Leadership Assessment

A leader is someone who has commanding authority or influence over individuals or an organization of individuals, where as, leadership describes the ability to lead a group or organization toward a goal. An effective leader must demonstrate character and build that character among the public or within the organization to be led (Forman, 2011). Types of leaders can be described as autocratic, participative and laissez-faire (Forman, 2011). An autocratic leader is one where the leader dictates the way an organization is run and has all the decision-making authority. The leader does not seek input from the team. Autocratic leadership can be detrimental to team building and can reduce follower motivation. Participative leaders promote team building and all team members have a role to achieve a goal. Laissez-faire leaders give little guidance to their followers. Followers under a laissez-faire leader are expected to make decisions without the help of the leader, however the leader will provide resources as needed. Another type of leader that is prevalent in today’s society is a bureaucratic leader. Under this type of leadership, rules are fixed; positions in the organization are supervised and enforced.

Leaders manage, integrate, facilitate, and provide a context for the performance within an organization (Porter-O’Grady & Malloch, 2013). Similar to the variety of leader types, theories of leadership also exist. Theories of leadership include quantum, transactional, transformational, shared, servant, and emotional. Quantum leadership involves envision of the whole team within a framework. The role of the quantum leader is to create a foundation that incorporates innovation into the overall work of the organization (Porter-O’Grady & Malloch, 2013). Where as transactional leaders pursue the follower’s faults and needs as a means of corrective action. Transactional leadership
is based on a system of reward and punishment. Resolving issues is a strength with these leaders but they lack problem-solving skills. Transformational leadership is based on building relationships and motivating staff members through a shared vision and mission (Frandsen, 2014). Motivation and inspiration from these leaders result in higher organizational achievements. Shared leadership involves distribution of responsibilities to reduce stress and difficulty. Collaboration can allow for enhanced decision-making methods. Servant leadership places priority on the needs of others and showing concern for others. Emotional leaders acknowledge that members of an organization are interconnected. An important role as a leader is acknowledging and addressing feelings with followers.

The Multifactorial Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) was developed to measure variables to determine leadership styles, individual satisfaction, and awareness of leader effectiveness. The MLQ measures a range of leadership styles including transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and laissez-faire leadership. The MLQ has been used to research leadership styles of education administrators and nurse leaders (Mullins, 2007).

Using the MLQ allowed an efficient assessment for my strength and weaknesses as a future leader. Factors for the scale held a reliability coefficient of 0.86 and a validity coefficient of 0.91. When interpreting the results a five-point Likert scale is used to rate the frequency of self-behavior, where a score of 0 indicates that behavior does not occur and a score of 4 indicates that the behavior frequently, if not always occurs. Each leadership style is broken down into components that describe the behaviors exhibited by the leader. Numerical values are given for each of the answers for the leadership factors.
Scores for each factor are then averaged and the averaged scores are used as an indicator of a leadership style characteristic. According to Mullins, the seven factors were as follows:

1. Transformational Leadership includes the following components:
   a. Idealized influence – leaders behaviors result in follower respect and trust.
   b. Inspirational motivation – leader motivates and inspires followers.
   c. Intellectual stimulation – leader encourages follower participation
   d. Individualized consideration – leader considers the potential of followers.

2. Transactional Leadership includes the following components:
   a. Contingent reward – followers actions are either rewarded or punished.
   b. Management by exception – leaders monitors performance and intervenes as needed.

3. Non-transactional Leadership (Laissez-faire) – the leader does not interact with followers. This type of leadership is considered the most ineffective style (2007).

According to my results I scored high with regards to transformational leadership and transactional leadership and low in laissez-faire leadership style. With regards to transformational leadership my high factor was giving individualized consideration to followers. For transactional leadership my high factor was in management by exception. I feel that my high scores have been a result of my life experiences thus far. I am sure as I continue to develop in the nursing profession I will continue to gain knowledge that will assist me in the role as leader and as a follower.
References:


