



ETHICAL LEADERSHIP ANTECEDENT AND PROSPECT

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Abstract: Over the past years, ethical leadership has increasingly become a popular topic in organisational leadership and politics. This has warranted several research and theoretical work on ethical leadership. Brown et al., (2005, p. 120) defined ethical leadership as the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement and decision-making. The primary purposes of this study are: (i) to review empirical findings from the ethical leadership literature utilizing a framework consisting of ethical leadership, antecedents and prospects, and (ii) suggest a set of interesting research opportunities, thus enabling future investigation. A total of 15 empirical studies on ethical leadership were reviewed. The result shows that ethical leadership exists and is desired. Ethical leadership has prospect but more still needs to be done to encourage ethical practices among leaders.

Keywords: Ethics, leadership, antecedent and prospect

1. Introduction

The concern for ethical consciousness comes at the time when the concept of leadership legitimacy is questioned and when the public's trust in corporate governance is extremely low (Fulmer, 2005). Ethics is moral principles that govern a person's behaviour or way of doing things. Being moral, means doing what is 'right' and, by inspiring others to do the same demonstrates an ethical leader. Values such as care, justice, integrity and respect are the ingredients of ethical leadership that requires a process to convert them into effective actions in complex and dynamic situations. This process is ethical reasoning. Without the capability for ethical reasoning, values based leadership cannot be continuously effective and may even lead to the use of values as rationalizations for unethical behaviour. A true or authentic leader works with others in the search of values based goals in all spheres of their life. Ethical leaders use a range of mechanisms to engage and influence people. These include what the leader says and does, the systems, processes and culture of the units

that he or she is responsible for. Ethical leaders must be good communicators and good role models. They must also ensure that the systems and processes they manage are not disposed to moral threat and that they build cultures that inspire and support ethical actions by others. Leadership includes responsibility for the behaviours of others and the tools that influence those behaviours.

Ethical leaders speak to us about our identity, what we are and what we can become, how we live and how we could live better (Freeman & Stewart, 2006). Leaders ought to be a crucial source of ethical guidance and at the same time is responsible for moral development. Ethics has a lot to do with management/leadership. Leadership is the art of persuading a follower to want to do things, activities that the leader sets as goals. Leaders vary depending on the individual leadership style that stems from personality characteristics. Some leaders, particularly charismatic and transformational, have personal power through which they engage employees, whereas other exerts the positional,

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legitimate power. Leaders are characterized by different values, attitudes, beliefs, conduct, habits and practices which to a certain extent dependent upon the organizational, professional or institutional culture. Leadership signifies a relation between a leader and his followers within a situational and organizational context. Rost (1993) defined leadership as a power and value-laden relationship between leaders and followers/constituents who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes and goals. According to Hitt (1990), senior leadership has two key responsibilities:-first to ensure that ethical decisions were made and secondly to develop an organizational climate in which ethical follower conduct was fostered. Brown et al.,(2005, p. 120) defined ethical leadership as the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement and decision-making. A particular behaviour might be correct from the intra-organizational perspective but is incorrect in society. Sometimes it occurs that leaders have moral intentions, but due to their incompetence create unethical outcomes (Ciulla, 2005). Today, Ethical Leadership is considered to be one solution for creating a balance between the wellbeing of the subordinates, the wider community, and the organization's profitability. The important elements of ethical leadership includes trust, integrity, relations and transparency

Trust: When an organization's leader is dependable, willing to admit mistakes and trustworthy, subordinates tend to have confidence in the leadership. Employees who believe that leaders will keep promises are willing to commit to the organization's goals as well. When people trust each other, they can focus on getting work done, asking for help when they need it and solving business problems.

Integrity: Integrity means being honest and showing a consistent and uncompromising adherence to strong moral, ethical principles and values. When a leader

honours commitments he expects subordinates and business partners to do so as well. She/he maintains loyalty, apologizes when necessary, takes responsibility, and makes the right choices for long-term benefit. Long-term, improved ethical leadership tends to positively impact the financial aspects of the organization. It also improves employee morale, job satisfaction and loyalty.

Relationships: Ethical leadership creates and maintains a safe work environment for the workforce. All employees get treated with dignity and respect, regardless of their level in the organization. This type of leadership enables fair and equal opportunity for promotion. Following local, state and federal regulations prohibits discrimination for ethnicity, gender or age. Ethical leadership also provides physical, mental health support and helps employees maintain a healthy life and work balance. It provides work that has meaning and encourages employees to pursue training and development opportunities to advance in their careers.

Transparency: An ethical leader realizes subordinates watches him closely to decide how to act themselves. He makes decisions carefully and communicates in a timely manner. When appropriate, he accepts input from subordinates and considers how his actions, such as strategic goal modifications, leadership changes, policy adjustments and other transformational activities, may distract employees from concentrating on job tasks. For example, they do not conduct business in locations where employees work in unsafe conditions or receive incommensurate pay. They don't make business deals in an unethical manner or knowingly act to harm the environment.

Becoming an ethical leader is a learning process that requires continual and deep reflection on failures as well as successes. Developing and applying these skills in the resolution of unexpected, complex and dynamic problems is the process of a lifetime. Hence ethical leadership is, not just doing the right things but at the right time and place in the right way. It is applying the



innermost conscience to the practical world, to make it better than it already is.

1.1 Problem Statement

Unethical behaviour in organisation and among the political leaders is impacting negatively on the society. Maak and Pless (2006) propose that leader as a key manager of organizations should change traditional management concept of shareholder supremacy, to care about all participants both inside and outside the organization to fulfil corporate social responsibility. Present leadership theory such as transformational leadership, servant leadership, authentic leadership and ethical leadership mainly focuses on dyadic supervisor-subordinate relationship, and ignores the influence of leaders' behaviours and decisions on others. The unethical behaviour of leaders has created disunity, lack of trust and this is affecting productivity and the general wellbeing of organisations and communities. The ethics and responsibilities of leaders have been attached much importance. This paper will examine the existence of ethical leadership in organisations, the antecedent and prospect. It will also propose ways on how to inculcate ethical behaviours in organisations and communities.

1.2 Objective

The objectives of this paper are to:

- i. To examine the existence of ethical behaviour in organisations and among the political leaders
- ii. To examine the antecedents and prospects of ethical leader
- iii. To suggest ways through which ethical behaviour can be inculcated

1.3 Research Questions

In order to achieve the purpose of the study, the research will be guided by the following research questions:

1. Do ethical leadership exist in organisations and among the political leaders
2. What is the leaders role in promoting follower's ethical behaviour

3. Is there a prospect for ethical leadership

1.4 Significance of study

1. The study will be of significance in understanding how ethical leadership can benefit the organisations and society.
2. The study will help leaders and follower to appreciate their roles in adopting ethical behaviour.
3. The study will make a contribution to the already existing literature and trigger further research in the prospect of ethical leadership.

1.5 Limitation of study

The limitation of this study was finance and time.

1.6 Definition of terms

Ethics: Ethics is moral principles that govern a person's behaviour or way of doing things.

Leadership: Leadership is the art of persuading a follower to want to do things, activities that the leader sets as goals

Antecedent: These are things that has happened before or precede an occurrence

Prospect: The possibility or likelihood of some future event occurring

2. Literature review

2.1 Conceptual literature

Ethics is a system of moral principles and perceptions about right versus wrong. Rost (1993) defined leadership as a power and value-laden relationship between leaders and followers/constituents who intend real changes that reflect their mutual purposes and goals. Brown et al.,(2005, p. 120) defined ethical leadership as the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement and decision-making. This definition places ethical leadership among the positive forms of leadership and focuses on leader behaviour and thereby unties personal characteristics, attitudes from the actual behaviour. A particular behaviour might be correct from the intra-organizational perspective but is incorrect in society. Sometimes it occurs that leaders



have moral intentions, but due to their incompetence create unethical outcomes (Ciulla, 2005). However, ethical Leadership is considered to be one solution for creating a balance between the wellbeing of the subordinates, the wider community, and the organization's profitability.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

