THE SERVANT LEADERSHIP

by:

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Leadership as a complex phenomenon, operates in a dynamic and indeterminate environment. This leads to application of different leadership styles in order to cope up with the fast and changing world. Thus, leaders need to possess a bright vision for future, establish good interrelationship among subordinates, and develop strategies that are necessary to bring about changes needed to achieve that vision (Dereli, 2003). Therefore, promotion to school administrative office is both a privilege and a challenge. It is a privilege that only few are given the chance to handle administrative functions for the benefit of the institution. On the other hand, it is also a challenge for this requires paternal care, fraternal respect, and selfless service to school and to the community. These constitute the calling of the servant leader.

Servant leader is practically a leader. He is a leader in charge of an institution and mandated with authority over his subordinates. He is also a person who has the capacity to influence the behavior of others to enhance organization performance. But what makes him a servant leader is his dedication to become first a servant. He knows how to serve without any hesitation and reservation. His highest priority is to encourage, support and enable people to fulfill their full potential and abilities. He helps people achieve their goals while working for the people. But above all, he is a servant leader because of his unique characteristics. These are “ego” and “thou” awareness, well-balanced decision making, good relational transparency, morally uprightness.

The first characteristic is “ego” and “thou” awareness. It is viewed as prime character of a servant leader. It is the awareness of oneself and others. It is to know one’s
strength and weaknesses. Knowledge of strength is the utilization of skills and talents for the welfare of the organization. On the other hand, consciousness of weaknesses is the management and control of what may harm or may become liability to the institution. It can be temperament, emotion, anger, and other negative characteristics. Moreover, awareness of thou is awareness of others’ existence. Awareness of other’s existence is manifested through selfless service for the benefit of others. It could be in a form of altruistic action that does not wait for anything in return. As a servant leader, being aware can be practiced through consciousness to the needs of his subordinates. Before it is uttered, he has the knowledge of what was going on. Moreover, he thinks and evaluates the situation first before making a decision. His broad horizon and perennial view of the issue provide a clearer vision of the problem in the organization.

The second character is well balanced decision making. It is inevitable that leaders make simple and complex judgment for the institution every day. A servant leader does not only make decisions outside the realm of proper discernment. His decision is always based on meticulous reflection and prevent discernment on what he will be deciding. He examines all aspects of the problem and anticipates all possibilities, thus being futuristic on what will be its effect. He consults different people to gather information to come up with not just right decision but the best decision he can make. Furthermore, his decision is humane and pro-organization that may benefit the whole institution with lesser or no dissatisfaction. Being well balanced is looking at the broader view of what has to be decided. It is looking with a silver lining of what the decision would be leading into. He avoids biases favoring the well-being of the few; nonetheless, decision will create greater happiness with greater number of beneficiaries.

The third character of a servant leader is good relational transparency. A servant leader has no room for malversation of funds or corruption. His genuine personality and uprightness are his shield for the malpractices of his authority. He does not hide anything to anybody. All transactions are made into public to safeguard public trust on his office.
He does these to reveal that he is indeed a servant leader who loves about his organization. He plans very well and does it in the light of collegiality. He does not make allocation of funds out of his decision only but through the wisdom of planning and heart of different people involve. He does not bend the law for each transaction just for others to enjoy its usage. In times that funds are in shortage, he cordially explains to the concerned that the situation is beyond his control.

The fourth character is morally uprightness. A servant leader does not separate his private life to his function as a leader. His leadership is not only confined in the four walls of his office but transcends even to his home. Likewise, his leadership cannot be separated from his moral life. A servant leader is a moral leader. He lives a moral and descent life. A servant leader is not a drug addict, a gambler, a womanizer, a drunkard, a liar, a corrupt, and the like. But rather, he is a man of virtue. It is because a servant leader values his integrity, dignity and being as a human person.

Different organizations need not only effective leaders but also servant leaders. Along with various problems being confronted by different schools around the globe, the need for servant leaders arises. Such leaders are those who will lead the institution not only with wisdom but also with a good heart. They are leaders who will not think about themselves but will focus on the welfare of the others. They are honest not only to their work but also to others. They are morally upright securing their integrity as a role model. The world needs a servant leader. These are leaders who will create positive organizational cultures, will strengthen motivation, will clarify mission and organizational objectives, and will steer organizations to more productive and higher performance for the sake of the institution (Mentor, 2013).
References:

