A Study of Ethical Leadership Qualities and Responsibilities of the Leaders in the New Millennium

Vaishali Nadkarni[a], Rajeshwary G[b]
[a]Asst. Prof- Department of Commerce, The Byramjee Jeejeebhoy College of Commerce, Charniroad, Mumbai, MS, India
[b] Associate. Prof- Department of Commerce, Ph.D Guide, K.P.B Hinduja College of Commerce,Opp Charniroad Railway Station, Charniroad, Mumbai, MS, India

Abstract

Leadership is the act of influencing someone or oneself to get the desired course of action. In the Organisation there are three levels of hierarchy i.e. top level, middle level and lower level. It is the middle level who bridges the gap between the higher and the lower level. Hence the researcher here has tried to understand what is ethics, the ethical behaviour of the leader, further to evaluate the responsibilities of an ethical leader in the new millennium.

KEYWORDS:-Ethics, Leader, Organisation, Millennium.

Introduction:-

Ethics is a philosophical term originating from Greek word "ethos" meaning custom or character. It is the code of values and moral principles that guides individual or group behaviour with respect to 'what is right or wrong'. Ethical behaviour is both 'legally and morally acceptable' to the larger community (L. K. Trevino, 1986).Ethical behaviour is defined as behaviour which is morally accepted as "good" and "right" as opposed to "bad" or "wrong" in a given situation (Sims, 1992).

According to Patricia Pinnell and Shirley Eagan from West Virginia University Extension, people use four common questions for determining the ethics of an action. These are:

❑ **The child on your shoulder**. Are you OK for doing the action, even if your children are watching?

❑ **The front paper story**. Would you feel OK if the action/behaviour became the front-page story in your local newspaper?

❑ **The golden rule**. Are you comfortable for being on the receiving end of this action or decisions?

❑ **The rule of universality**. Would it be OK if everyone in the world would behave or act that way?

Ethics is therefore open to interpretation. Ethical leaders always know how to do the right thing. it may be difficult to define exactly what "right" is, but a leader who is ethical is not afraid to do what they truly believe to be right – even if it is unpopular, unprofitable, or inconvenient.

Ethical Leader

An ethical leader is a person living up to principles of conduct that are crucial for them.An ethical leader one needs to adhere to a more universal standard of moral behaviour.Leading ethically is believed to be a process of inquiry – asking questions about what is right and what is wrong setting the example for followers and others about the rightness or wrongness of particular actions.Ethical leadership can be viewed in terms of healing and energizing powers of love, recognizing that leadership is a reciprocal relation with followers.Leader's mission is to serve and support and his passion for leading comes from compassion

Traits of an effective Leader

Focused: To lead a team to success, leaders must possess an extraordinary amount of focus. It's important to eliminate distractions from the work area and to hone in on the key issues at hand. The leaders are must be able to retain clear minds and focus on the things that matter.

Passionate: Effective leaders are already passionate about what they do. The level of enthusiasm and commitment can inspire the team members and motivate them to do better work. Modeling the attitude can effectively lead the team towards a successful destination.

Assertive: Assertive leaders are firm and bold, unafraid to go after what they want. Such a level of certainty and confidence will serve the employees and self. As well as the leader can tackle the larger challenges and go after new goals.

Decisive: Leaders are often called on to make big decisions, so it's also important for the leader to be decisive. A decisive leader is never confused with an impulsive one. A decisive leader carefully weighs the potential effects of each option and chooses the opportunity that works best for his or her team. Decisive leader are always ready to take challenges.

Humane: Leaders are usually seen as active, expressive, and energetic. They are often very optimistic and open to change. Overall, they are generally quick and alert and tend to be uninhibited.

Focus on Team Building: For people to do their very best work, they need an organizational environment that supports them by making it safe to take risks, Business leaders today put a strong emphasis on team work. Leaders must create an friendly relationship which fosters team cohesiveness.

Leadership by Examples: A good leader always demonstrates the right behaviour that the employee should follow. If the leader demands a lot from their team, they should willing set higher standards for themselves. Aligning your words and actions will help to build trust and make your team more willing to follow your example.

