The Virtue of School Leadership: Three Paths to Fulfilling Value Forms

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Abstract
This study discusses the fulfillment of value forms by examining the virtue of school leadership. The virtue of school leadership stresses character traits in leaders that focus on the pursuit of excellence, appear as a value form, comprise paths to fulfilling values, reinforce leaders’ positive motivation, and foster reform in schools. To investigate this phenomenon, a qualitative method was adopted to interview 18 leaders from schools in northern Taiwan. The analysis of the findings suggests that staff who exhibit the virtue of school leadership focus on leading by example, satisfying others, surmounting failures, and adhering to ideals, which involve three paths to fulfilling value forms.

Keywords
the virtue of school leadership, fulfillment of value forms, three paths, junior high school, qualitative study

School leaders typically strive for excellence, which is vital to the success of their leadership (Hackett & Wang, 2012). Character traits are used to determine the effectiveness of leadership because personality-related behaviors help distinguish between kindness and wickedness (Strang & Kuhnert, 2009). The virtue of school leadership has been increasingly studied (Robinson, 2001); in particular, the virtue of leadership in schools has received growing academic attention due to its role in reducing ethical problems (Atkinson & Butler, 2012).

The virtue of leadership in schools triggers positive feelings in a leader, in turn influencing others (Ciulla, 2005). The meaning of the virtue of school leadership varies depending on the cultural context. Thus, discussing the virtue of school leadership in different cultural contexts may elucidate the personalities underlying school leaders’ pursuit of excellence, thus facilitating school improvement.

When the virtue of school leadership is essential to leadership, it involves value forms (Macallister, 2012) and induces positive motivation in a leader, thereby causing positive changes (Whetstone, 2005). Therefore, analyzing the values that the virtue of school leadership fulfills and the positive impact it produces can highlight the significance of the virtue.

As a charismatic leadership, the virtue of school leadership becomes a path to the fulfillment of values (Brierton et al., 2016) and appears as a value form (Macalister, 2012). Thus, exploring the positive effects of the fulfillment of different value forms and the relationships between these value forms to determine the different paths of value fulfillment through the virtue of school leadership and the positive effects of these paths can facilitate the systematic assessment of school development.

The characteristics of virtue of school leadership is closely related to a school’s reform (Sergiovanni, 2005); the reform of the 12-year compulsory education system in Taiwan has caused disputes over the management of junior high schools. Moreover, the virtue of school leadership helps to improve the quality of educational policies; thus, research into the virtue of school leadership can alleviate the disagreements over education reforms. Based on this argument, the researcher conducted interviews with 18 school leaders from six junior high schools in three cities in northern Taiwan to address the following objectives:

(a) Analyze the current conditions of the virtue of school leadership and the value forms it fulfills;
(b) Explore the positive impact of fulfilling the value forms of the virtue of school leadership and the paths constructed by the fulfillment of the values.

Literature Review

Significance of Virtues of School Leadership

When talking about the virtues of school leadership, we should first look at the evolution of the virtue of public school leadership in America, which can be roughly
goodness. Among the traits of goodness, honesty and respect leaders, and it arouses positive motivation via the norms of refer to the personality traits of goodness among the school education. According to this, the virtue of school leadership aims to provide students with better services through better human resources, contribute to the reform of education, and each era has attempted to improve the quality of educational notations of the virtue of school leadership can explain why the sustainable development of education through the course of continuous learning. During this period, ethnic integration has become the focus of educational reform. In addition, through social networking, women’s role in education was also expanded from that of caregivers of their own offspring to educators of other children. Equality of education was improved, but the problem of poor management efficiency was still profound. With expertise in education, school leaders were the pilots of the new education. During the second phase, from 1890 to 1954, schools combined business and social ideas to work in public schools with the aim of improving education efficiency. Education committees were established to take charge of planning and budgeting, promote students’ learning, and safeguard the fairness of education. Meanwhile, the most cherished virtues of school leadership were democratic values. The third phase is 1954 to date, which has been a period for realizing dreams. Running schools as a business operation has become the norm. During this period, ethnic integration has become the focus of education reform. School leaders are expected to be mobilizers who listen to diverse voices of different ethnic groups, protect the weak, and advocate for social justice and human rights. The virtues of school leadership in this era focus on efforts to awaken the social commitment to pursue public good and kindness. Education in Taiwan is much influenced by education in America, so are virtues of school leadership.