Some authors combine different ethical theories within the same leadership approach. Knights and O'Leary (2006) said that ethical leadership is indeed "ethical" since it reflects one ethical theory or the other. Ethical leadership repeatedly takes the form of different approaches to leadership. The five selected ethical theories that could be relevant for leadership approaches are philosophical egoism, utilitarianism, deontology, ethics of virtue, and ethics of responsibility. These approaches have historical and philosophical foundations and each highlight different aspects in decision-making. It is difficult to assess to what extent a given ethical theory could be connected with ethical leadership. Ncube and Washburn (2006) suggested that ethical leadership should combine deontology (Kant), virtue ethics (Aristotle) and utilitarianism (Bentham, Mill). Such an approach will imply to take into account the needs of all organizational members, in order to maximize harmonious relationships within the organization. The choice of ethical theories actually reveals the meaning of "ethics" when it is connected with leadership.

Philosophical egoism

Egoistic is when the right thing is considered by leaders because of a selfish motive. The theory is focused on satisfying leader's personal interest first.

Utilitarianism Theory - The focus is on ensuring the subordinates feel good and are happy, before deciding on an action. The concern is on the proper ends of the action and not necessarily on how you get there. The approach is closely associated with John Stuart Mill and the ethical cost-benefit analysis.

Libertarianism Theory - The approach follows Aristotle's idea of virtue ethics or eudemonism. The

protection of individuals' freedom is the main concern. For example, if an action or decision would affect the subordinate's freedom, the leader would not proceed with the course of action. The concern is on the intent of individuals.

Immanuel Kant's Ethical Theory of doing the right (Deontology). The theory believes that by understanding these common, agreed values, a leader can make the right decisions.

Ethics of responsibility

Emphasis is on the necessity, for every partner of the dialogue, to recognize each other as a responsible subject who could orientate his (her) conduct. A responsible subject is using his (her) claims of validity as parameters of truth. Some duties (such as the duty to say the truth) are drawn from the respect we have (and should have) towards the capacity to be responsible for others, through "communicational processes". According to Habermas, said Schnebel (2000), within communicational processes, individual values are articulated as units of meaning.

In the modern context, ethical leadership theories often emphasize either one of the above approaches or a mixture of them. However ethical leadership requires a leader to act and lead in an ethical way. Leader's actions should show in public and give reassurance to subordinates about the ethical behaviour, and the leader must also think in an ethical manner. The leadership theory requires the leader to have ethics as an important part of their everyday framework. Ethical leadership should also be understood through the lens of its influence over other leadership theories. Being ethical is a core part of other leadership styles and a strong ethical foundation is required for styles such as transformational and charismatic leadership. Ethical leadership places the biggest emphasis on implementing ethical values to every aspect of leadership.

In their 2006 analysis of ethical leadership, Michael E. Brown and Linda K. Treviño compared ethical leadership with other notable leadership theories. While



the similarities are often clear, Brown and Treviño concluded that, “ethical leaders explicitly focus attention on ethical standards through communication and accountability processes”. It’s precisely this aspect of ethical leadership that separates it from authentic, charismatic and transformational leadership.

23. Empirical literature

The study of ethical leadership is becoming more relevant, due to unethical practise of leaders. In recent years, the collapse of Enron, the fall of the Lehman Brothers, stock market crash; all due, in part, to unethical leadership behaviour. Green and Odom (2003) note that the lack of ethical leadership in Enron caused harm to thousands of employees, invoked greater government regulation, and crippled consumer confidence of the financial industry (Thompson, 2010). The cases of organizations displaying unethical behaviour has made businesses to revisit their strategic direction, and this has helped them to learn that ethical leadership is the way which leads to profitability (Moss, 2002). Thornton (2009) noted, “Now in the global marketplace, with fierce competition for business and resources, the scope of problems that can occur in leadership ethics has expanded exponentially” (p. 60). A study completed by Plinio, et al., (2010) found that one of the most serious problem facing organizations now is poor ethical behaviour and non-existence of ethical leadership. The authors noted that trust in leadership is declining and the situation is worsened by a weak economy. They also noted an alarming increase in misconduct by employees at all levels.

