

Discourses on Sustainable Development in Africa



Editor: Maurice N. Amutabi

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Value-Based Leadership towards a Sustainable Pedagogy in Africa: Assessing Implications for Schooling in Kenya

By

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Abstract

Value based leadership is deeply integrated with ethical leadership. In this paper we argue that value-based leadership is integral to thinking pedagogy in Kenya schools to sustain it. In this vein, despite the fact that people can learn values in all phases of life, research identifies early childhood as critical and significant for character formation. At this developmental stage children learn personality characteristics through the values acquired from the older adults close to them. We employ value-based leadership as leadership style that is executed through values, as a pedagogical approach through which parents and teachers as leaders transmit values to the children. Children are imitators of their role models. So, children learn essential values separately by observing adults; parents at home and teachers in school who are role models. There is speculation as to whether value-based leadership is intentionally embedded in school and family pedagogical styles. We argue that when consistency and harmony are achieved in the way children learn values in school and at home are reinforced intentionally by the family; chances of having conflicts in personality differences will be potentially minimized. On the contrary, when consistency in value-based leadership as a pedagogical lens is not employed between school and family, there is a possibility that students' character will become questionable and are likely to hamper sustainable character development in Kenya. This research reviewed the literature on the consistency of parental value-based leadership and teachers' value-based leadership through documentary analysis based on value-based leadership, and Learning Theories. The findings established that the value-based leadership of parents is influenced by the cultural and religious beliefs while the training that teachers received in College influenced their school value-based leadership. This study recommends a standard curriculum that incorporates the potentiality of value-based informed pedagogy in which both teachers and parents can use as character models for children to bridge the inconsistencies.

Keywords: Kenya, Value-based Leadership, Family, Teachers, Role models, School, Values, Pedagogy, character development, early-childhood

Value-Based Leadership towards a Sustainable Pedagogy in Africa: Assessing Implications for Schooling in Kenya

Joseph, K. Sambu, & Jane, A. Chiroma

Introduction

Value-Based Leadership (VBL) refers to leadership based on foundational moral principles, ethics and, values such as integrity, empowerment, and social responsibility (Reilly & Ehlinger, 2007, p. 246). Increasing societal challenges such as intolerance, violent extremism, terrorism and corruption (Nyaga, 2018) act as a stimulant for the need for value-based leadership. In the Kenyan Education sector for example, challenges such as bullying, drugs and substance abuse, and examination dishonesty seems to come up as a result of waning values in the society. These challenges pose a concern for the schooling system, and especially how children are taught and how they acquire values. It is important to rethink an education system and a pedagogy that equips individuals with values and provides a pedagogy that sustains the learned values throughout the learning cycle into adulthood.

We perceive a value-based education system where harmony and consistency in the way children learn values from teachers in school and reinforced at home by the parents, as a strategy to achieve economic growth and sustainable development in Kenya. This perception is echoed by previous researchers who observed that a synchronized and a well-coordinated learning approach involving schools and families is essential for education to be successful (Bernal, Urpí, Rivas, & Repáraz, 2011).

Until recently after unveiling the new constitution in 2010, various policy documents kept in government records did not differentiate pedagogy of value-based education from that of other subjects (Musungu, & Chang'ach, 2018). Teachers who used those records especially in the secondary school section while teaching values under social education and ethics (SEE) (Mbae, 1990) favored the use of teacher-centered, didactic methodologies, which are not compatible with the effective teaching of values (Wamahiu, 2015). The situation is now changing because Life Skills Education (LSE) which is a replacement of SEE is taught under specific value-based objectives. In the primary school curriculum for example, the curriculum suggest a pedagogy that teachers use to integrate values through various techniques such as: value statements – school motto, mission, and vision; demonstration of values through practice in, the classroom, clubs, sports, school assemblies, pastoral and counseling programs, and student leadership forums (Wamahiu, 2015).

Curriculum policies are silent on the preschool pedagogy for value-based education although the Kenya Institute for Curriculum Development ([KICD], 2017) gives guidance to teachers on the organization of learning activities. In the preschool curriculum, learning of values is not taught as a subject but integrated into main subjects namely: Language; Mathematics; Environmental, Psychomotor, Creative, and Religious Education activities. In these thematic areas, teachers teach values that include respect, integrity, trust, honesty, responsibility, patriotism, and love through; storytelling, role-modeling and perform activities that teach responsibility (KICD, 2017, p. vii). Studies on value-based education are required in the preschool section of the primary school curriculum (Wamahiu, 2015). This research hence reviewed literature on how children learn values from parents and teachers and discussed the inconsistencies that exist in the way parents and teachers model the character of children through value-based leadership.

This research is a conceptual study of Value-based leadership in relation to pedagogy on learners' character development. The study utilized documentary analysis to generate the data. Document analysis is a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents - both printed and electronic (Strauss, & Corbin, 1998). Google and Google scholar were used to search electronic articles and books on the concepts and words such as: values, value-based leadership, pedagogy, family, parent, and teacher all tagged with 'preschool' or 'early childhood education'. We used the articles to review value-based leadership as a pedagogical approach through which parents and teachers as leaders transmit values to the children.

Statement of the Problem

Research on value-based leadership describes how leaders use their values to influence followers both in business and education organizations (Mombourquette, 2017; Brown, Treviño & Harrison, 2005). In the education sector for example, studies depicts the teacher as a leader that transmit values and influences students' character (Chi, Jastrzab & Melchior, 2006; Lin, 2013; Wamahiu, 2015). In addition, studies illustrate how children learn values from their families, especially from the parents or guardians that are around them (Cirila, Ema, Janja, Metod, Nina, Vesna, & Pavlina, 2018). There is barely a study on how value-based leadership can contribute to rethinking pedagogy in relation to learners' character development (Yaşaroğlu, 2016). This study argues that VBL has the potential, to provide a language of practice to teachers and parents to intentionally teach and learn towards the improvement of young children's character development. So the paper reviewed literature on how pedagogical approaches in the mode of role modeling can contribute to character development. Value-based leadership is reconceptualised to tease out values (language of practice) that can aid, and provide a framework for pedagogical practices. In this case, teachers are viewed as intentional leaders with value laden intentionality to influence learners in their early childhood ages towards a renewed sense of character development. This we argue, teachers can do by modeling their becoming towards particular values. Students at the young age are considered imitators that depend on models (value-leaders) to grow their character.

Review of Related Literature

Learning is defined as "[a] persisting change in human performance or performance potential as a result of the learner's interaction with the environment" (Driscoll, 1994, p. 8). According to Luluk et al. (2017), learning is caused by changes in an individual's behavior as the individual interacts with the environment. This research reviews two important learning environments; home and school, where children learn values from parents before going to school and from the teachers at the age of three to five. The review in the two environments focuses on role- modelling as a pedagogy that studies single out as appropriate for children to learn values in early childhood. The review also highlights the role of value-based leadership of parents and teachers in sustaining the learned values.

Pedagogy

The origin of the word 'Pedagogy' is derived from the Greek 'paidag' which means 'to lead a child (Bruner, 1996). In literature, pedagogy has been given numerous definitions, for example; "the art or science of teaching" (Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations ([DEEWR], 2009a, p. 42), "the instructional techniques and strategies that allow learning to take place" (Siraj-Blatchford, Sylva, Muttock, Gilden, &

Bell, 2002, p.10), "learning, teaching and development influenced by the cultural, social and political values we have for children..." (Education Scotland, 2005, p.9), and many more. The definitions, understandings, and interpretations of pedagogy are based on the context of research.

In the school context, the term 'pedagogy' "is understood as a set of practices which shape educational organizations around teaching and learning in order to match externally applied standards and expectations of student outcomes" (Male, & Palaiologou, 2015, p. 215). In the context of this research, pedagogy is perceived as the techniques and strategies around values that parents and teachers use to educate children with the hope of developing and sustaining ethical traits in them. Understanding how children learn values helps in selecting a suitable pedagogy that parents and teachers should use to develop good character in them.

Although people can learn values in all phases of life, research identifies early childhood stage (three to five years) as the prime time when children learn and most likely form personality characteristics through the values acquired. Studies show that from ages three to five years, children develop linguistic, cognitive, social, emotional, and regulatory skills that predict their later functioning in many domains (Trawick-Smith, 2014; Woolfolk & Perry, 2012). Similar findings indicate that ages three to five in a child's life are "critical for developing the foundations for thinking, behaving, and emotional well-being" (Bakken et al., 2017, p. 255). In addition, children learn by observing and imitating the behavior of adults who act as role models (Bandura, 2006), and develop in children the desired values such as respect, justice, fairness and love (Lickona, 1996).

According to the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD, 2017) curriculum for preschools, teachers' practices are framed around the activities listed in the schemes of work, while parents teach values based on family and cultural beliefs (Cirila, Ema, Janja, Metod, Nina, Vesna, I., ... Pavlina, 2018). Our view of pedagogy in this context is a technique of instilling and sustaining values like respect, honesty, and tolerance in children. The findings seem to focus on role-modeling by adults as a suitable pedagogy in which children learn values at the early childhood stage.

Role-Modeling

A role-model in the context of this research is a person who children look up to for guidance. A role-model develops positive character traits by showing children how to live with integrity, optimism, hope, determination, and compassion (Price-Mitchell, 2011). Studies confirm that age (three to five years) is the prime time in the cognitive development of a child (Bakken, Brown, & Downing, 2017), and when values, for instance honesty and integrity, are allowed to develop to the full and nurtured through the school cycle, the chances of these values becoming part of the child's beliefs will be very high (Trawick-Smith, 2014). Children should receive consistent communication about the value of good character from parents and teachers who are role models to the children (Yaşaroğlu, 2016).

Studies show that children learn values by observing and imitating adults as they lead (Bandura, 2018). Furthermore, leadership that is presented through moral values enhances good character development in children, in accordance with Aristotle's theory of moral virtue (Ross, 1908), Thomas Licking's model of character education (1996), and value-based theories of leadership (Brown, Treviño, & Harrison, 2005). It is also

observed that all learning phenomena resulting from direct experience occur through the observation of others' behaviors (Bandura, 2013).

The implication of this for this research is that a child's characters are highly dependent on the values of teachers and parents, because values are imitable. If teachers and parents consistently practice the desired values, chances are high that children will develop and present good behavior, which is good for economic and sustainable development in Kenya. Value-based leadership allows parents and teachers to act as role-models of good behavior, who live their values in the respective environments (Price-Mitchell, 2011).

Value-Based Leadership

Value Value-based leadership is defined "as goal-setting, problem-solving, language-creating, and value-developing interaction, which is anchored in the organization's values and high ethical standards" (Busch, & Murdock, 2014, p. 87). This definition connects with what happens in schools, for instance, teachers set goals for students to achieve and choose what to teach and how to teach. This also resonates with what parents should model at home to create an enabling environment where children can learn values to develop their character. Parents and teachers teach children desired values such as respect, love and justice. Values that are desired in society are those that bring people together to coexist and work together, unite and make people of different races and gender to respect one another. Value-based leadership also cultivates values and makes those vulnerable and marginalized to develop a sense of belonging in the wider society (Waghid, 2007).

This research considers value-based leadership as a theoretical lens necessary to rethink pedagogy. Teachers and parents lead through values such as; respect, integrity, honesty and justice which are observed and imitated by the children (Bandura, 2018). All learning phenomena resulting from direct experience occur through the observation of others' behaviors (Bandura, 2013). The implication of this is that children's characters are highly dependent on the values that teachers in school and parents at home model, because values are observable and imitable. Some of the values drawn from the concept of value-based leadership that connects to children's learning includes: integrity, respect, listening, trust, clear thinking, vision, and inclusion. These values are indicators of value-based leadership (O'Toole, 1995), which according to Garg and Krishnan (2003) can be measured. What follows below is a brief description of the indicators (traits) of value-based leadership that can be used to rethink pedagogy for both the school and home environments.

Integrity

Integrity as a value that manifests leadership is contested and multifaceted. Vines (1999), views integrity as wholeness, completeness, and also as consistency and coherence of principles and values. In the professional context, "integrity means that a professional exercises his tasks adequately, carefully and responsibly, taking into account all relevant interests" (Karssing, 2007, p. 3). Other studies depict integrity as honesty, impartiality and accountability (Dobel, 2016), acting in line with virtues like wisdom, justice, courage, and temperance (Becker & Talsma, 2016). All these views as presented in the literature link integrity with morals and values. When teachers and parents as leaders uphold values such as honesty and justice in a consistent manner, children will observe

and imitate the values as a part of their beliefs which develop the desired character in the children.