The concept of education globalization has widely spread in the 21st century and Taiwan is no exception. Accordingly, school leadership was expected to have the virtue of life-time learning (Crick & Wilson, 2005). Leaders should be learners who constantly improve their self-awareness, respond to changes in situations, facilitate school reform, and promote the sustainable development of education through the course of continuous learning. In fact, Hackett and Wang (2012) opined that “virtue” means the goddess of excellence in Greek (aret’e) and manliness in Latin (virtūs), emphasizing moral character of excellence. On the basis of this rationale, the virtue of school leadership highlights the leader’s personality as an intrinsic quality marked by a desire for excellence (Robinson, 2001), and it induces the positive motivations needed to improve the ability to formulate legitimate and sound judgments (Ciulla, 2005; Whetstone, 2005). The above interpretations of connotations of the virtue of school leadership can explain why each era has attempted to improve the quality of educational human resources, contribute to the reform of education, and aim to provide students with better services through better education. According to this, the virtue of school leadership refers to the personality traits of goodness among the school leaders, and it arouses positive motivation via the norms of goodness. Among the traits of goodness, honesty and respect are the most common; at the same time, they are also inspired by school progress and public interests.

Positive Effects of the Virtues of School Leadership

Virtue has proven a far more suitable categorization for moral educational teaching and leadership (Burns & Rathbone, 2010). Therefore, virtues of school leadership emphasize the interests of others as a goal of education, facilitate tutors’ teaching ability, stimulate students’ voluntary learning, and cultivate students’ motivation for learning (Bohlin, 2014). At the same time, by encouraging the free will of students, schools attempt to support their students in becoming a whole person with dignity and responsibility (Ortiz, 2015).

Furthermore, because school leadership is responsible for fulfilling a school’s educational objectives, its motivation for reform is strong. Silvman (2012) believes that virtue ethics are inextricably intertwined with social practices. They focus on the development and flourishing of human beings, as well as the balance of distinctive capacity of an individual with his or her social service. They aim at improving teachers’ professional skills, enhance the learning of students and cultivate students’ ability to live a virtuous life (Kristeja’nsson, 2013). Those are the core values of the virtues of school leadership.

In particular, personalities marked by a tendency to achieve excellence draw on the capacities of a leadership role to address the demands of different situations (Wilson, 2014), guide a school’s personnel through healthy reform, and refine the quality of its education.

Fulfillment of Value Forms of Virtues of School Leadership

The virtue of school leadership enables the realization of values and is fulfilled through different value forms that can promote reform, including independence, integrity, equity, benevolence, kindness, justice, loyalty, generosity, passion, and modesty (Hackett & Wang, 2012); trust, politeness, and sincerity (Sergiovanni, 2005); conscientiousness, sincerity, and concern (Haughey, 2007); and confidence, moderation, discipline, empathy, kindness, and uprightness (Robinson, 2001). Therefore, the virtue of school leadership manifests itself in the form of different values, and the realization of those values produces different positive impacts, which contribute to the success of the reform. Moreover, the virtue of school leadership underpins the value forms that can foster the behavior of intellectual growth (Barclay et al., 2012) at individual (Cranston, 2013), organizational (Bon & Bigbee, 2011), and societal (Ciulla, 2005) levels, thus prompting leaders and followers to undergo healthy reforms.
Research Method

This study used Grounded Theory, which emphasizes the significance of symbolic interactions for knowledge exploration (Strauss & Cobin, 1990), as the basis of the research methodology and stimulated the interviewees’ deep thoughts through interviews, which are quite appropriate for research on school leadership.

Qualitative Study

The qualitative method was used to explore the opinions of school leaders—including principals, directors, and teachers—about leadership morality. Interviews were conducted with participants working for junior high schools in Taipei City, New Taipei City, and Keelung City in northern Taiwan to explore the virtue of school leadership across these cities. Moreover, the participants were recruited based on certain criteria, including place of residence, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, sex, and urban–rural gap. The sample contained differences in the place of residence, urban–rural gap, and socioeconomic status; therefore, findings regarding the virtue of school leadership would not be biased.

The virtue of school leadership emphasizes the positive motives of leaders. Understanding leaders’ motives through interviews can reduce the misjudgment of virtue, and such recognition also represents the driving force of the leaders’ practice of goodness and can avoid the excessive gap between theory and practice to further enhance the applicability of research.

Out of respect for the participants, the researcher interviewed the participants at their respective schools. Before the interview, the principal and other invited school leaders were informed of the objectives and implications of this study for the development of education; they willingly consented to participate in this study without any pressure from having an interpersonal relationship with the researcher. To enhance their trust in the researcher, the participants were apprised of the rationale behind this study before the interviews, and the researcher introduced himself and answered questions posed by the participants.

Data Collection

After specifying the objectives of this study, the researcher held three meetings with the research assistants to prepare an interview outline. During the first meeting, the interview questions were drafted on the basis of the results of a literature review, and to ensure their intelligibility for participants, the questions were revised repeatedly so that they were written concisely and colloquially; revisiting the interview questions in which the participants replied relatively belatedly in terms of intrinsic factors (e.g., having no relevant experience, having to recall the circumstances under which the event mentioned in the question occurred, and looking for a better way to answer) and extrinsic factors (e.g., having little, if any, understanding of the relevance of their values and experiences to the question, tending to be impatient toward the lengthy answering process, and being unwilling to address a given question and therefore providing an ambiguous response). Moreover, in each interview, questions were displayed in a similar pattern as possible to reduce misunderstanding. The order of the questions was arranged in line with the objectives of the study.

All the interviews were conducted one-on-one and face-to-face. The researcher ensured that the participant focused on the topics. The interview was conducted for about 8 months; each interview lasted for 1 to 2 hr. Before interviews, the researcher described the research directions and relevant connotations, and the participants were informed that the interviews would be recorded. After the interview, the researcher asked for further interviews and clarifications when something was unclear about the information. These interviews did not exceed 30 min at a time. Interviews continued until the researcher fully understood the participants’ opinion.

During the interviews, none of the participants refused to answer questions about the personalities of leaders or found it difficult to answer such questions. In addition, the researcher remained neutral throughout the interviews, listening to and identifying with the participants. The researcher did not disclose sensitive topics to prevent the participants from altering their responses.

After repeated discussions and revisions, the following final interview outline was devised:

(a) What are the most important issues you wish to address when you lead others? Why?
(b) When you lead others, what character traits related to the pursuit of excellence do you exhibit to improve your ability to address these issues? Why?
(c) What roles are these character traits related to?
(d) What values do these character traits comprise? Why?
(e) How (e.g., in terms of performance and unity) do these character traits enable you to stay true to your values when you lead others? Which aspects (e.g., performance and unity) does this influence occur through? Why?
(f) What positive effects does this have?
(g) Among these positive effects, what are the direct and indirect effects of the virtue of school leadership, and what impacts do they have?
(h) Which of the indirect effects are derived from the direct effects of the virtue of school leadership, and what impacts do they have?

Data Analysis

Participants. The participants’ demographic backgrounds led to different opinions on virtue of varied leaders. The data are summarized in Table 1.

All participants had over 4 years of tenure and held a leadership position in their respective schools. The researcher recruited a large school (more than 30 classes) and a small school (fewer than 30 classes) from Taipei City, New Taipei City, and Keelung City separately, and interviewed three participants (the principal, director, and a teacher) from each school. In total, 18 participants working at six junior high schools in northern Taiwan were interviewed. Participants all play the role of leaders, who are people with virtues. The principal is represented by the letter P, director by the letter A, and teachers by the letter T. See Table 1 for a framework of virtues of the participants.

Analysis of interview data. Based on the interview data, the researcher coded the themes and concepts that appeared. The interview data were summarized, analyzed, and compared through coding analysis. The topics and concepts presented in this study were used as the framework for preliminary classification. Researcher re-analyzed those strings that did not fit in the framework to identify new data categories. After the trial-and-error process, the categories were expanded, deleted, and corrected. The new and original classified data were integrated to form a complete data analysis framework lately.

