LEADERSHIP AND ETHICS

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One of the major issues nowadays in the field of administration and supervision is Ethics – that is, how can a leader lead the way and simplify ethical leadership in the workplace. Since immemorial, ethical leadership is considered one of the ideal leadership styles that can possibly promote better human relationship within the organization and produced better output towards the realization of its objectives.

But among the well-known leadership style, ethical leadership is one of the few which is always at the bottom when it comes to application in the workplace. More often than not, most leader nowadays are not familiar with ethical leadership and how it may improve organizational climate and performance for better services.

Musa (2016) pointed out that Ethics is a set of moral principles of what we should do and what we should be. As leaders of the institution, we are bound with duties and responsibilities expected from us to perform with the organization, hence, our actions speak louder of our personality, thus, ethics tells us leaders that at all times, we should imbued with the spirit of moral decency worth emulation by others in the workplace. Along with this, if you start it right, you are directing yourself towards the path of what you should be as a leader.

Though there are several definitions of leadership, but when we talk about ethical leadership, it encompasses to the ability to make positive influence in following directions and decisions based on trust, respect and legality. When there is mutual relationships, trust and confidence between and among the members of the organization, respect is built as the utmost form of showing actions in any decisions made in accordance with legality.
Furthermore, leadership and ethics vary across cultures. What is acceptable in one group of people may not be true to others. He also explained cultural relativism is a theory that deals with the nature of morality and different societies have different moral codes. In the new millennium, leaders are sometimes having no other options to choose the values they think are suited regardless of the culture they belong to. Thus, leadership plays a vital role in producing ethical change in most of the public institutions where there are more newly hired teachers. As leaders, these principles provide a foundation for the development of sound ethical leadership: respect, service, justice, honesty, visionary and community.

**Respect** – listening to the voices of your teachers, considering their suggestions and opinions really matters to them. For some cases that there will be opposing ideas but when you try to consider their insights, a culture of mutual respect will develop. Being considerate and compassionate means, you are respecting their nature as human beings. As leader, you are demonstrating utmost respect to their dignity as persons in authority, their rights and privileges and you open the communication between you and them to provide an avenue to achieve sustainable success which will make them feel appreciated and worthy as individuals.

**Service** – school leaders are the catalyst of change in the organization. We are the stewards of our work force whom we should serve as leaders. We are empowered to make a change and touch the lives of our teachers. They look upon us as the source of knowledge and spread positivity in the workplace through building strong linkage of where you, capacitate them and enhance their competencies by providing technical support through mentoring and coaching, positive behavior modifications where you inspired them more to succeed in teaching. Ethical leaders have the roles to be of service to others, an entitlement with a purpose serving them for their welfare.

**Justice** – like in any workplace, there should always be a sound, fair and square treatment to all its members regardless of sex, religion, position, cultural background and
personal beliefs and traditions. In making decisions, the core value that must be take into consideration is fairness, when you consider this, you are deciding based on moral values. When the situations need you to decide between two opposing ideas or sentiments, make it sure that you will be able to make clear and reasonable decisions.

**Honesty** – perhaps, this is still the best policy that a leader should always follow. Honesty in the workplace elicit trust, confidence and respect within the workplace. As leader, being honest means everything, honesty in what you do, what you say, what you plan, how you plan it and how you implement it calls for transparency and good governance. Dalla Casta (1998) made the point clearly in his book, *The Ethical Imperative* that being honest means “Do not promise what you can’t deliver”, hence, do not make promises when you are happy neither do make decisions when you are angry – it will compromise your honesty as an ethical leader.

**Visionary** – an ethical leader is dynamic in realizing the vision and mission of the department by focusing in the areas that need to be prioritized, this means that an ethical leader is visionary and goal oriented. He would make it sure that he is looking forward for the betterment of the school, of the children, of the teachers and of the community. He is a risk taker and willing to experience disappointment and fall back, but when he envisioned, he carefully plans everything and takes into considerations the possible alternatives, solutions and recommendations and most of all, the plan that needs to be done for the success of his vision for his school. A visionary leader poster commitment, dedication and confidence that through your leadership, you can possibly lead the way and show how things can possibly be done.

**Build Community** – an adage that says “It takes a village to educate a child” needs the collaboration and active participation through school – community partnership where networks and linkages of the internal and external stakeholders are sailing towards one direction in fulfilling the organization’s aspirations. An effective leader ignites changes and sparks inspirations to people around him, this will be the motivating force to make
his people support every program, project and activities he will undertake for the betterment of the school in general and for the welfare of the school children in particular. Meanwhile, an efficient leader knows how to make use of this support coming from his people in the right place and in the right time. An ethical leader builds a culture of excellence and giving equal opportunities to its members and sense of ownership so that everyone will be held responsible towards the attainment of the common good, in the broadest possible sense.

To top it all, ethical leadership calls for leading by example. If you are able to manifest acceptable behaviors in your workplace and you established a culture of honesty, there will be a spring of mutual trust and confidence among the members of the organization. They will work with respect and treat everyone fairly and they will envision to build a community of excellence in fulfilling their duties and responsibility of being of service to its clientele.

References:

Sam Musa July 2016 “Five Ethical Leadership Attributes that Leaders Should Role Model to Employees” retrieved from https://www.academia.edu/27536411/Five_Ethical_Leadership_Attributes_that_Leaders_Should_Role_Model_to_Employees