Trust

Trust as a component of VBL is understood as being helpful, trustworthy, competent, honest, and open from one side and the other being willing to be vulnerable (Hoy, & Tschannen-Moran, 1999). This means that, the concept of trust reveals attributes that include kindness, reliability, ability, honesty, and openness, which are essential for school success. Research findings indicate that teachers in schools in which trust had increased over a three-year period reported a greater willingness to try new things; a greater sense of responsibility for their students; more outreach to parents; and a stronger commitment (Robinson, Hohepa, & Lloyd, 2009). Individuals who trust people more, control them less and individuals who trust people less control them more (Vosselman & Meer-Kooistra, 2009). The implication of this is that when parents and teachers trust children more, they control them less, meaning children can easily cooperate and learn the desired values when led by values.

Listening

This is the third component of VBL. The International Listening Association (ILA, 2012) defines listening as the process of receiving, constructing meaning from, and responding to spoken or nonverbal messages. Listening is portrayed as a profound responsibility of a leader – to listen effectively and consciously (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2006; Humphreys, 2005; Spears, 2010), to ask questions to create knowledge (Humphreys, 2005; Rai & Prakash, 2012), to give time to reflection and quietness (Spears, 2010) and, what is more, to be aware of what is inferred (Coetzer, Bussin & Geldenhuys, 2017).

Research demonstrates that leaders who practice active listening make their followers more satisfied (Weger, Bell, Minei & Robinson, 2014). The implication of this is that when parents and teachers practice active listening as they lead, children are likely to be more satisfied and comply with the instructions given to them. They will be willing to learn values and act according to the good traits they observe in both teachers and parents.

Respect

Respect as the fourth component of VBL is defined as “warmth and caring connoted by positive regard” (Hersrud, 1994, p. 49). According to Van Quaquebeke and Eckloff (2010, p. 344).

Respect is a person's attitude towards other people in whom he/she sees a reason that, in itself, justifies a degree of attention and a type of behavior that in return engenders in the target a feeling of being appreciated in importance and worth as a person.

Respect is a perception of fair treatment a person receives from people who give such treatment. There are two types of respect: horizontal respect and vertical respect (Simon & Stürmer, 2003). Horizontal respect refers to the respect experienced between peers, while vertical respect exists between superiors and subordinates. In the school environment, respect for the teacher and the teaching of respect itself is important factors for learning (Mertz, Eckloff, Johannsen, & Van Quaquebeke, 2015). The horizontal

respect between children plays an important role in learning. Further, Interviews carried out by Meyer (2008) about respect in the classroom showed that students were more willing to learn and to show commitment in class when they were respected by their teachers. Deutsch and Jones (2008) further found that (horizontal) respect moderates youths' perceptions of and relations to authority. The implication of these findings is that when there is respect between children, teachers and parents there is a potential to teach this very value both at school and at home.

Vision

Vision as the fifth element for VBL, is defined as an impression of a desirable future (Starratt, 1993). The role of a head teacher in the development and implementation of the school vision has been given significant attention in the literature (Greenfield, Licata, & Johnson, 1992; Leithwood & Jantzi, 1990; Sashkin, 1993; Stalhammar, 1994; Starratt, 1993). Kouzes and Posner (2007) define vision as an ideal and unique image of the future for the common good. "Vision is a picture of the future with some implicit or explicit commentary on why people should strive to create that future" (Kotter, 1996, p. 68).

Head teachers are influential leaders in the school who can change how things operate and influence performance. Mombourquette (2017) conducted research to determine the degree to which the personal beliefs of school heads and school-based vision affect the student learning experience. The study incorporated twenty-seven elementary, middle and high school principals from Alberta, Canada who were interviewed using a semi-structured protocol.

The findings of the study showed that schools that were perceived as high performing were all led by head teachers who clearly articulated vision, mission, and goals that emanated from personal beliefs about student learning, while schools that were perceived as not performing were led by heads who did not work from a position of clearly identified personal beliefs or vision for the school. This implies that parents and teachers should clearly identify their personal beliefs and clearly articulate the vision and mission for teaching values as they lead children. The goal of teaching values is to develop good character in children.

Clear Thinking

Clear thinking is the sixth component of VBL. Clear thinking is a value necessary for leadership in school. Clear thinking is critical for schools when they need to make decisions. For instance, clear thinking means that the leaders remain focused, cut expenses, grow new items, become progressively effective or improve quality, as a rule, the way of life will also need to change for the organization (Gleenson, 2017). This, according to Gleenson, is required almost immediately, because another method for doing things requires a new way of thinking, particularly by leaders at all levels.

Schools need leaders who are clear thinkers to transform schools and make them progressive, effective and improve the quality of the learning outcomes. Families also need parents who are clear thinkers to transform their families. Visionary leaders are clear thinkers (Day, & Sammons, 2016). What this statement means is that parents and teachers who are visionary will think critically and communicate constantly at every opportunity possible to make the home and school environments conducive for learning.

Inclusion

The seventh element for VBL is inclusion. Sturm (2006, p. 249) defines inclusion as "identifying the barriers to full participation and the pivot points for removing those barriers and increasing participation". In the school context, there are barriers that prevent children from learning and achieving their potential, for example religious barriers that dictate what they should learn for instance, in some Christian sponsored schools, Muslim students are not allowed to practice their religious values in school.

In the home environment, barriers could be forms of discrimination in the family, for example, parents may prefer to educate the boys and leave the girls in a situation where the family has scarce resources. If such barriers are removed and boys and girls are given equal opportunities to pursue their education, children will feel that sense of belonging, and will participate fully in family affairs.

When parents and teachers provide environments that satisfy the children's needs, children are likely to perceive parents and teachers as loving and caring (Nembhard, & Edmonson, 2006). This will make children have that sense of belonging and most likely shape their behavior. Implications of Value Based Leadership to Sustainable Pedagogy in Kenyan Schools

The family is the most essential organization that transmits values from generation to generations and prepares children for their lives in school and the public. As such, family becomes the principal social structure in which people are conceived, raised, nurtured, prepared and protected (Sengun, 2013). On the other hand, the school is a place where children from diverse cultural groups are gathered and coordinated under a specific curriculum with the aim of unifying their worldviews to achieve standardized learning outcomes (Shatalebi, & Yarmohammadian, 2011). In light of Trevino and Brown (2004) "The underlying attitudes and beliefs that help determine individual behavior depends on both personnel and leaders" (p.75). Therefore, both home and school environment are critical for the cultivation of values that shapes character. This means that the pedagogical approach that is implemented by both parents and teachers require one that is value-based.

Implications of Parental Value-Based Leadership

Value-based leadership offered by parents at home varies from family to family and on culture and spiritual beliefs (Cirila et al., 2018). The values that a child learns from the family and cultural beliefs tend to shape the character of that child. Take an example of how Muslim and Christian families influence the character of their children by practicing values and beliefs of their faith. Muslims teach their children values according to the Islamic faith, while Christian children learn Christian values in line with the Christian beliefs. The behavior of the adults in the two type of families model the character of children differently, for instance, Muslim children strictly observe the fasting ritual during Ramadhan after seeing their parents do so, while Christian children do not observe the ritual at that time. In other instances, while Christian children are free to wear fashion clothes, Muslim children stick to their traditional attire, making them more conservative (Mathras, Cohen, Mandel, & Mick, 2016).

Religious and cultural practices have the potential to shape the belief systems of children differently, impacting on their character and personality. Differences in personality and character that children develop and embrace during their adulthood embraced values can result to conflicts. For example, when Kenya was reviewing the constitution before it was promulgated in 2010, leaders took too long to agree on issues

as they were building consensus because each had different value positions such as cultural, religious and politically oriented. Some of the conflicts emerged including: ethnic divisions whose origins go back to pre-colonial times; the choice between parliamentary and presidential systems of government; devolution of power with a focus on minority protection; and the erosion of democracy and constitutional protections against the misuse of power (Kaguongo, 2018). To bridge the gap in value differences, developing policies that can inform value-based pedagogy is critical to the school practice which potentially will influence the home practice. A prolonged use of value-based leadership pedagogy throughout a child's education cycle may help in sustaining the learned values. That means teaching and learning will be characterized by: respect, integrity, trust, vision, inclusion, listening and clear thinking in the modeling and inculcating these values.