Darcy (2010) confirms that the current climate of organizations is doubtful regarding ethics. In the study carried out by the author, it was discovered that sixty-six per cent of people question if ethics exists within leadership. The author refers to this as “a crisis of trust” (p. 200). The study established that the biggest problem in organizations and individuals presently is a lack of trust. This lack of trust can be attributed to what Frank (2002) calls the “shadow side” of leadership. These shadows include the negative influences of “power,

privilege, deception, inconsistency, irresponsibility, and misplaced loyalties” (p. 81). It is the consequences of these shadow behaviours that followers are expose to, and made them to lose trust in the integrity of their leader.

This has necessitated several research and articles on the topic of ethical leadership. The question is, is it possible for one to lead a company in an ethical manner and produce surplus of profits? In answering this question, it is good to have understanding of what the literature defines as ethical leadership. According to Yukl (2006) an ethical leader is one who promotes honesty, and mirrors his or her actions with their values and beliefs. He acknowledges that the field of ethical leadership is a confusing construct, which includes various constituents. As a result, ethical leadership may be difficult to evaluate.

Freeman & Stewart, (2006, p. 2) define ethical leadership as simply a matter of leaders having good character and the right values or being a person of strong character. The authors acknowledge that following the law and obeying regulations are not what makes ethics complicated. They further reveal that influencing others to do the right thing is not the problematical part of ethical leadership. Plinio (2009) noted that, the complexity of ethical leadership exists in the grey areas of who is responsible when problems arise. Heifetz (2006) proposes that the primary responsibility of ethical leaders is to deal with conflict among followers, and instruct them in the right way. Frank (2002), states that transformational leadership is the outward display of ethical leadership. Though slightly different definitions have been constructed, all of these authors agree that ethical leadership is focused on influencing followers to do the right thing.

In contrast, Cumbo (2009) focuses on the leader when defining ethical leadership. A leader is considered ethical when inward virtues direct the leader’s decision-making process. Followers simply are beneficiaries of a leader living a virtuous life. A leader is motivated not by influencing others but rather living by one’s own



virtues. The author states that virtues are improved when the leader exhibits imagination, compassion, empathy, and discernment.

Martinez-Saenz (2009) identifies constructs within ethical leadership. The five paradigms identified are altruistic, egoistic, autonomous, legalist, and communitarian. Altruistic motivation within ethical leadership is the leader acting out of selfless motives. Egoistic is when the right thing is considered by leaders because of a selfish motive. Autonomous is allowing followers to determine their own direction of ethics. The authors define legalist ethics as leaders following a set of given rules or regulations. Communitarian, on the other hand, places the emphasis on bettering society and the community in which the organization resides.

Plinio (2009) reviewed three commonly correlated leadership theories to ethical leadership. The first classical leadership theory that associates with ethical leadership is transforming leadership. Transforming leadership ultimately becomes moral in that it raises the level of human conduct and ethical aspiration of both leader and led, and thus it has a transforming effect on both (Burns, 1978, p. 134). The second is servant leadership, which emphasizes the need to serve followers and devote oneself to the ethical development of followers. The third classical leadership theory is authentic leadership. Plinio (2009) said that the very essence of ethics is being true to oneself and authentic.

Sandel (2009) noted three common historical approaches to ethical leadership. The first approach is the leader maximizing the welfare of followers as defined by Utilitarianism Theory. The second is a leader protecting the freedom of individuals, which is noted in Libertarianism Theory. Third, a leader is focused solely on promoting the right thing to do, regardless of consequence, as seen in Kant's Ethical Theory. Ethical Leadership in Organizations making process and determining what is ethical often stems from a variation of one of these three historical approaches to ethics, according to the author.

Skovira and Harmon (2006) developed the idea of ethical ecology within organizations. The authors define this concept as the moral landscape or ethical environment in which leaders operate. This landscape influences the leader's decision-making within the organization. The author identified common constructs that help identify an organization's ethical environment. These are corporate policy, codes of conduct, financial affairs, environmental concerns, human resources, organizational reputation, relationships, and the leader's personal moral frame.

Antecedents of ethical leadership

For years the studies of antecedents of effective leadership have focused on determining the traits that define superior leadership performance. Such studies have recognized the role of cognitive ability, emotional intelligence, and personality in generating superior leadership outcomes (Northouse, 2015). Research has continually demonstrated a moderate to a strong correlation between personality factors such as extraversion, conscientiousness, emotional stability and leadership emergence and effectiveness (Northouse, 2015). Little is known about antecedents (Brown and Mitchell 2010). A variety of personality-based antecedents have been proposed (Brown and Treviño 2006), but thus far only two traits, leader agreeableness and conscientiousness, have been found to be related to follower ratings of ethical leadership (Kalshoven et al. 2011; Walumbwa and Schaubroeck 2009). Other research on antecedents by Jordan et al. (2013) found that ethical leadership is positively related to the leader's cognitive moral development and is maximized when the leader's cognitive moral development diverges from and is greater than the follower's cognitive moral development. Mayer et al. (2012) found that both dimensions of a leader's moral identity, internalization, and symbolization were related to ethical leadership. This information is useful for selection purposes, but individual differences are not very amenable to change. From a practical standpoint, identifying antecedents that can help organizations not



only select ethical leaders but also develop them would be beneficial.

Previous surveys suggested that traits such as integrity, credibility, honesty are also associated with a perception of an effective leader (Bass & Stogdill, 1990). Based on a philosophical foundation Marcic (1997) outlines five virtues that are crucial for a leader-follower relationship. These are trustworthiness, unity, respect and dignity, justice, service and humility. Rubin et al., examined the consequences of ethical leadership in form of promotion on a sample of ninety-six managers and found, that ethical leaders were more and more likely to be rated as exhibiting potential for senior leadership positions. Leaders who demonstrated increased ethical leadership were more likely to be viewed as promotable in the short-run in comparison with those who displayed less ethical behaviour (Rubin, et al., (2010). A leader who treats their subordinate fairly and are supportive of and loyal to them are more likely to be reciprocated with the desired ethical behaviour (Den Hartog and De Hoogh 2009; Mayer *et al.* 2009; Neubert *et al.* 2009; Resick *et al.* 2006). The criteria relevant for judging ethical behaviour of a leader include individual values, conscious intentions, freedom of choice, stage of moral development, types of influence used, and use of ethical as well as unethical behaviour (G. Yukl, 2006). A good example of ethical leadership is the former president of Liberia, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2011. *Newsweek* and *Time* listed her as one of the ten best (female) leaders in the world, while *The Economist* described her as arguably the best president the country has ever had. Other examples are Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr., Nelson Mandela etc.

Unethical leadership can be thought of as referring to leaders that display unethical conduct and discourage subordinate ethics and integrity (Craig and Gustafson 1998). According to Van Wart (2006: 39) the most common symptom of unethical leadership styles is leaders that 'use their positions for their personal benefit or for a special group at the expense of others'.

This is common in the political sector. Examples of political leader that fail the ethics test are Silvio Berlusconi, former prime minister of Italy who was accused of many unethical and illegal practices such as corruption and bribery; conflicts of interest; links to the mafia; abuse of media for political gain as well as sex scandals, Idi Amin Dada Oumee was a Ugandan military officer who served as the President of Uganda from 1971 to 1979. Popularly known as the "Butcher of Uganda", he is considered one of the cruellest despots in African history, Adolf **Hitler** was chancellor of **Germany** from 1933 to 1945, serving as dictator and leader of National Socialist **German** Workers Party, for the bulk of his time in power. **Hitler's** fascist policies caused World War II and led to the genocide etc.

