ETHICAL LEADERSHIP IN EDUCATION

Bryan M. Santos
OIC-Deputy Director
Bataan School for the Arts

Introduction

Ethics is often encountered in examining and settling human conduct towards morality and righteousness. As such, there is a possibility for it to be objective and inclusive (Bedi et al., 2016). But for Winch (2020), ethics may vary according to culture, context, and history. Ethical behavior is founded on culture. Hence, culture is considered as a determinant of what is ethically acceptable. The situation in values, norms, and moral priorities are not the same; culture influences them causing a diverse set of rules among different societies (Winch, 2020).

Ethical dimensions are rooted from and shaped by social and cultural influences (Winch, 2020). A person's behavior and actions are results of a culture-based viewpoint of right, wrong, and appropriate behavior (Gasparski, 2018). Clark-Kazak (2017) added that ethical considerations are also not uniform as these are affected by constantly transforming trends. In a study conducted among university graduates in Jordan about moral values, it was found out that ethical leadership, culture, together with religious factors have a relationship (Rababa'h et al., 2020).

Ethical Leadership in General

Ethical leadership is described as a social and relational practice associated with moral and righteous goals focused on human relations (De Roeck & Farooq, 2018). In connection with this, Lin and Liu (2017) described ethical leaders as compassionate, truthful, and honorable heads who guarantee fair judgment, and effectively disseminate ethics and ethical behavior down to their constituents. Additionally, Dust et al. (2018) stated that ethical leaders should incite values to its co-workers through inclusive teamwork and cooperation, and social justice.

In this section, the three overlapping leadership theories in the field of ethical leadership namely transformational, spiritual, and authentic will be explained concisely. The leadership's moral potential will be tackled in light of these theories. Consequently, the relationship and differences between these theories and the concept of ethical leadership will also be identified.

Transformational Leadership

According to the proposal of Burns (1987), since transformational leaders encourage their subordinates to set aside self-centered matters and function as a group for a shared goal, transformational leadership is a moral guidance. Yet, this influential movement started a tension among scholars from both sides of transformational and transactional leadership. Yasir and Mohammad (2016) defended that transformational leadership includes an ethical method while transactional leadership does not. On the other hand, Berkovich (2016) claimed that transformational leaders can either be ethical or unethical based on their inspiration. Hoch et al. (2018) justified this notion by differentiating authentic transformational leaders from pseudo ones. Authentic transformational leaders conform with the moral standards because of their moral values and social motivation. On the contrary, pseudo transformational leaders are self-centered and affected by politics. Personalized and socialized charismatic leadership were also differentiated and found out that between the two, socialized charismatic leadership was more aligned with ethics.

However, in the analysis of Galli (2019), he argued that transformational leadership is indeed ethical. Leaders who are viewed by their followers as persons with high moral reasoning tend to appear more transformational. Also, leader integrity has a positive relationship with transformational leadership (Galli, 2019).

Siangchokyoo et al. (2020) argued that transformational leadership and ethical leadership are common in terms of their individual features. Both transformational and ethical

leaders are concerned with their followers, firm with their ethical beliefs, proactive of the result of their decision, and are moral examples to others. At the same time, Turnnidge and Côté (2018) emphasized the distinction between the two leadership styles. Ethical leaders have notable correlation with the leadership's ideal impact aspect. This is probably due to the more stable moral management dimension of ethical leadership far from the frequent transactional leadership style. Through obvious establishment of ethical standards and making the followers responsible and loyal to those standards by applying punishment and incentives, ethical leaders try to motivate and change their followers' ethical behavior (Fischer, 2016). Turnnidge and Côté (2018) concluded that transactional process is included in ethical leadership that makes it apart from transformational leadership. Moreover, intellectuals and idealists are not parts of ethical leadership because these characteristics are constant in transformational/charismatic leadership.

Authentic Leadership

Authentic leaders are persons who have full knowledge of their thinking and actions and are remarked as mindful of their own and others' advantages, virtues, and intellect; aware of the work environment; and are proud, positive, aspiring, tough, and have high moral character (Covelli & Mason, 2017). Alvesson and Einola (2019) perceived authentic leadership as a root concept where charismatic, transformational, integrity, and/or ethical leadership can be integrated, but maintained the claim that these concepts have different characteristics.

Self-knowledge, honesty, and stability are the bases of authentic leadership (Covelli & Mason, 2017). Authentic leadership is characterized by optimism, and authentic leaders have to have the ability to determine indefinite ethical problems, look into them from different angles, and comply with the moral values when making decisions (Gill et al., 2018).

As stated by Liu et al. (2018), authentic leadership seems to be similar to ethical leadership in such a way that it has social motivation and regard, and that authentic leaders are righteous and proactive when it comes to decision-making. On the other hand, Alilyyani et al. (2018) mentioned that authentic leadership becomes a distinct leadership style through its authenticity and self-knowledge which ethical leadership does not possess because it is mainly focused on the state of others.

Spiritual Leadership

Egel and Fry (2017) said that morals and manners essential for fundamental motivation of self and others make up spiritual leadership. This leadership style is influenced by religion-based values and ethics. Mubasher (2017) gave another description of spiritual leadership which is an event where a leader expresses spiritual ethics like integrity, trustworthiness, humility, righteousness, empathy, and courtesy towards others making himself a good model to others.

Fry et al. (2017) mentioned three tools to determine the extent of spiritual leadership: vision, which defined the group's idea and goal; hope/faith, which represents the assurance that the idea or goal is still in sight; and selfless love, which leads to a kind and considerate setting. Spiritual leadership is founded on integrity, consideration, and abnegation, and these remain consistent with the principles of leadership's ethical aspect (Mubasher, 2017). But as Samul (2020) indicated in his paper, spiritual leadership has also qualities that deviate from ethical leadership. Spiritual leaders also possess visionary characteristics the same with transformational leadership, and they are inspired to serve God and the people which they do not consider as a job but as a calling (Fry et al., 2017). Although, it cannot be denied that spiritual factors may affect leaders to become ethical, there is also a possibility that ethical leaders are more influenced by empirical drives (Egel & Fry, 2017).

The abovementioned leadership styles, along with ethical leadership, portray true selflessness through caring and showing empathy on their followers (De Roeck & Farooq, 2018). All leaders are based on integrity with decisions always aligned with ethics thus making them good examples for their subordinates (Samul, 2020). Employees are expected to look up to such leaders, learn and adopt their principles and values, and desire to be like them (Dugan, 2017). But the situation in ethical leadership is not similar to this. Babalola et al. (2016) said that ethical leadership emphasizes proactivity whether in the ethical or unethical manner of its followers in a work environment. Ethical leaders are more on ethical rules by communication and accountability methods. The transactional dimension of ethical leadership makes it separate from other leadership styles. It is somehow related to these other constructs but different in most of its characteristics.

Influences on Ethical Leadership

The presence of an ethical role model has an immense impact on the development of a leader's ethical development as posited by Bandura's Social Learning Theory. Kang (2019) claimed that other than followers, some leaders are more likely to be ethical than others depending on the observations from an existing model. The identification, internalization of values and attitudes, and emulation depend on the portrayed behavior of the model which includes how the model deals with the decision and consequences of their actions.

Demirtas et al. (2019) asserted that an ethical role model is proven to be a precursor of ethical leadership. Concerning this, Hu et al. (2018) stated that ethical role modeling is a side by side phenomenon as they are commonly known through their daily conduct and interactions. The way role models behave and treat others has a vital effect on other people around them (Demirtas et al., 2019). Individuals who have workplace ethical role models identified characteristics and behaviors that affect their behavior. Setting high ethical standards and

holding accountability are found to be associated with ethical leadership (Ghanem & Castelli, 2019). In line with these traits are honesty and fairness. Ghanem and Castelli (2019) further discussed that humility as well as the willingness to learn from mistakes and experiences take a toll on being an ethical leader. However, the study has been limited to people wherein subjects had closely worked with in the past.

Saha et al. (2020) stated that there are three possible types of role models that affect the development of ethical leadership. These three types are early childhood role models, career mentors, and top managers. The study concluded that early moral development with the influence of senior leadership is a requirement in creating the tone of an organization that is most likely to succeed as results showed that an ethical mentor positively affects the growth of a leader, making one more ethical as identified by their peers and colleagues (Karim et al., 2019).

This supports the findings of Presbitero and Teng-Calleja (2019) regarding the relation of social learning perspective in ethical leadership as early childhood ethical models do not automatically showcase relevance to ethical leadership as seen in the workplace. Additionally, top manager ethical role models do not necessarily serve as the only ethical model with regards to social learning theory (Karim et al., 2019). Hence, having a proximate ethical role model throughout a person's development would have a greater chance of helping a person become an ethical leader.

