Why Does the Leadership Development Plan be Necessary for Young Children to

Cultivate the Emerging Leaders of the Future?

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Developing Emerging Leaders from Young Age

Abstract

This article discusses the evaluation of philosophical concepts as it pertains to build emerging leaders from young and early childhood ages in the school by developing context-based , integrated with the existing curriculum and culturally sensitive relevant leadership training manual to teach children in school at all levels. Although there is data to support the development of young children and early childhood ages the available data are scanty and may not always be empirical. Hence, schools and researchers need to construct a process to put in place to support the data needs for the philosophical concepts. Though there are data that have to do with young and early childhood development, the data are not evidence-based and sufficiently allied to learning leadership, nor developed into the conceptual framework. A conceptual framework based on which schools and other similar institutions teach children and prepare them to be leaders.   Keeping in mind that there are assumptions about each concept and approach, the non-empirical assumptions need to undergo an evaluation process as well. The effects that schools may experience and may also lead to the creation or remaining theories in the philosophical ideas where many perceptions are necessary to create a sound paradigm for leadership concept in the school system. The young age's period is a critical time to develop Character, calling/ vocation, confidence and competencies for future personal and professional development of the children. Few people are born leaders. In most cases, leadership skills and qualities are developed through hard work and persistence, but there's no point putting in all that effort if you're not must utilizing the most effective learning and development methods.

Introduction

Few people are born leaders. In most cases, leadership skills and qualities are developed through hard work and persistence, but there's no point putting in all that effort if you're not must utilizing the most effective learning and development methods (Wright 2016). It is evident that leaders' quality is also about taking charge of things and motivating others to work towards a goal, including themselves. If the leadership qualities are introduced to children at an early age, it proves to be a great asset to their overall development of the community they live in (Godbole Medha, (2011). Piaget (1980) stated that changes in thinking take place gradually over time and children learn best when developmentally appropriate practices guide their learning. This article examines the role of calling (a strong urge towards a particular way of life or career; a vocation), competence (being good at what you do), confidence (knowing what you can accomplish in the context), and character ("good" traits) with the purpose of showing that character, while important, is the fourth in the sequence of the four (Bandura, A. (1994). The concept of the four in sequences complement with John F Kennedy's leadership statement. "Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other" (John F Kennedy).

Philosophical Concepts

Some of the philosophical concepts and approaches in child leadership need empirical data to distinguish the approaches that best fit the existing culture and contexts. Researchers have found that a complete understanding of empirical data can assist in the concepts and measures to formulate information and requirements (Bagozzi, 2011). The major concern of this essay is that ECD schools are mainly teacher-centered; subject focus

where children are passive listeners and the school leadership in early childhood education (ECE) and development program is not facilitating the identification of potential child leaders and coaching them to achieve this end. On the other hand, for example, the ECD curriculum that exists in Ethiopia overlooked the integration of leadership skills that are necessary for children at an early age. Based on Karnes & Stephens statement, leadership education remains an abstract concept that is often ignored in school curricula (Karnes & Stephens, 1999).

Learning institutions do not equate leadership education with traditional academic education, and teachers often do not receive proper training in leadership skill development. Consequently, students are given limited opportunities to develop their potential (AmmyBisland, 2004, p. 24). Furthermore, one of the problems facing current leadership education is the lack of a clear definition of a leader. Some view an effective leader as one who is skilled in group dynamics can inspire others and relates well to a wide variety of people. Others see a leader as one who is able to communicate well, lead groups in problem-solving, structure goals and objectives for a group, and evaluate group progress in achieving its goals (Feldhusen & Pleiss, 1994). A third group defines a leader as someone who induces a group to pursue a goal (Karnes & Bean, 1996).

Majority of scholars agrees that leadership is not so much a stand-alone function as a catalyst for other functions. To cultivate young leaders in the school system, schools must develop a clear sense of purpose, strong commitment on the part of their staffs, and productive working relationships with their communities. All of these things are hard to come by without good leadership. Good leaders of small schools typically develop productive relationships directly with individual students because they know that such relationships go a long way towards ensuring students' engagement with school (Kenneth Leithwood, 2008,

p. 10). As stated by Ammy Bisland, (2004 P. 24-25), as society grows into a more cooperative society, the importance of finding emerging leaders has become crucial. Not only should these potential leaders be identified, but also their talents need the opportunity to develop. As a result, leadership education continues to be a concern in education. Many children possessing giftedness in leadership share common characteristics, including the desire to be challenged, the ability to solve problems creatively, the ability to reason critically, the ability to see new relationships, flexibility in thought and action, understanding of ambiguous concepts, and the ability to motivate others (Karnes & Bean, 1990).

The literature recommends that to help children develop innate leadership skills, there are five key skills and attributes that children need support with. 1) Communication skills; 2) Organizational skills; 3) Problem-solving/decision-making skills; 4) Confidence; 5) Collaborative skills. These skills do not develop in a vacuum, or by chance. They may be facilitated by offering children the opportunity to have responsibilities and experiences in many different roles in clubs, on school trips, in presentations and debates and around the home (Dulwich College Suzhou, P. 1-2).

