PHI 805-22: Faith-Learning Integration and Interdisciplinary Studies

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Professor

Dr. David Ward

Instructor Assigned Essay or Project

Assignment #3 – Essay

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

a. From the Course Resources tab in DIAL for PHI 805, download the (a)

Interdisciplinary Faith-Learning Research Worksheet, and (b) Tips for

answering the questions for each of the seven steps of the interdisciplinarity

learning process.

b. Review (a), and (b). Complete the worksheet including the top section,

providing submission date, your name, educational background, social

profession, and other pertinent information (e.g., I have worked/been involved

with/influenced by....)

c. Answer the questions for the seven steps of the OGS Interdisciplinary Faith-

Learning Research Worksheet.

d. Document all sources in APA style, 7th edition for in-text citations and for Work

Cited. Include page numbers.

e. Include a separate Works Cited page, formatted according to APA

style, 7th edition.

2. Submit through DIAL to the professor.

**Leadership Development Through a Christian Perspective.**

The leadership in the military in the twenty-first century faces several questions that call for rethinking leadership development beyond tactical and technical competencies. Modern armed forces function in conditions that are more and more ethically grey and fuzzy, and the leaders must be able to solve the ethical dilemmas in an efficient and ethically sound manner. Based on the Fundamentals of leadership theories, such as transformational leadership by Burns and servant leadership by Greenleaf, this research aims to assess the possibility of applying Christian leadership as a form of leadership transformation in military leaders (Burns, 1978; Greenleaf, 1977).

The study is based on a noteworthy omission of the current models of leadership training, which acknowledges the fact that military academies and training programs instilling professional competence and discipline may neglect the moral and spiritual aspects of leadership. By adopting the framework of the military, organizational psychology, Christian theology, moral theory, and leadership theory, the study seeks to provide a holistic theoretical concept of leadership that will enhance human dignity, moral maturation, and organizational hardness. There are several possible advantages of such an approach, including enhancing the purpose of leaders, increasing reliance on ethical practices and humanistic approach in individuals and organizations, conceptualizing leadership as a moral imperative, and enhancing organizational culture flexibility and compassion (Wong & Gerras, 2015; Dempsey, 2013).

**Literature Review**

From a new perspective, leadership is a dynamic process of influence that has a multifaceted nature. Military leadership studies have shifted gradually from the mechanistic approach that emphasizes hierarchical decision-making to the more organic form of leadership, which focuses on the relations within the military community, the application of values, empathy, and people's personal growth (Wong & Gerras, 2015). Organizational psychology supports this, where Avolio and Gardner (2005) noted that authentic leaders should embrace self-consciousness, the relations between the leaders and others, and ethics. It is in line with the Christian leadership values that place much emphasis on the need to be of good character.

Modern leadership theories have also given more importance to spiritual and existential aspects of leadership in organizations. Specifically, in the recent past, scholars have paid more attention to military leadership by going beyond the traditional measures of performance to include psychological fitness, ethical behavior, and cultural sensitivity (Soldiers, 2019). Senge (2006) has identified the need for personal mastery, shared vision, and systems thinking; on the other hand, Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000) pointed out the significance of purpose, meaning, and intrinsic motivation. Thus, based on the analysis of organizational behavior theories, psychological studies, and the works of theologians, leadership is a multifaceted concept based on relationships, values, and the possibility of developing individual potential. In this regard, Kouzes and Posner (2007) show that leadership is not just about vision formulation and implementation but more about creating a vision that can enable people or organizations to embrace based on ethical values and goals that are higher than the technical and hierarchical approaches.

**Faith-Learning Integration**

Incorporating biblical leadership with modern leadership approaches, leadership gets a rich perspective that transcends the organizational frameworks (Ward, 2014). Moses in the book of Exodus and Leviticus is a good example of a humble leader who demonstrated moral courage (Brueggemann, 2001), while Jesus' leadership style as a servant leader as presented in the New Testament is another example of a servant leader (Nouwen, 2002). Proverbs underscore the importance of the fact that one's character is the key to good leadership and not training (New International Version, Proverbs 4:23). These scriptural models of leadership are more as a process of a person becoming and transformation rather than as a set of positions and tasks.

Further, modern leadership theories, such as transformational leadership and positive psychology by Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi (2000), supplement these scriptural teachings in that they advocate for intrinsic motivation, purpose, and ethical leadership as per Bass & Riggio (2006).

From this understanding of integration, leadership involves four principles, namely stewardship, moral courage, relational integrity, and purposeful development. Stewardship can be described as a transfer of authority and control from a superior to subordinates with responsibility for the welfare of all the parties involved (Ward, 2014), while moral courage aims at making the right decision when it is difficult. Interconnectedness and interpersonal accountability contribute to the growth of true friendship, while intentional growth recognizes leadership as a lifelong process of transformation in every aspect of life (Ephesians 4:11-13). This approach to leadership is not about the leaders but also their followers leading a reciprocal change characterized by ethical responsibilities towards the self and others (Mark 10:42-45).

