhere to the guideline. (Trevino et al. 2000) states that an executive must first be a moral or ethical person or else their followers will come to regard them as hypocrites when their true nature shows. This traits, behavior and decision making characteristics should be transparently evident, or else they may be misinterpreted, and the executive may not be viewed as a moral or ethical person.

A leader who is neither a moral person nor a moral manager is an unethical leader. Even if you are a moral person, but it does not make you a moral manager, to be able to able strike a balance between both moral person and manager, you will need show your followers how well you support and promote company's ethics and values to your followers. This shows that in order to develop ethical leadership, the executive need to be both a moral person and manager, it works two way (Brooks & Dunn 2009).

(Trevino et al. 2000) discovered out that these can be achieved by having transparency in the system, role model qualities must be portrayed openly, there should be interaction on a daily basis and persuasively about ethical requirements, principals and value, using the compensation system to keep all workers responsible to ethical standard. Let's relate this to real life scenario, take for example, civil servants who is working for the government should uphold integrity in them, Public has the perceived image that all civil servants are role models to look up so if they were commit crimes that is against integrity, public will naturally see them as hypocrites and will lose faith in them as a role model. (Bandura 1986) states that if leaders do not adhere by what they stated in the guidelines, there is no reason why the

followers should adhere to it. It is the virtue of a leader will religiously stick to their principles, keeps promises, admits their mistakes and adhere to through on their commitments (Bass & Bass sounds 2008).

Ethical leadership and ethical culture

Leaders can affect cultures in many ways. They can change culture by sending down new values to the followers. What leaders do, say or any actions affects how followers think of the leaders. Clearly, employees are very responsive towards messages send in by leaders. But they personally do not know who the senior management of the organisation is; they can only make sense of it from what they hear. Therefore, leaders has to build a reputation for ethical leadership through transparency on the ethical issue and thus communicating a strong ethic message

Outcomes of ethical relationship

Ethical relationships is believed to be important because of the results it is believed to impact. Constant with a social learning theory, followers replicate ethical leader's behavior because such management are eye-catching and reliable models who model normatively appropriate behavior. In addition, ethical management conveys the value of ethical requirements and use performance management systems to hold workers responsible for their performance. Employees don't have to know about the benefits and punitive measures straight but according to public social learning concept, they can learn about them by monitoring others result.

Social learning theory and ethical leadership

Following Brown et al. (2005), we rely on social learning theory (Bandura, 1997, 1986) to explain outcomes of ethical leadership. Social learning theory serves as a guidance to understand why individual characteristics of ethical leadership and how external cultural factors influences follower's perceived image of leader as ethical leader.

According to social learning theory, for leaders to be seen as ethical leaders by their followers, they first lead an example that proves that they are dependable and trustworthy leaders to their followers. According to (Bandura, 1977, 1986) social learning theory describes that based on the way individual learn by looking out for and attempting to work towards the same attitudes, values and behavior of the dependable leader. This is supported by (Kohlberg, 1969; Trevino, 1986) that most individual look up to others for ethical advice or assistance.

If you are the CEO, the perceived image as seen by the followers is seen as someone who has what it on the surface you will be seen as a person who has qualities and credibility basically what it takes to be in that position, therefore the it is the status and power of a person will boost the attractiveness thus resulting in followers interest to look out for ethical leaders behavior (Bandura, 1986).

Leaders have the power and authority because their position held is of a higher post as compared to the followers. Not only the status draws attention to the followers, leaders who displays acts of care and concern and giving

fair treatments plays a part in the attention for followers and gives positive motivations.

Studies have shown that encouragement plays an essential part in modelling effectiveness because followers focus on those who controls essential resources and to rewards and punishments. Employees can learn about what is acceptable or undesirable by focusing on how other business members are honoured or disciplined and control their own answer as a result

Critical view on ethical leadership styles

There are three leadership theories that overlap the ethical leadership domain, Transformational, spiritual and authentic theories of leadership all address the moral potential of leadership in some way.

Transformational leadership

Burns (1978) recommended that transformational leadership as moral leadership because the leaders inspire their followers to look beyond self-interest and perform and work towards goals together. Kaungo & Mendonca (1996) recommended that transformational authority engaged ethical influence process, while transactional leadership did not. But bass(1985) recommended that transformational control could be ethical or unethical based on their inspiration.

Authetic leadership

Authetic leadership are leaders who are deeply aware of how they think and behave and are perceived by others a being aware of their own and other's

value/moral perspective, knowledge, and strengths; aware of the context in which they operate; and are confident, hopeful, optimistic, resilient, and high on moral character" (Avolio, luthans & walumbwa 2004). Self-awareness, openness transparency and consistency made up of authentic leadership. And also being motivated by good end concepts and issues for others is essential to authentic authority. Authetic leadership are capable of evaluating uncertain ethical issues, watching them from several viewpoints, and aiming choices with their own ethical concepts. Like transformational leadership, authentic leadership seems to overlap with ethical leadership in terms of personal features.

Spiritual leadership

Spiritual leadership comprised of " the concepts, behaviours and habits that are necessary to motivate one's self and others so that they have a sense of spiritual survival l through contacting and membership: (Fry, 2003, p. 711) Spiritual leadership has also been described as " occurring when a person in a authority place symbolizes spiritual concepts such as reliabililty, loyalty, and humblness, developing the self as an example of someone who can be reliable, depended upon and admire. Spiritual leadership is also confirmed through actions, whether in personal indicative exercise or in ethical, sympathetic, and well-mannered treatment of others, (reave 2005)

Thus, ethical leadership is clearly related to, but unique from these leadership concepts. I have described ethical leadership and articulated how it overlaps with, yet is unique from other related theories of authority.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, I disagree with the statement that ethical leadership is mainly about leadership integrity. Integrity only plays a part in establishment of a reputation leadership it is not sufficient enough as it requires more than just strong personal qualities or virtue. Not only should you have leadership integrity, followers must be led from the leaders on how to be ethical, it is not just enough to be a ethical person who makes good choices, a reputation for ethical leadership requires leaders to continually communicate ethical values to the followers and make sure they abide by it. Failure to develop a reputation for leadership, it will mostly likely end up as ethically neutral. Therefore, we can say that communication from the leaders is very crucial, they need to be aware of their actions, what they say, and what they do is constantly viewed from their followers. As mentioned in the social learning theory, in nature followers look up to leaders because they have status and power, if a leader do not abide by the guidelines they set the trust from the followers will be gone which thus result in followers losing trust and faith in their leaders.

You need to be both a moral manager and a moral person in order to achieve a reputable ethical leadership