Philosophical Assumptions

In the development of concepts and approaches, philosophical assumptions can occur. In leadership; these assumptions may have an effect on the children development, future career, and development in society to determine the success or failure of the child. For this reason, researchers study and evaluate the epistemology of a theory to find the "extent and validity" (Dubé & Paré, 2003, p. 187) of the truth of a concept or method. In the following pragmatist point of view from an example of canonical AR, a theory may skip the epistemological points and go straight into the practice of the concept.

"Baskerville and Myers (2004) address theory and practice in their four

pragmatist premises for Allison, Raphael (AR), (2005):

1. Establish purpose of action (explicit theoretical basis);

2. Practical action in the problem setting;

3. Practical action must inform theory;

4. Reasoning and action are socially situated (researchers are participant

observers, part of a collaborative team throughout the process)" (Dubé &

Paré, 2003, pp. 186-187).

This article tries to correlate the environment at ECD Schools, the policies, and programs that these schools are following, the qualification and effectiveness of staff. The early childhood schools are sometimes reluctant to provide programming to serve the needs of potentially gifted child leaders. Once a child is identified as possessing leadership giftedness, many options for developing the talent are available. A separate curriculum for leadership education is not necessary, but, integrating with the existing for the student may acquire knowledge and skills through activities complementing the existing curriculum (Karnes & Stephens, 1999),

Purcell, M. E., Christian, M., & Frost, N. (2012) asserted that "effective" leadership and the skills needed to meet the requirements of improving the lives of children and young people interventions, to enhance leadership in this area might contribute to better outcomes for children and young people in the future in an era of significant change. As indicated in the qualitative study of Min Sun Shin, Susan L. et al (302 p. 302), early social relationships, particularly those with peers, are considered a crucial aspect of social, emotional, and cognitive development for children under the age of five (Hartup, 1992; Piaget, 1932; Sullivan, 1953). With an increasing number of young children in child care,

social interactions with peers begin at earlier ages and last for longer periods of time (Kemple, 1991). During social interactions, young children both influence and become influenced by peers. While there seem to be children who take a submissive role or follow others, one or more social leaders usually emerge. These young leaders give direction to, command, order, make requests of, and are persuasive with other children, over whom they appear to have influence, and from whom they get cooperation and submission (Fu, 1977).

In terms of the nature of leadership, two common perspectives of leadership styles have been depicted: social dominance and pro-social/diplomatic leadership. Parten, (1933), a pioneer in this area of study, concluded that there are two types of preschool leaders, which she labeled diplomats and bullies. These two forms of leadership style have been presented, providing two very different lenses through which to view positive or negative aspects of early childhood leadership (Min Sun Shin, et al, 2004, p. 302). As stated in Min Sun Shin, et al, 2004 pp. 302-303), research based on the concept of social dominance has characterized leadership as a negative/coercive dimension of peer influence and focused on the establishment of power within the group through aggression, bullying, and force-submission sequences. More recent studies on social dominance have begun to view the dominance construct as more complex. Williams and Schaller (1993) expanded this concept and found three dominant strategies that preschoolers use, including verbal assertiveness, physical assertiveness, and the use of theme plays (Strayer and Strayer, 1980; Trawick-Smith, 1988).

In contrast to the research on social dominance, other researchers view leadership as a pro-social process, which includes negotiating, compromising, and using other pro-social behaviors to influence peers (Edwards, 1994; Trawick-Smith, 1988). This view of

leadership argues that socially competent children engage in positive leadership behaviors. According to Trawick-Smith (1988), leaders will employ more friendly, skillful, and diplomatic tactics to win the acceptance of play ideas, rather than forcefully demanding changes in play. Overall, research on pro-social leadership argues that leading and following are complementary behaviors and that an effective and competent leader would use both behaviors skillfully (Min Sun Shine, et al, 2004, p. 303).

According to authors, a comprehensive analysis of the data brought forward layers of behavioral and personal characteristics shared by the young children leaders, with two distinct categories emerging: 1) dynamic and powerful personality; and 2) high level of awareness. They further explained that Young leaders were observed not only generating creative play ideas but also using classroom materials creatively. Thus, their ideas were more desirable to, and drew attention from, their peers (Min Sun Shin, et al, 2004, p. 306,). Ideally, the assumption is, leadership education should begin as early as preschool or kindergarten. In developing nation, particularly, in Ethiopia, the school system could integrate with the existing curriculum to build the foundation for young children. Working to develop young children's skills in creative drama, group play, simulation, collaborative work, and modeling establishes a foundation for future leadership skills (Karnes & Stephens, 1999). Teachers can incorporate short lessons into their weekly curriculum or choose to teach a thematic concept unit focusing on leadership. Regardless of format, teachers should begin by choosing objectives relating to leadership (AmmyBisland, 2004, p.25).