Value awareness: Being able to "put oneself in the other person's shoes" is a key trait of leaders today. Without empathy, you can't build trust. And without trust, you will never be able to get the best effort from your employees.

Integrity: Research shows that the top thing that employees want from their leaders is integrity. Be honest, fair, candid and forthright, and treat everyone in the same way that one want oneself to be treated.

Intelligence: Good leaders are practical, logical, and to-the-point. They tend to be low in sentimental attachments and comfortable with criticism. They are usually insensitive to hardship and overall, are very poised.

Ethical Leadership

"It is difficult to make predictions, especially about the future" – goes Danish quote. The human brain is more comfortable thinking linearly, however, changes happen in complex systems, where a small incremental difference can lead to a disproportionate impact in another place — or what is known as "the butterfly effect". However, if we see from an India perspective, here is the current state of affairs: Technical and Professional education is at a standstill. More and more engineering colleges and management schools are shutting down, lack of proper selection process and job-ready candidates, and a shortage of teaching staff. Traditional big industries from manufacturing to IT to banking to telecom are introducing automation and Artificial Intelligence to take away jobs that would traditionally be done by humans, but are prone to human error. RPA (Robotics Process Automation) is taking over tasks across industries. While reskilling is imperative, incumbent industries that are trying to compete with disruptors are under tremendous pressure to cut costs and hence are unable to take on the costs of reskilling.Leadership in the context of normative organizational ethics would be defined with regard to "how individuals should or ought to behave in an organization". This includes speculations about criteria that define ethical decisions and personality characteristics.Ethical leadership is crucial and vital in providing direction that enables the organization to fulfill its mission and vision and achieve declared goals. Ethical leadership is regarded as a key factor in the management of an organization's reputation in the external environment and in comparison with competitors

Responsibilities and Challenges of an Ethical Leaderin New Millennium

It is reviewed by various authors that in today's global scenario, the generation that is coming into the workforce will need to re-skill about 10-15 times in their lifetime. So careers are going to be "emergent" rather than planned and more like a patchwork quilt than a traditional ladder. New skills are evolving all the time. And the openness to experiment and learning would be essential for any employee to grow. Leaders serve as role models for their followers and demonstrate the behavioural boundaries set within an organization. The appropriate and desired behaviour is enhanced through culture and socialization process of the newcomers. Employees learn values by observing their leaders in action. The more the leader "walks the talk", by translating internalized values into action, the higher level of trust and respect they earn from followers. When leaders are prepared to make personal sacrifices for followers or the company in general for the

sake of acting in accordance with their values, the employees are more willing to do the same.

Retaining the talent:-

The first and the foremost challenge that organizations face today is that of attracting and retaining the right talent. Finding the right fit for the organization is testing and correspondingly challenging is the aspect of knowledge retention. Employees and employers have high expectations from each other which have made the process of recruitment and retention a grueling task. The impact on business communications, new generation of employees and their technology demands will influence job decisions, hiring and a new age of work life balance. How businesses address these demands will inevitably affect their competitive advantage and HR success. It's not just a technology trend anymore- it's a business trend.

Proficient Personnel :-

Expertise needed to lead a startup is remarkably different from that of established organizations. Employing proficient personnel with complementary skills will help to harness the right skill and those who will stick to the organization for long. Leaders need to effectively retain the knowledgeable and competent work force, since they are the ones who are the essence of core competency and productivity for the company. Thus, leaders have a perplexing task to retain the talented workforce in wake of employee poaching activities and also the social media which is used by employees and employers for recruitment purposes.

Cohesive Approach:

Share identical vision and mission as that of the organization. This challenge of creating a cohesive approach to achieve organizational goals is an arduous task. Leaders need to efficaciously weave there sentiment within the talent pool through effective communication. So that it becomes rousing enough for the workforce to have the same vision of the organization they belong to.