**Synthesized Interdisciplinary Formulation**

The research question focuses on identifying how the application of Christian leadership principles can improve leadership professional practices. More specifically, the research aims to find out how spirituality and ethics can be incorporated into the leadership training processes to develop officers with different aspects of morality in their training compared to the technical training that is commonly used.

The research hypothesis of the study is that there will be statistically significant increases in the leadership domains in the participants who underwent the leadership development program based on Christian values. Such domains include ethical decision-making, organizational commitment, team cohesiveness, and moral resilience, implying that spiritual leadership can improve military leadership by addressing the human and ethical aspects of leadership.

**Critical Communication and Contextual Strategies**

A complex epistemological tension is notable in this paper regarding the integration of Christian leadership with the advancement of military leadership. Some may dispute that the insertion of theology conflicts with the neutrality or professionalism in the leader's professional development. However, this research remains academically sound by adhering to general ethical standards and also establishing that the models of faith-integrated leadership are empirically tenable (Bhaskar, 1975). In response to the objections, the study incorporates two protective factors: a theoretical stance that declares the theoretical assumptions but does not influence the findings and conclusions and cross-disciplinary validation that involves the views of organizational psychology, leadership, theological ethics, and military science. In this way, this multiple method eliminates threats of theological reductionism as it presents the leadership knowledge in a dialogical manner.

Thus, the presence of these findings in military organizations needs an effective communication strategy that takes into consideration cultural, work-related, and worldview differences. Three ways to accomplish this include linguistic accessibility, where the ideas within the theological and theoretical frameworks translate into leadership language; the second is cultural competence, which means considering the different perspectives accepted in the military; and the last one is practical applicability, which means that the focus is on the benefits that are achievable in the organization rather than on abstract concepts. It is not a surprise that there is always resistance in military organizations against such a shift of leadership thinking due to organizational culture, lack of belief in spirituality as a tool, and a feeling that there is a hidden political agenda. Addressing these challenges requires a systematic, empirically grounded approach that underlines the efficiency of the integrated leadership frameworks and that focuses on the general ethical values that are relevant regardless of the denomination.

**Ethical and Social Orthopraxis**

It is where theory meets practice in the sense that orthopraxis becomes the practice part of leadership that brings out the practical implementation of the leadership theories. This approach to leadership development is a process that is constantly occurring and not a single event or a fixed state. At the individual level, orthopraxis is evidenced in purposeful, reflexive processes of personal transformation, thereby embracing both spiritual and professional aspects of development. After a person becomes a practitioner, they understand the importance of having resilience in their development and applying ethical values in different professional fields.

These organizational and societal changes go beyond the transformation of the person and encourage the reconsideration of leadership norms at organizational and community levels. Leadership development curricula in institutions can be changed and adapted to integrate human qualities as part of leadership, which should be mirrored in the programs that are developed to encourage mentorship as part of leadership. To build an organizational culture of human dignity, adaptability, and ethical innovation, more organizations should have ways of assessing leadership beyond key performance indicators; the overall objective of this approach is to create leaders who can solve social dilemmas with intelligence, compassion, and passion for humanity.

**Reflective Evaluation and Future Research Trajectory**

The developed proposal includes an awareness of the challenges that are characteristic of the methodological approach that will be employed within the presented research, which is aimed at interdisciplinary cross-sections of leadership development, spirituality, and military professions. Multidisciplinary approach paradigms pose rather complex interpretative difficulties, which scholars need to be as transparent and methodologically sophistical as possible to solve. The research also identifies a number of limitations that are likely to affect the study's interpretative validity in some ways: possible bias in research design, the general problem of how to measure spiritual and ethical development in more traditional academic terms, and the tremendous variability between different contexts within military settings.

However, acknowledging such limitations can contribute to the development of new theoretical research directions for the further continuous enhancement of leadership development knowledge. Three of them are most promising: Longitudinal research that assesses the long-term effects of faith-based leadership models. These cross-cultural studies examine the differences in leadership development with respect to cultural contexts, as well as methodological research that aims to improve the instruments for the measurement of the spiritual and ethical leadership constructs. These are not just a compilation of topics of study; they are scholarly attempts at developing conceptual maps for a phenomenon we know as leadership, which has many dimensions that are naturally human.

**Conclusion**

This research is a groundbreaking study of leadership development that reflects combined Christian leadership and military professional values. The study reveals leadership as a process of change that must be internal as well as external and which understands technical proficiency as inadequate if it does not incorporate moral clarity, self-awakening, and respect for other people. Beyond a scholarly exercise, this research is a call for a new conceptualization of leadership as a constant process of learning, moral development, and service to others, and, by implication, a call for the emergence of leaders who perceive their role and work as stewardship for the development of people and the common good.

**Works Cited**

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