Establishing Trustworthiness

To enhance the validity of this study, the researcher familiarized participants with the nature, objectives, and procedure of the study before conducting the interviews; thus, the participants would provide responses with greater credibility, which would improve the reliability of the data. All the interviews were conducted in schools, where participants were more likely to answer in a manner that reflected their leadership practices as accurately as possible. Two voice recorders were used during the interviews to ensure that the data were fully collected even when interviews became lengthy. Voice-recorded data were transcribed faithfully without distorting the participants’ opinions. The transcripts were analyzed and compared in the most objective way possible. The researcher took field notes throughout the interviews. When transcribing these data, the researcher recalled them in the contexts where they were written to understand participants’ perceptions for the subsequent analysis. These data were collated based on the critical meaning of events and analyzed based on the opinions of all the authors of this study.

Research Ethics

The researcher established a genuine interaction with the participants. Accordingly, before the interviews, the researcher thoroughly acquainted participants with the objectives of this study and the methods used to collect the data; subsequently, their informed consent for participation was obtained. During the interviews, the researcher avoided disturbing the daily routine of the participants’ schools. Informed consent was obtained from the participants for formal and informal interviews, all participants’ names were replaced by codes to protect their privacy, and the data were organized and secured in a confidential manner. During the interviews, the researcher listened to the participants more than he spoke to them and did not express subjective views or reveal data collected from other interviewees. The researcher transcribed the interview data faithfully, reflected on his roles and opinions constantly, and did not alter any part of the participants’ responses. If any of the data required clarification, the researcher checked in person with the participants who had provided those responses.

Results

Due to space constraints, the presentation of research results selected the common opinions of the interviewees as evidence; the data were a comprehensive expression of all the data analysis.

Current Situation of the Virtue of School Leadership

Leading by example is a character trait identified in the leaders. They tend to build a sense of togetherness, work willingly with others to address problems, serve as a role model, blaze a trail, envision themselves assuming different roles, improve teachers’ working conditions out of consideration for their limited time, enlist help (to upgrade their professionalism, for example), provide a teaching demonstration, accommodate others’ suggestions, embrace
| Participant | Interview codes | Virtue |
|-------------|-----------------|--------|
| Josh P1     | 1. Positive     | 2. Enthusiastic |
|             | 3. Lead by example | 4. Law-abiding |
|             | 5. Doesn't take all credit alone |
| Frank A1    | 1. Affiliative   | 2. Care for others' |
|             | 3. Rise to challenges |
|             | 4. Place oneself in others' position |
|             | 5. Solicit people by power |
| Joshua A2   | 1. Subdue people by power |
|             | 2. Exchange interest for support |
|             | 3. Persuade people through reasoning |
|             | 4. Treat people with respect |
| Keith T1    | 1. Empathetic   |
|             | 2. Share weal and woe |
|             | 3. Follow the norms |
| Abbott P2   | 1. Preemptive   |
|             | 2. Rise to challenges |
|             | 3. Lead by example |
|             | 4. Persuasive people through reasoning |
| Abbott P2   | 1. A good listener |
|             | 2. Sincere |
|             | 3. Fair |
| Ryan P3     | 1. Positive thinking |
|             | 2. Sincere attitude |
|             | 3. Accept criticism |
|             | 4. Recognize one's shortcomings |
| Howard P4   | 1. Patience |
|             | 2. Positive attitude |
|             | 3. Self-reflective |
|             | 4. Self-imposed demands |
| April P5    | 1. Patient |
|             | 2. Lead by example |
|             | 3. Follow the norms |
|             | 4. Tolerant of dissent |
|             | 5. Lead by example |
| Howard P4   | 1. Sense of justice |
|             | 2. Positive |
|             | 3. Competitive |
|             | 4. Pursue perfection |
|             | 5. Rise to challenges |
| Rita T6     | 1. Empathetic |
|             | 2. Decisive |
|             | 3. Face the challenge |
|             | 4. Innovative |
|             | 5. Keep one's word |
| Clara A4    | 1. A good listener |
|             | 2. Empathetic |
|             | 3. Fair |
|             | 4. Fair |
|             | 5. Rise to challenges |
| Bella A5    | 1. Professional |
|             | 2. Understanding |
|             | 3. Discover others' potentials |
|             | 4. Coordination ability |
|             | 5. Decisive |
| Lee P6      | 1. Professional |
|             | 2. Empathetic |
|             | 3. Perseverance |
|             | 4. Recognize one's shortcomings |
|             | 5. Positive |
different viewpoints, put themselves in others’ shoes, determine the procedure and content of teacher evaluations through discussion, and, hence, establish and comply with rules, thus prompting their constituents to do likewise.

A leader should lead by example and build a sense of togetherness to improve his/her relationship with their members and urge the entire team to execute tasks. (T1)

Leaders possess character traits that enable them to satisfy others. Leaders provide teaching resources for teachers, encourage them to develop curricula, and accompany them through difficult times during curriculum development to alleviate their anxiety over such projects.

Leaders should seek funding for launching projects, such as reading promotion, and enlist help from experts and entrepreneurs interested in reading promotion to expand a school’s external support network and increase tutorial charges and library resources. (A5)

Leaders possess character traits that enable them to surmount failures. Leaders tend to think positively when encountering setbacks, look for ways to address their difficulties, reflect on why they fail and recover from their failure, seek alternative solutions, and improve the existing educational environment by, for example, leading teachers to rigorously design and execute course evaluations.

Leaders are supposed to surmount difficulties and avoid remaining in the status quos. Leaders should launch curriculum evaluations to examine students’ learning difficulties and increase their learning opportunities. Therefore, the principal should work closely with teachers, lead them to execute the evaluations, and guide them through difficulties in the process. (P2)

Leaders possess character traits that enable them to adhere to their ideals. Leaders are passionate about education, care for every student, expect more from themselves than from others, strive to create an ideal world, and criticize less hardworking teachers. Similarly, leaders also lead teachers to formulate group learning projects while encouraging their participation in the projects. With increased teacher participation in such projects, a school can become a role model in group learning.

Leaders are supposed to be principled, always attend to each of their students, and strive to attain meaningful achievements. As far as Leaders are concerned, although group learning projects prompt teachers to prepare more, these projects benefit teachers and students alike. Therefore, the principal should continue to implement these projects and work closely with teachers to ensure that the projects contribute to a motivation for learning. (P6)

Positive Effects of Fulfilling the Value Forms of the Virtue of School Leadership and the Paths Created by the Fulfillment of the Values

Building a reform-minded culture. Leaders promote the fulfillment of the value of fairness by translating resources into productive areas and providing competitive teachers with adequate resources, rather than distributing resources into certain areas. Doing so can boost school productivity.

During school reform, it is important to distribute resources fairly. Additionally, to distribute resources fairly, resources must be offered to capable teachers who can deliver substantive results. (A6)

Leaders promote forgiveness, thus encouraging differentiated instruction sympathetically, helping to minimize teachers’ workload, forgiving teachers who cannot implement differentiated instruction, and supporting teachers who are left alone. Thus, leaders can build a sense of team spirit in a school, enhance collective efforts to implement innovative instruction, and promote the legitimacy of the school’s operation.

Often, teachers struggle to meet all expectations when they perform differentiated instruction. Therefore, teachers should not be left unsupported; they should work as a team to handle different problems arising from differentiated instruction. Leaders and teachers should together identify who struggles with differentiated instruction. Teamwork approaches should be used to equip these teachers to better apply new teaching methods and maintain their emotional strength. (P1)

Leaders promote the fulfillment of the value of equality, which encourages communication about empowerment and the sharing of rights, thus providing an understanding of teachers’ problems, helping them improve their teaching processes and fostering school reforms.

The principal should communicate in an equal manner with teachers when developing featured courses or conducting other innovative projects. (P4)

Leaders promote the fulfillment of duties, urge teachers to perform their respective roles, gain an understanding of different tasks and all stages of goals to communicate with teachers more effectively, and help students to improve their learning outcomes.

To assume leadership responsibilities, a leader must understand what the organization prioritizes, what others promote, what the school’s directions are, and what the objectives of development are. Leaders have worked in different administrative departments; leaders had to be familiar with the duties of these departments and fulfill their objectives. (A3)
Leaders promote the fulfillment of the value of commitment and encourage positive interpersonal communication to make negotiations more flexible, facilitate mutual help, enhance teachers’ commitment to their jobs and organizations, and help them complete their tasks.

It is important to accomplish tasks and assist your colleagues’ in achieving their objectives. Tasks can be completed through teamwork. When leaders are given tasks from superiors, leaders encourage others to accept their jobs so that we teachers can improve our organizational commitment. (T2)

Leaders promote the fulfillment of the value of involvement and take the initiative to help teachers. Leaders adapt to teachers’ values, thus encouraging teachers to make a contribution and complete their tasks.

Leaders should help others without being asked to. The leaders’ assistance touched the teacher, resonated with her values, and made her more passionate about her job. (A1)

**Fulfilling the school’s objectives.** Leaders promote the fulfillment of the value of responsibility, making the planning of international education curricula more rigorous and encouraging the assignment of clearly delineated tasks to prevent shirking. In this way, the duty to participate in workshops will not be shifted to subject leaders alone. Leaders are visionary individuals; they build frameworks for curriculum development, encourage teacher adherence, and improve the effectiveness of projects to boost students’ learning outcomes.

Leaders should be responsible. Leaders should also be able to organize instead of simply asking their subordinates to perform assigned tasks. In undertaking a task or project, leaders should lead with foresight; in this way, they can create a solid learning environment. (T6)

Leaders promote the fulfillment of the value of supportive ness by taking the initiative to lending a helping hand; communicating with teachers in a generous, selfless manner; and recognizing their additional hard work. Therefore, teachers will respond by earnestly improving their teaching competence and contributing to educational objectives.

Leaders listen to teachers talking about their teaching-related problems and help them meet their varying needs and handle their difficulties. The teachers understand the school has made some changes for them; this encourages them to improve their teaching competence. (A4)

Leaders promote the fulfillment of the value of dissemination. Leaders evaluate viable policies, ask teachers about their potential, and allow them to conduct pilot projects and enhance their capabilities through self-empowerment.

Education policies abound, and principals must determine which of the policies is realistic. Leaders assess a large project called Learning Community. In this way, members can prepare for the launch of the project. (P3)

**School innovation.** Leaders are charged with initiating innovation, possessing a wealth of knowledge, fostering idea exchange, furthering the search for new approaches, and developing new methods for providing education.

To lead is to develop different methods and strive for constant improvement. Leaders should do so in remedial instruction, for example; teachers can design customized teaching materials to encourage low-achieving students’ participation in learning and strengthen their existing experiences, learning effectiveness, and sense of achievement. (P5)

Leaders promote the fulfillment of the value of criticism. Leaders are receptive to criticism, characteristically modest, and foster their personal growth and the dynamics of their organizations. Moreover, leaders improve the selection and utilization of contingency plans to solve problems effectively and encourage a school’s growth.

Leaders are receptive to criticism and modest, and they develop their own opinions, thus promoting school reform. (P4)

Leaders promote the fulfillment of the value of reflection, being introspective during social interactions. When promoting school affairs in accordance with regulations, leaders consider different opinions, thereby changing their ways of thinking, expanding their influence on others, and fostering organizational learning.

Leaders should be highly introspective. This allows leaders to adjust my way of thinking, expand my influence on others, and encourage learning within an organization. (P1)

Leaders promote the fulfillment of the value of helpfulness. Leaders provide further assistance for students with learning difficulties and encourage teachers to participate in activities related to educational innovation to ensure that no student is left behind.

When you undertake a leadership role, you should be able to solve students’ difficulties, give them hope, and help them address their learning difficulties. (T5)

Leaders commit themselves to undertake innovation in schools. However, undertaking innovation in school often leads to differences of opinion, which leaders can address in different ways.

Handling differences of opinion on reform is within a leader’s remit. This is also the role of subject leaders. For example, they have to resolve issues in which teachers complain about being
Leaders promote the fulfillment of the value of lawful-
ness. Leaders allocate manpower when undertaking school
innovation and, in the face of uncertainties, follow the law
and urge teachers to do likewise so that teachers are less
likely to interpret laws subjectively. Leaders instruct teachers
to act within the law and reduce differences of opinion to
prevent excessive dissension.

When my school was designated to implement experimental
education, leaders began by discussing regulations, for example,
whether we should enlist services from the public or private
sector and whether we should ask uncooperative teachers to
move to other schools. Our teachers expected the discussion to be
based on the law; this gave them a clearer idea what to do. (T3)

Leaders promote the fulfillment of the value of transpar-
ency. Leaders create an environment that is congenial to open-
ended discussion and the formulation of decisions based on
different opinions.

A transparent platform for open-ended discussion should be
established to accommodate different voices. For example,
when discussing the reform of the system governing the rotation
of homeroom teachers, some teachers suggest that female
teachers be exempted from managing classroom affairs during
pregnancy, whereas others object. Therefore, a consensus
should be reached, after which norms can be established with
relative ease. (A3)

Leaders promote the fulfillment of the value of prudence,
collecting information online to explore how new concepts are
advocated. Leaders develop relevant theoretical knowledge
and ask their directors to conduct research into the limitations
a school may encounter during its reform. Leaders encourage
debates in which different opinions are given adequate consid-
eration, thus improving harmony. Leaders encounter unex-
pected opinions, such as facing negative feedback, no matter
how hard they work; therefore, when being criticized, they
seek advice. Constant debate allows social leaders and other
people to complement each other, renders truths more intel-
ligible, improves social balance, refines schools’ approaches to
reform, resolves others’ problems, reduces teachers’ anxiety,
and enhances the motivation for reform.

When schools implemented teaching innovation, leaders
acquired theoretical knowledge of the learning community,
reflected on why they could do this and why they couldn’t,
pondered what limitations my school had, and listed these
limitations. Then, thanks to their opinions, leaders could solve
my shortcomings and ease teachers’ anxiety. (P2)

Leaders promote the fulfillment of the value of patience,
asking teachers whether they are willing to help implement
new plans, respecting their opinions, creating an atmosphere
of positive interaction, and encouraging them to contribute to
curriculum reform.

Some teachers focused largely on teaching their respective
subjects, such as natural science experiments, and resisted
sharing their research results and knowledge at community
meetings. The hosts of the meetings patiently encouraged the
teachers to make contributions for the good of students, rather
than for their fellow teachers. These teachers have begun to
share their ideas more. (T6)

Leaders promote the fulfillment of the value of politeness,
carefully addressing differences in teachers’ competence to
prevent complaints when uncertainties occur over the imple-
mentation of new policies. Therefore, leaders should maintain
the interests of others by promoting healthy social
interactions and encouraging teachers to participate in deci-
sion making, undertake different tasks, provide opinions
needed for decision making, and take risks for innovation.

Leaders should be able to put themselves in others’ shoes. All
teachers differ in their level of competence. Some teach
creatively, while others teach less creatively. Less creative
teachers complain when they feel a sense of uncertainty; they
should be allowed to participate in decision-making processes to
have their needs addressed. (A2)

**Discussion**

The virtue of school leadership encompasses numerous char-
acter traits. These include satisfying others’ needs; providing
material and spiritual support to reduce teachers’ work-
related anxiety; enhancing the motivation to meet personal
needs (Copp & Sobel, 2004); surmounting failures and seek-
ing alternative solutions when necessary; keeping teachers
company to improve their psychological adaptation and
motivate them to surmount their limitations (Whetstone,
2005), thus promoting intellectual growth at the individual
level; fostering a sense of responsibility, togetherness, a
sense of shared responsibility in crises, and a sense of admira-
tion for role models to encourage members’ compliance
with existing rules, facilitate consensus building, and
strengthen mutual understanding (Reitzug, 2008); facilitat-
ing intellectual growth at the social level; adhering to ideals
and highlighting the unique experiences of each individual
(Cameron & Caza, 2002) to reinforce the motivation to
achieve high-level objectives (Blakesley, 2008); and encour-
aging learning development in individual students and
increasing the availability of learning opportunities for stu-
dents of different backgrounds to expedite intellectual
growth at the organizational level. In summary, the virtue of
school leadership emphasizes character traits that enable
leaders to lead by example; satisfy others’ needs, surmount
failures, and adhere to their ideals to alleviate teachers’ anxi-
ety; earnestly help them adapt psychologically; reinforce
their compliance with existing rules; and motive them to attend to every student, think positively, and pursue excellence. All these practices can contribute to intellectual growth at the individual, organizational, and social levels, thus promoting school reform and establishing paths to the fulfillment of value forms.