Implications of Teachers' Value-Based Leadership

The school treats children from different races, religion and sex equally. On matters, religion, teachers teach children to pray to God who is recognized by the different faiths as a supernatural being. Children are taught how to respect one another irrespective of religious or cultural inclination (Darling-Hammond, Flook, Cook-Harvey, Barron, & Osher, 2020). Research has shown that when teachers take an active role in the transfer of values through displaying fitting practices in the classroom, accompanied with the usage of well-designed character training programmes, children acquire numerous all-inclusive characteristics. These universal characteristics or values include honor, courage, belief, honesty, truthfulness, kindness, generosity, helpfulness, faith, respect, freedom, and equality (Fidan & Duman, 2014; Lickona, 1997; Öztürk, 2011).

Teaching qualifications, along with other factors such as teaching methods, have been found to positively affect the character development of children (Umudjere, Okogu, & Osah, 2016). The training that teachers acquire in college enables them to impart values, attitudes, knowledge, and skills that help in developing the character of the children. In Kenya for example, teachers learn skills in college that enable them to teach values through instruction, demonstration, and role modeling framed in three themes as: class activities, environmental activities, and social activities (KICD, 2017). The stated activities are like the inquiry method, dramatization, and role-playing found in another research (Umudjere, Okogu, & Osah, 2016). Research shows that teachers who have undergone training on values are more effective in developing children's characters than those who have not (Agocha, & Aboyi, 2010). In addition, the training that teachers receive on leadership affects the learning outcomes of the children (Abu-Hussain, & Essawi, 2014; Fullan, 2001; Nir, & Bogler, 2008; Sergiovanni, 1990). The training on styles of leadership including value-based leadership enables teachers to support children, and provide wonderful environment for learning and facilitate their teaching methods in class. The training also helps teachers observe professional ethics and display the best behavior that children can imitate in class.

Implications of VBL as Pedagogy for Sustaining Character Development in Children

VBL pedagogy needs to inform teacher training, teacher practice and parental seminars. Unlike teachers who have some level of training on how to teach children and how to observe professional behavior in class while teaching values (Darling-Hammond, Flook, Cook-Harvey, Barron, & Osher, 2020; Hauser-Cram, Sirin, & Stipek, 2003), parents do

not know how to combine affection and control while instilling values in children. Some parents become too authoritarian, while others are uncertain about how to make their children happy without overprotecting them (Bernal, Urpí, Rivas, & Repáraz, 2011). The experience that parents use to model the behavior of their children is derived from their religious or cultural beliefs (Alba, & Foner, 2015). Empirical studies have established that parental influence on the values learned in school is strong in societies dominated by a single ethnic group, but in those whose ethnic diversity is high, the parental influence on values learned is negligible (Thijs & Verkuyten, 2014). These findings show that diversification of values helps in bridging the gap in cultural differences.

Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization ([UNESCO], 2014), recommends a curriculum that teaches the children national and global values to harmonize their thinking and expand their worldviews beyond their family and school environments. The standardization of values is required because, when children are empowered to think beyond their immediate environment, they easily appreciate cultural diversity, accommodate one another's points of view, and co-exist (Nesliturk, 2014). If the same standardization of values is achieved at home, the inconsistency that exist between parental and teachers' value-based leadership will be bridged. This can be achieved by deliberately training parents on value-based leadership skills and coming up with a standard curriculum based on global values. If parents teach children global values that are acceptable to all religious and cultural organizations, children are likely to develop personality characteristics that are similar.

A learning environment deliberately designed to instill values that promote democracy, fairness and justice, gives children a chance to observe the parents, teachers, classmates, and peers. In the process of observing, children learn the values they see and practice them (Bandura, 2006). A learning environment where both parents and teachers are trained on value-based leadership skills will improve the consistency in which children will learn values, ethics and morals within the diverse cultures in Kenya. The diagram below (see Fig 1) describes a conceptual model of a deliberate learning environment where both parents and teachers practice value-based leadership in a consistent way.