3. Methodology

To review empirical studies related to ethical leadership, antecedent and prospect, set of articles published in journals relevant to the study were identified and analysed. Keywords were used to search EBSCO database, Scholar Google and SAGE and 109 articles was found to be relevant to the topic under discussion. From these, studies that were not related to ethical leadership, antecedent and prospect were excluded. Studies that focused on conceptual discussions of people's perceptions and understanding of ethical leadership, antecedent and prospect, resulting in a set of 15 empirical articles were selected. All the 15 articles were read, analysed and the measures of ethical leadership and units of analysis were applied in those articles. Brown et al. (2005)'s ELS is by far the most dominant scale used in empirical studies on ethical leadership.

4. Results and Discussion

Results

From the foregoing, ethical leadership does exist and has a future. This is because organisations and communities continually desire ethical leadership for the following benefits:



An ethical leader promotes honesty in workers: This makes the workers feel secure and free to express their thoughts and as well honest about their perceptions.

Ethical behaviour ensures security, stimulates job satisfaction and more prosperity for the organization. The employees have greater job security and are more dedicated.

Action with an ethical reason has a meaningful impact on the workers. When an action upholds one's virtue, every direction towards the action is followed and executed to a greater extent.

Ethical behaviour creates stability: This is because the persons with a strong morale and value system have a strong emotional quotient and is stable and consistent in performance. They follow their leader in unison for the greater good of the organisation and community.

Ethical leadership enhances the public image of the Organization. When lead by an ethical leader, the consequences of the action will often be in agreement with the public desires and such organizations often come under the good books of the society. This brings about both popularity and profit.

Discussion

Obviously, there is growing recognition of the need for ethical leadership. For example in a study conducted by Legal Research Network (LRN) in 2019 on prevalence of moral leadership among managers, 72% of respondents say their colleagues would perform better under moral leadership. The Centre for Ethical Leadership recommends a 4-V Model of Ethical Leadership as a framework that should align a leader's internal beliefs and values with his external behaviours and actions for the purpose of advancing the common good of all concern. An ethical leader must demonstrate mastery over these 4-V Model and they are as follows:

Values: Ethical leadership begins with an understanding of and commitment to a leader's core values. By discovering the values which make up the core of our identities and motivators, we begin the process of integrating our unique values with our choices in our personal, professional, and civic lives.

Vision: Ethical leadership requires the ability to frame our actions within a picture of what ought to be – especially in the area of service to others.

Voice: Ethical leaders must be able to articulate their vision to others in an authentic way that moves them into action.

Virtue: Ethical leaders strive to do what is right and good. They practice good behaviour by asking: How are my values, vision and voice in alignment with and is supporting the common good?

In answering the first research question on whether ethical leadership exist can be seen in the following cases: When a leader or organisation does the right thing it will definitely have a positive impact. Example is the BUC a financial institution in Puerto Rico during the Hurricane Maria disaster in 2017; who put the interest of the people first. They were the first to make aids available, stocked their ATMs with cash and did not limit access to only members, issued 0% interest disaster-recovery loans, defer interest payment on existing loans and accept hand written promissory notes of repayment while network was not available. Two years after, their action proved to be the right decision because their membership grew by 20%, they expanded their operations to create new jobs and grow their employee base on the island to 55.

Procter & Gamble is another example of a company doing the right thing. They raised awareness of gender bias, working toward equality for all with a campaign called 'We See Equal'. This boosted their performance in 2019.

Also, in a research carried out by Accenture to determine if there was a correlation between how inclusive companies are of people with disabilities and its financial performance? Accenture's research proved that companies which embrace best practices for including people with disabilities performed better financially on average over a four-year period, with 28% higher revenue. It was recorded that the reaction to this research was overwhelming, with many companies



started asking how to address disability inclusion within their own workforces.