Ethical Leadership in the Education Field

Research on ethical leadership incorporated with education was recorded to have increased over the past 30 years since Hodgkinson (1978) took the initiative to restore the theories on the moral foundation of educational leadership in the 1970s (Berkovich & Eyal, 2020). Following the said initiative of Hodgkinson (1978), Greenfield (1981) and Foster

(1986) proposed the need for an in-depth study on educational leadership mainly focusing on its moral and ethical aspects. However, one of the first conceptual frameworks of ethical leadership was proposed by Starratt (1991) in which he suggested the use of moral dimensions and actions to define ethical leadership rather than addressing and classifying it as a form of style. Sergiovanni (1992) used this kind of approach and incorporated it with his moral model by amalgamating the needs and interests for both collective and individual processing (Eva et al., 2019). Although integration of concepts and increasing number of research on ethical leadership continue to pave the way in capturing the interest of researchers, inquiries on the moral scope and ethical basis were raised on international research agenda. These inquiries include: does the word "ethical leader" or the role it plays conveys the same meaning and significance across the globe taken into account that history, culture or religion vary among places? Answering these questions could give a better understanding of the means and problems in facilitating ethical leadership creating a more distinct function and meaning in different places and cultural contexts, and distinguishing universal commonalities and variations in different social settings (Shakeel et al., 2019).

Frameworks on and Approaches to Ethical Leadership in Education

To provide a clearer perspective on the concept of ethical leadership, many scholars working on educational leadership have developed significant frameworks and approaches. However, earlier frameworks and approaches both to ethical leadership and ethics in general have been regarded as a single approach in illuminating ethical concerns and giving solutions to ethical dilemmas (Lawton & Paez, 2015). One good example of this is the paper of Arar et al. (2016) who argued in favor of an ethics of care. Arar et al. (2016) propounded the position that care should be the overarching point that leaders in the education field must consider when evaluating their professional and personal actions. Similarly, Robinson and Mazid (2016)

argued that in a hierarchy of values in the field of educational leadership, caring must be at the topmost of the hierarchy. This singular approach to ethical leadership is in direct contrast to that of Starratt's framework (1991). According to Starratt (1991), ethical leadership is a complex subject that needs a multi-dimensional framework. Thus, his framework consisted of three ethics namely ethics of care, ethics of justice, and ethics of critique. This paper deems it appropriate to elaborate on this multidimensional framework.

Starratt's (1991) Multi-Dimensional Framework

Starratt (1996) said that "an ethics of care refers to a standpoint of regard for the dignity and worth of individuals that requires fidelity to persons, a willingness to acknowledge their right to be who they are, an openness to encountering them in their authentic individuality, and a loyalty to the relationship" (p.163). This means that in the field of leadership, educational or otherwise, human relationships must be the center where each individual's voice is heard, considered, and valued (Shapiro & Gross, 2013). While the ethics of care is driven by rationality, the ethics of justice is driven by treatment of people in an equitable and fair manner (Starratt, 1991). According to Starratt (1996), justice means the choice of an individual "to act justly" as well as the choice of a community to "direct or govern its actions justly" (p. 163). For Starratt, justice, both as a choice by an individual and community, is important. Leaders in the field of education who consider ethics of justice in guiding their actions and decisions create an environment where a strong relational spirit is strengthened and democratic practices are fostered (Starratt, 1991). The last of the three ethics, the ethics of critique, is based on the work of some critical theorists who doubt the structures of power in institutions and social relationships. The ethics of critique demands that educational leaders are reflective on the current educational practices and policies in order for them to unravel injustice or exploitation that is deeply embedded within the different structures in society (Starratt, 1996). Educational

leaders are therefore challenged to give solutions to injustices and conduct social activities that are more responsive to the society's needs (Starratt, 1991). Despite all of these, however, Starratt (1996) argued that arrangements, relationships, and structures in educational institutions must be critiqued so that greater equity may be served both for students and staff.

The multi-dimensional framework by Starratt (1991) provides for a useful method exploring ethical leadership in the field of education. The three dimensions of this framework, however, are not discrete. Instead, they interrelate with one another and each of which implies "something of the other" (Starratt, 1991, p. 198). For example, while the ethics of critique is anchored on human rights and social justice, the ethic of justice would not be operational sans a degree of caring about human relationships. Also, the ethics of caring is embedded in the ethics of critique in the sense that its focus is on the significance of human relationships. This implies that the three dimensions of Starratt's (1991) framework enrich and complement one another.

