LDR 807-12 Leader Development: Transforming Self-Concept

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**Assignment #3-Essay**

1. Write a 5-page paper based on the question below:

a. Synthesize and integrate all you have learned thus far to write an essay on the following question, a question of utmost importance: “Why are self-concept, spirituality, and moral development so critical for leadership?”

2. Paper Outline

a. Begin with an introductory paragraph that has a succinct thesis statement.

b. Address the topic of the paper with critical thought.

c. End with a conclusion that reaffirms your thesis. d. Use a minimum of eleven scholarly research sources (two books and the remaining scholarly peer-reviewed journal articles).

This paper explores the transformative power of self-concept, spirituality, and moral development in leadership. These elements can reshape a leader's values, beliefs, and actions when nurtured and developed. They are essential to effective leadership, influencing how leaders perceive themselves, relate to others, and make decisions.

Self-concept is usually conceptualized as an individual’s self-perception formed by experiences with significant others, attributions for one’s behavior, and environmental reinforcements (Chen et al., 2020). Self-concept, the way individuals perceive themselves and their abilities, plays a crucial role in leadership. A positive self-concept is crucial for cultivating confidence in leaders. When leaders strongly believe in their abilities and values, they are likelier to embrace challenges, make decisions, and lead with conviction. Confidence is contagious and inspires trust and respect among followers. Despite facing numerous obstacles, setbacks, and criticism, a positive self-concept enables leaders to bounce back from failures, learn from mistakes, and persevere through difficult times. It helps them maintain a positive attitude and not be discouraged by setbacks, allowing them to lead with resilience and determination. Additionally, a positive self-concept allows leaders to lead authentically and genuinely by clearly understanding their strengths, values, and identity. This authenticity fosters trust and credibility among followers, who see the leader as genuine and reliable. Leaders with a positive self-concept are more confident and comfortable communicating with others, enabling them to express their ideas, opinions, and expectations clearly and assertively. Effective communication is essential for building relationships, inspiring others, and achieving common goals. Furthermore, a positive self-concept enables leaders to delegate tasks and responsibilities effectively, increasing productivity and team collaboration. Lastly, a positive self-concept is linked to emotional intelligence, allowing leaders to be more self-aware empathetic, and connect with and motivate their followers effectively. Leaders with a strong sense of self are likelier to inspire trust and motivate others.

Moreover, clearly understanding one's strengths and weaknesses enables leaders to delegate tasks effectively and build high-performing teams (Racy & Morin, 2024). The study of the self should include, if not emphasize, an examination of how its various aspects relate to one another before assuming that specific aspects alone interact or affect one another (Racy & Morin, 2024). The self is usually understood as being multidimensional, made up of both conscious and unconscious levels, and informed by the observations of others; it includes all conceivable private and public aspects that make who a person is, such as thoughts, emotions, goals, values, sensations, memories, traits, attitudes, physical attributes, behaviors, and skills (Racy & Morin, 2024).

Spiritual leadership is a theory that encompasses a range of values, attitudes, and behaviors aimed at intrinsically motivating oneself and others. This allows both parties to feel a sense of spiritual survival through their calling and sense of belonging. Critical components of spiritual leadership include vision, faith/hope, and altruistic love. Spirituality involves an individual's beliefs, values, and connection to something greater than themselves, providing a sense of purpose, meaning, and ethical grounding (Zou et al., 2022). Spiritually aware leaders are more likely to lead with integrity, empathy, and compassion, guided by a higher purpose beyond personal gain. They are motivated to make ethical decisions that benefit the greater good and are better equipped to navigate complex moral dilemmas while maintaining a long-term perspective. In recent years, there has been an increasing focus on spirituality in the workplace among organizational scholars and practitioners (Zou et al., 2022). Research suggests that spirituality can improve employees' quality of life and well-being, give them a sense of purpose at work, and foster a feeling of connectedness and community. Within the realm of workplace spirituality, two key constructs have emerged. Employee workplace spirituality involves integrating one's spiritual values and ideals into the work environment. It is about applying one's spirituality to the workplace, including how personal spiritual beliefs impact interactions and outcomes (Zou et al., 2022).

Ethical and moral leadership involves individuals in positions of authority making decisions and taking actions guided by fairness, integrity, and responsibility principles. It requires leading with a solid moral compass and conducting oneself ethically, considering the impact of one's decisions on others and society. Ethical leadership also entails prioritizing honesty, transparency, respect, and accountability and serving as a role model for others. By leading ethically, leaders inspire trust and confidence, fostering an environment of integrity and ethical behavior within their organizations or communities.

Moral development refers to individuals' cognitive, emotional, and behavioral changes as they internalize moral values and principles. Leaders with a well-developed moral compass are likelier to act ethically, demonstrate fairness, and uphold justice. They prioritize the welfare of their followers and consider the broader impact of their decisions. By modeling ethical behavior, leaders inspire trust and create a positive organizational culture. The impact of ethical leadership is far-reaching, influencing organizational and top-management effectiveness, follower performance, and job satisfaction.

Additionally, research suggests that ethical leadership affects a broader range of employee attitudes and behaviors, including work engagement (Adnan et al., 2020). Furthermore, ethical leaders demonstrate a commitment to fairness and justice. They treat all individuals equally, regardless of background, status, or position. They create an inclusive and diverse environment where everyone feels valued and heard. Ethical leaders also promote a culture of open communication and encourage their followers to voice their opinions and concerns without fear of retribution. Our research delves into the intricate pathways that lead to moral leadership, exploring the catalysts for moral awareness and the courage to take a stand on ethical issues. We also examine how leaders skillfully unite their followers and their moral beliefs to spark a more significant movement, ultimately leading to transformative change within a moral system (Solinger et al., 2020).

In addition to setting a positive example, ethical leaders establish clear ethical standards and expectations within their organizations. They develop and implement codes of conduct or ethical frameworks that guide decision-making processes and outline acceptable behaviors. They provide training and support to ensure their employees or followers understand and adhere to these ethical guidelines. Ethical leadership has its challenges. Leaders may face pressure to compromise their ethical principles in the face of competing interests or demands. However, ethical leaders stay true to their values and principles, even in difficult situations. They are willing to make tough decisions and take responsibility for their actions, learning from their mistakes and striving to improve continuously. There are numerous benefits to ethical and moral leadership. Ethical leaders foster a positive work environment where employees feel motivated, engaged, and valued. They inspire loyalty and commitment from their followers, as trust is built on the foundation of ethical behavior. Ethical leadership also contributes to organizations' long-term success and sustainability, enhancing reputation and stakeholder relationships.

Developing self-concept, spirituality, and moral values is essential for effective leadership as it influences a leader's beliefs, values, and behavior. These elements of personal growth contribute to successful leadership by fostering confidence, integrity, empathy, and ethical decision-making. Ethical and moral leadership goes beyond making good decisions; it involves leading with integrity, considering the impact of one's actions on others, and upholding ethical principles in all aspects of leadership. Ethical leaders inspire trust, promote fairness and justice, and create a positive and inclusive environment. By practicing ethical leadership, individuals in positions of authority can make a meaningful difference in their organizations, communities, and society by inspiring and motivating others, building strong relationships, and achieving sustainable success.

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