Research also revealed that there's obviously an appetite for more ethical hiring. Example is the CEO in one Telecommunication Company. In a bid to save his company because the company went through month after month of difficult times as the market moved from analogue to digital systems and the carriers changed the way that any resellers would be compensated. This made their revenues to plummet. To keep the company afloat, the business owner tried to keep the problems a secret and took loans against every personal asset he could to keep making payroll. When he shared the challenge with his employee, they cried, hugged him, shared in his challenge and all agreed to a reduction in pay and all pulled together to ride the storm and turn the company around - and they did. The CEO's openness is a good example of ethical practise.

The second research question on what is the leaders role in promoting follower's ethical behaviour, findings revealed that to promote follower's ethical behaviour a leader must listen to what people have to say, have the best interest of employees at heart and create an environmentally friendly atmosphere to work. The leader must also compliment employees who behave according to the integrity guidelines. He must be relied on to honour his/her commitment, treat others in a way that is right and equal as well as clarifies responsibilities, expectations and goals for the followers.

The third research question on whether there is prospect for ethical leadership can be seen from the above findings that ethical leadership has prospect. It is the great way to succeed both in business, corporate bodies and communities.

In comparing results from previous studies Green and Odom (2003) note that the lack of ethical leadership in Enron caused harm to thousands of employees, invoked greater government regulation, and crippled consumer confidence of the financial industry (Thompson, 2010). This is not the case with BUC a financial institution in

Puerto Rico during the Hurricane Maria disaster in 2017; who through their ethical decision and action brought expansion to the company.

According to Van Wart (2006: 39) the most common symptom of unethical leadership styles is leaders that 'use their positions for their personal benefit or for a special group at the expense of others'. An examples of political leader that fail the ethics test are Silvio Berlusconi, former prime minister of Italy who was accused of many unethical and illegal practices such as corruption and bribery; conflicts of interest; links to the mafia; abuse of media for political gain as well as sex scandals in contrast to the former president of Liberia, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, who through her ethical leadership qualities was able to rebuild her country and moved it forward.

Conclusion

An ethical leader is someone who represents the purpose and values of the company, organisation or team that he/she works for or leads. This leader is resolute to perform to the best of their ability and drives others to do the same. An ethical leader requires the ability to be open, honest and direct in all situations. The understanding of integrity is fundamental to the role of the ethical leader. Within an environment, an ethical leader can only lead and influence others if he/she is able to maintain a consistent drive that remains morally focused, determined and forthright. An ethical leader creates an environment that allows for open conversation and working practice that enhances the sharing of ideas, knowledge and vision. The leader must also make others to follow the lead that he/she sets by the values that are reflected in the way they live, influence and inspire. An ethical leader leads in a manner that respects the rights and dignity of others.

Leaders are naturally in a position of power, so ethical leadership must focus on how leaders leverage this power in the decisions they make, actions they engage in and the ways they influence others. By demonstrating ethical leadership, a leader promotes a high level of integrity that stimulates a sense of



trustworthiness, and encourages subordinates to accept and follow their vision. In summary, ethics boils down to a choice to influence oneself and others in doing the right thing. Ethical leadership is not about a process but rather a way of being and making the right choice (Darcy, 2010).

Recommendations

Leaders should put more structures that will increase the ethical awareness among consumers, organisations and followers. The awareness for ethical leadership requirement must be beyond laws and regulations and focus should be on business metrics and on building good corporate image. Companies should promote the use of social media sharing as this will discourage brands from using unethical tactics. They should be aware of global cultural peculiarities and have respect for differences. Managers learning landscape should be deepened to enable them handle complexities, manage a ceaseless surge of information, and see connections, emerging patterns and systems. Managers should integrate ethical responsibility into all aspects of learning. All these will make them to move away from traditional knowledge-based approach to leadership development and toward something more transformational.

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