Managing Workforce Diversity:-

Nowadays, majority of the work is done in teams and therefore effective team management is quint essential for an organization to succeed. The challenge lies in consolidating all this diversity such as the cultural diversity in the team, varied age groups and performance in the team into one unified element. Leaders need to gauge the individual expertise of the team members and coordinate with them so that they contribute willingly towards the organizations requirements.

Employee Engagement:-

Leaders should make certain that, employees are befittingly engaged within the organization so that a sentiment of companionship and esprit-de corps prevails. The leaders should strike a balance in maintaining professional and personal relationships

with employees.This will foster the spirit of passion for work and sense of belongingness for the organization.

Empowered Workforce:-

The employees can be empowered by involving them into decision making and problem solving process in the organization. This would not only enthuse the workers but also prove to be a productive approach to enhance work efficiency. Leaders need to be aware of the fact that they would fail if they can't empower the workforce. For empowering the group leaders need to go beyond the tried and tested leadership styles. Empowerment too brings its own sets of demands. Empowering a workforce means that employees should be bestowed with liberty and independence at work. But when things go awry, leaders are expected to own responsibility for the overall state of affairs

Employee Involvement and Team Spirit:-

Leaders need to give individual recognition for the work done. Again, the irony lies that employees need to be given decent chances for growth, meet new challenges and carve a niche for themselves. Leaders should coach and mentor them so that their potential can be maximized.

Change Management:-

Change is an inevitable and is unrelenting. Organizations can't do away with it. Changing and acclimatizing to the dynamic business environment helps in organizational sustainability and maintain the competitive edge. Leading change is a skill which demands leaders to take intrepid steps to anchor the changes in the corporate culture. This can be done by being open and honest in approach, getting the feedback for the initiatives taken and by remaining committed to usher in the change. This methodology builds an environment of trust and sureness within the workforce and thus facilitates the change process

Corporate Image:-

Managing the public image of the company is the toughest challenge lies with the leader. Business today demand that companies focus their attention not only to their own enterprise, but also the overall business environment. A leader needs to associate with and promote a web of business connections with other organizations and people. This practice would aid in superior understanding of the current trends in business, competitive forces, and global market concerns. It's the leader who helps for maintaining the superior performance, growth, sustainability and profitability of the organization.

Conclusion:

In the present age of humanism, scientific progress has greatly improved human material wellbeing. The communications revolution made the world a 'global village'. But there has also been moral decay as evidenced in the great increase in broken homes, immorality, violence and crime. Vivekananda concept of potential divinity of the soul prevents this degradation, divinizes human relationships, and makes life meaningful and

worth living. He is thus, also known as founder of 'spiritual humanism'. Leaders ought to be a crucial source of ethical guidance for employees and at time are responsible for moral development of employees in an organization. Businesses today are undergoing a sea transformation in their functioning due to Globalization. It has become increasingly tortuous and tricky encompassing an excess of complex business issues in its fold, thus paving the way for new leadership challenges. These complex business issues manifest themselves in old and new, small and large business. These complications are driven by ambiguity and fast-track changes. Nonetheless, sustainability of business in this dynamic business environment seeks for exceptional leadership skills to manage the challenges ahead and transform them into a win-win situation.

References:

1. Covey, Stephen R (1999), Principle Centered Leadership, Simon and Schuster, ISBN 0-684-85841-X
2. Landsberg Max, (2003) The Tools of Leadership: Vision, Inspiration and Momentum, Profile Books, 1-86197-660-7.
3. Rego,Armenio(2012), The Virtues of Leadership, Oxford University Press, 978-0-19-965386-7.
4. Daft, Richard (2011), Leadership, Cengage Learning India, 8-1315-1714-4.
5. http://www.leadershipandinfluenceblog.com/10-traits-of-effective-leaders/
6. https://www.forbes.com/sites/deeppatel/2017/03/22/11-powerful-traits-of-successful-leaders/#34f21c25469f
7. https://www.entrepreneur.com/slideshow/299443
8. https://www.michaelpage.com/advice/management-advice/development-and-retention/8-must-have-qualities-effective-leader