Dimensions of Ethical Leadership in Education

Educational research in the twenty-first century has highlighted social justice as one of the major concerns due to the shift in Western society and economic gaps amongst different populations that include a large number of displaced persons, immigrants, and refugees (Shields, 2013; Wait, 2016). Cribb and Gewirtz (2013) stated that these problems created a call for impartial school practice as well as fair learning that is sensitive to different cultures and racial backgrounds. With the presence of corruption in politics and business, the effects of unethical behavior done in organizations have been given attention to for being a hindrance in achieving social justice (Hassan et al., 2013). This has led to the surge of studies with the aim to understand different leadership ethical dimensions which include education (Langlois et al., 2014).

Kohlberg's moral reasoning based on justice together with the theories of Gilligan (1982) and Noddings (1984) stimulated numerous studies focusing on the ethical dimension of leadership in education. Early studies included Hodgkinson's (1978) suggestion of moral foundation rehabilitation in educational leadership theories and Starratt's (1991) comprehensive and cohesive educational administration theoretical model.

Consequently, ethical leadership in education has been addressed by several pieces of research that provide organized structure in identifying practice of educational leadership that is ethnic-oriented (Aksu & Kasalak, 2014; Norberg & Johansson, 2014; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2016).

Lately, the difference on the influence of culture and social contexts and their impact on meaning and practice of educators worldwide with regards to ethical leadership has been the topic of several studies (Aksu & Kasalak, 2014; Norberg & Johansson, 2014; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2016). Langlois et al. (2014) pointed out that finding the commonalities of culture and language that ease and impede the development of ethical leadership will promote a better understanding of it.

Farquards (1981) proposed an antithesis to earlier approaches stating that a single ethical posture and multiple ethical paradigms should be adapted in solving ethical dilemmas in educational ethical leadership (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2016). The ethical perspective of practicing utilitarianism and fairness should always be included as school leaders can always examine and utilize different ethical approaches that can be most fitting to a situation at hand. Shapiro and Stefkovich (2016) suggested that ethical paradigms should take the ethic of the community in part. Moreover, Aksu and Kasalak (2014) cited a professional ethic aspect that could be applied to all the given aspects.

The ethic of care

School leaders who practice the ethic of care, while considering human relations important in the school system operations, are individuals who are effective under pressure as they use stress to empower them in making decisions. Starratt (1991) indicated that the ethic of care requires the willingness to accept a person's individuality with openness to authenticity and loyalty to a relationship that is built from engrossment, receptivity, and relatedness.

The definition of the ethics of care by Starratt (1991) is anchored on the insights of ethical theorists in the field of education whose original work pertained to a feminist approach to morality and ethics in education (Gilligan, 1982; Noddings, 1984). For Nodding (1984), the basis of every decision that educational leaders must make should be caring. As a consequence, the ethics of care is considered as a representation of the feminist approach to morality and ethics in education (Gotlib, 2015).

The Ethics of Justice

The ethics of justice originated from a philosophical perspective on the nature of the physical world and the relationship between human beings and their place of abode. It can be split into two distinct viewpoints. The first viewpoint puts emphasis on the rights of persons, where these rights are anchored on the idea of equity and fairness, that is, that every person must be treated equally (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2016). The emphasis of the second viewpoint, on the other hand, is on the rights of the majority even if specific persons may not benefit from them.

The Ethics of Critique

This dimension is closely related to the ethics of justice because critical evaluation often leads to the determination of injustices (Starratt, 1991). Specifically, however, the ethics of critique is focused on confronting power structures and norms that discriminate against the weak and offer better ones (Langlois et al., 2014). According to Starratt (1991), "their [leaders]

basic stance is ethical because they are dealing with questions of social justice and human dignity" (p. 189). The basic proposition of the ethics of critique is that leaders must deal with questions of human dignity and social justice and that they must take into great consideration the individual rights of the different stakeholders in the field of education (Norberg & Johansson, 2014). As such, the ethics of critique is mostly needed in institutions or societies that are multicultural in nature. Ethical leaders in such settings must be able to give solutions to ethical dilemmas and conceptualize efforts aimed at effecting changes within the institution (Langlois et al., 2014).

Conclusion

Ethical leadership dimensions are rooted from and shaped by social and cultural influences. Transformational leadership, authentic leadership, and spiritual leadership overlap with ethical leadership. To provide a clearer perspective on the concept of ethical leadership, many scholars working on educational leadership have developed significant frameworks and approaches. In the field of education, it is Starratt's (1991) multi-dimensional framework that is being used more often. Its three dimensions are ethics of care, ethics of justice, and ethics of critique. While there have been many studies about ethical leadership in the field of education, its impact on educational institutions has not yet been fully explored. Moreover, the effect of decisions that an ethical leader makes on his or her subordinate is a subject yet to be examined.

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January 5, 2023