Operative Paradigms

Screening and identification practices can assist educators in nurturing leadership skills in children identified as gifted leaders, and can also serve to help teachers develop leadership skills of students with other areas of giftedness. Shaunessy and Karnes present

instruments that can be used to help young children and educators assess levels of leadership development and make plans for growth (Shaunessy, E., & Karnes, F. A. 2004).The psycho-dynamic perspective extends upon this theory through the notion that the child's mind, body and physical, social and emotional worlds form an integrated system that guides growth and development. Children's learning is viewed as a holistic process where skills and competencies develop as a result of interactions with broadly ranging activities experienced in real-life contexts (Erikson, 1902–1944).

According to Vygotsky, (1896-1934), a socio-constructivist perspective rejects the idea of universal developmental stages and instead presents the idea that as children acquire language their ability to communicate is enhanced and this leads to ongoing changes in behavior and thought, which can vary greatly from culture to culture. In the Ethiopian situations, young children should at least begin to understand what qualities leaders possess. After understanding the leadership traits, children will begin to identify those characteristics in other children and adults, as well as in themselves. Piaget's cognitive developmental perspective introduced the idea that children are active learners who initiate their innate drive to make sense of their world in a generally stimulating social and physical environment. Changes in thinking take place gradually over time and children learn best when developmentally appropriate practices guide their learning (Piaget (1896-1980)

Effects on Children (Paradigms)

Comparing the existing paradigms can also serve as a premise toward finding some of the "non-empirical assumptions" (Kuhn, 2010, p. 148). According to Kuhn (2010) finding, the assumptions may not occur because of the requirement of necessitating the creation of a case for the paradigm. Bronfenbrenner (1917) describes the child's

development is strongly influenced by the layering of relationships with parents, family and friends, experiences within neighborhoods in settings such as childcare and school and finally by customs, laws and the dominant cultural values of the community. Small children should be encouraged to see things from different perspectives. By talking about feelings and ideas, young children will begin to understand themselves and how their actions affect others (Hensel, 1 991). Children should be given many opportunities to apply new information about leadership to their lives.

After studying about leaders in various career fields, children can draw pictures or write stories about what they will do when they grow up. Children should also continuously work on a leadership mural illustrating how they will be leaders in their own schools, communities, or religious affiliations. Other activities that emphasize leadership connections include role-playing, guest speakers, team building, and simulations (AmmyBisland, 2004, p. 26- 27).

Evaluation of Assumptions

The Positivist Challenge

The assumptions from a positivist's perspective indicate that the assumptions from the philosophical concepts are "immediately and factually given" (Delanty & Strydom, 2003, p. 18) in opposition to that of the evaluation through science. These assumptions lead to arguments as there are differences between the views and realities of the philosophers and how they attempt to come to an understanding of what they believe is the truth and the way toward enlightenment (Delanty & Strydom, 2003). The positivist views seek to define an understanding of the scope of the issues and research to have an understanding of the assumption. They also look to study relationships between their views and other perspectives. As the data continues to evolve, the positivist questions

the relationships between the perspectives and forms an assumption from these aspects (Delanty & Strydom, 2003). By ignoring the needs of children gifted in leadership at a young age, it is possible that they will not develop the skills necessary to reach their full potential as leaders. Young children's leadership is an under theorized and under researched topic. Much of the research literature involves paired children working on adult-set tasks that are aimed to provide data on specific aspects of children's collaborative work. It is suggested that individual cultural experiences and contextual factors play a greater part in children's leadership in early childhood education than current gender-focused explanations would suggest (Mawson, 2009).

Reflection

The evaluation of the positivist's philosophical concepts of leadership demonstrates a concept that evaluates not only the behaviors of individuals, organizations, and society but also a reflection of the processes and concepts that attempt to seek the truth. Finding the assumptions of other and previous concepts lead the way towards creating new processes or approaches. This article describes within the context of international experiences on strengthening child leadership in young age and at Early Childhood Education and Development that would help to introduce emerging leaders' development program in developing nations, such as in the Ethiopian early childhood development school system. It compares the international experiences from various literature and comparing with the Ethiopian context about the good practices, challenges and recommendations on identifying potential student leaders, and creating or enabling these children to build their capacities and skills to become young leaders. The involvement of family members and parents on child's development is strongly influenced by the layering of relationships in the community. At the family level, parents and friends, experiences

within neighborhoods in settings such as childcare, school and finally by customs, laws and the dominant cultural values of the community could be used as an opportunity to develop the leadership skills of young children.

The problem is that young and early childhood integrated with leadership curriculum is not available in the school system, particularly in Ethiopia. However, the country can adapt and integrate the existing curriculum in the school system based on the context of the culture with each successful level of the four Cs, (character, calling, confidences and competencies) of leadership development principles. In many developing nations, such as Ethiopia the greater success could happen, to build the young generation for the better future of the country. Moreover, the existing early childhood schools are not situated in an environment where they can develop children to become the desired leaders in Ethiopia. As a result, it is difficult at this stage to expect the ECD school system has leadership curriculum that can produce child leaders.

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