Chapter 10

Seven Scales to Measure the Seven Beatitudes in Leaders

John Kilroy
Fresno Pacific University, USA

Corné L. Bekker
Regent University, USA

Mihai C. Bocarnea
Regent University, USA

Bruce E. Winston
Regent University, USA

ABSTRACT

This study presents seven scales for the seven beatitudes found in Matthew 5: 3-10. Separate scales were created rather than a conceptual instrument with seven factors since the ‘concept’ of ‘Beatitude’ does not exist and since the seven beatitudes are related in various ways making them highly correlated. The seven scales were reduced to five items each. The resultant Chronbach alpha scores were .86, .95, .89, .92, .93, .93, .92 for each of the scales. The value of the seven scales lies in their ability to assist researchers to compare leadership effectiveness with the seven representative values and, in time after normative data is developed, to offer a measure to help with leadership selection.

BACKGROUND

This study builds on Winston’s (2002) conceptual work about the Beatitudes from Matthew 5: 3-10 being the values base of leadership. No valid scale development work has been done on Winston’s conceptual propositions or, for that matter, on the beatitudes as related to leadership. A premise for this paper is that each beatitude of the seven found in Matthew 5: 3-10 is a separate concept and, as such, we developed a separate scale. As a corollary to this the authors posit that ‘Beatitude’ in general is not a single concept and as such neither attempted to, nor believe that there should be a single instrument to measure ‘Beatitude’ in which the intent would be to have seven scales within the single instrument. This study produced

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seven instruments – one instrument for each of the seven Beatitudes.

The word ‘beatitude’ does not exist in the Bible but is a term, according to Langan (1977), that means ‘happiness’. Winston (2002) suggested that a leader’s foundational values yield beliefs, beliefs yield intentions, and intentions yield behavior. Winston further posits that a leader’s behavior forms the follower’s attitude, and the follower’s attitude affects the follower’s behavior (p. IV). Bass and Steidlmeier (1999) noted, “with the renewed emphasis upon strategic leadership and ethics, the virtues and moral character of leaders have taken centered stage” (p. 194). Winston’s suggestion established a circular pattern of the leader’s behavior influencing the formation of the followers’ behavior, which, in turn influences or reinforces the leader’s behavior. The concept of leader-follower influence is not new to leadership research and is incorporated in one’s personal and group efficacy belief (Bandura, 1997). Nonetheless, Winston’s concept is unique in its premise that Agapao love forms the basis of such leader-follower influence and it is foundational to effective leader behavior. Furthermore, Winston associated the above behaviors with the values Jesus articulated in the Beatitudes contained in the Sermon of the Mount and found in the gospel of Matthew 5:3-9. In these Beatitudes, Jesus exhorted his followers to (a) demonstrate humility and a willingness to learn, (b) have compassion for others, (c) exhibit controlled discipline, wisdom, and compassion, (d) be highly focused, and (e) be a peacemaker. These characteristics represent the “inward traits and principles that a godly person possesses” (p. 135). Winston’s incorporation of Agapao love, which is a manifestation of one’s spiritual principles, is the foundation of the values. This argument links spirituality and leadership a concept which is gaining popularity among researchers and leadership practitioners (Burke, 2006; Fry, 2003; Klenke, 2005; Kriger & Seng, 2005; Mitroff & Denton, 1999).

Values Research

The premise that a leader’s behavior is reflective of his/her values and has an influence on both followers and the organization is not a new position, nor is it limited to a biblical perspective (Mitroff & Denton, 1999). Northhouse (2007) believed leadership decisions were “informed and directed by their ethics” reflecting the virtuousness and motives of the individual (p. 342). Northhouse further stated that virtue-based theories focus on “who the leader is as a person and that virtues and moral abilities can be acquired and learned through practice” (p. 345). Writing on leadership, Kriegbaum (1998) asserted that values control behaviors, which are based on one’s belief, and whoever influences a group’s core value is in fact the leader who has the responsibility to direct followers toward the right goals. Behr (1998) stipulated “those who practice value-centered leadership create the organizational integrity needed to compete in an ever-changing world” (p. 51). Northouse (2007) further stipulated that the values leaders promote influence organizational values. Northouse’s position on values supports Winston’s (2002) writings that identified the concept that a leader’s behavior forms the followers’ attitudes and the followers’ attitude affects their behavior consequently forming the values displayed within an organization.

Kriger and Seng (2005) discussed the values and concepts of spiritual leadership within Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, and Judaism, which represent the five major religions and encompass 72% of the world’s population. Their research of the various religions indicated that a leader’s actions are based upon religious values and teachings, and as the leader practices their beliefs, followers eventually internalize the behavior thereby becoming part of the organization’s values. However, Kriger and Seng suggested the knowledge of how values based upon ones religion can deepen the practice of leadership in organizations is under-discussed and under-researched even though a literature review of the
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