On the basis of the aforementioned discussions, the virtue of school leadership is a path to fulfilling value forms and appears as a value form (Macallister, 2012). Given its findings, the present study divided the virtue of school leadership into three paths of value fulfillment, which are described as follows.

The first path to the virtue of school leadership focuses on the construction of a school culture that promotes fairness, forgiveness, and equality. Fairness stresses that capable individuals should be provided with more resources; forgiveness focuses on the burden imposed by reform on teachers, empathizes with teachers who cannot undertake reforms well (Fullan, 2001), and enhances buffers against coordination over reforms (Cameron & Caza, 2002); equality emphasizes empowering others and encouraging idea exchange to promote organizational reform (Blanke, 1992). Power utilization affects the virtue of leadership (Altunkurt & Yılmaz, 2012). Notably, Blanke (1992) also showed that “power through,” “power create,” and “power with” accompany the fulfillment of the values of fairness, forgiveness, and equality, thus fostering positive motivation for leadership. Moreover, the virtue of school leadership emphasizes the fulfillment of value forms of professional responsibility, commitment, and involvement to encourage motivation for leadership and passion for professional obligations (Sergiovanni, 1995). Thus, teachers are more willing to follow leaders with moral characters, establish school discipline, and hone their capabilities. This result corresponds with Kelman’s (1992) argument that the use of microscopic power elements, such as compliance, identification, and internalization, helps teachers grow professionally, schools realize their objectives (Sergiovanni, 2005), and individuals strengthen their sense of achievement. In addition, power helps establish culture norms (Morgan, 1997); thus, the virtue of school leadership creates a culture conducive to reform and a professional-minded environment (Catacutan & de Guzman, 2015), paving a solid foundation for education reform that is instrumental to a school’s improvement (Ahmed & Machold, 2004). In brief, the first path of the virtue of school leadership stresses the macroscopic power effects (i.e., one individual affects others or several individuals affect others) of the fulfillment of fairness, forgiveness, and equality, and the microscopic power effects (i.e., one individual affects another) of the fulfillment of responsibility, commitment, and involvement (Blanke, 1993). This perspective reinforces the motivation for improvement on the basis of expert opinions; eliminates a culture marked by hyperbole, folly, and dishonesty (Wilson, 2014); avoids unprepossessing cultural entities (Morgan, 1997); and promotes educational development (Jennings & Velasquez, 2015).

The second path to the virtue of school leadership is aimed at fulfilling the value forms of responsibility, supportiveness, and dissemination. As Stratt (2004) argued, “responsibility,” “authenticity,” and “presence” are similar in terms of value systems. Specifically, responsibility focuses on strengthening preventive measures and creating a forward-looking learning environment and opportunities; authenticity involves promoting the understanding of teachers’ strengths and providing the assistance they need; and presence focuses on improving teachers’ specific, critical, and functional capabilities, thus furthering their potential (Bredeson, 2005), helping schools fulfill their objectives, and fostering intellectual growth at the individual level. The fulfillment of the aforementioned objectives focuses on the growth of professional responsibility, rather than punitive implications regarding performance responsibilities (Cranston, 2013), and motivating all students to facilitate a school’s fulfillment of its visions, instead of determining accountability.

The third path to the virtue of school leadership emphasizes an orderly combination of value forms to promote school reform in three stages. In the first stage of school reform, the leadership undertakes school innovation, encouraging the fulfillment of the value forms of criticism, reflection, and hopefulness. Criticism reinforces the motivation to challenge ideologies, thus promoting open-mindedness (Wilson, 2014), modesty (Sergiovanni, 2005), and awareness of the power bias (Ah-Teck & Hung, 2014) and developing strategies for school management to quickly address parents’ anxiety over education reform (Hargreaves, 2001) and high-level social reform (Catacutan & de Guzman, 2015). Reflection enables leaders to re-examine their social interactions through which they can adjust their thinking and prompt teachers to do likewise, promoting learning within organizations in response to changes in the environment and reforming schools’ structures to highlight the ethical values of praxis (Hodgkinson, 1996). Hopefulness involves freeing individuals from the domination of hegemonic power, eliminating the disadvantages students with learning difficulties experience, providing substantive assistance to students from different backgrounds, creating an environment congenial to reform (Arthur, 2003), motivating students to learn (Sergiovanni, 2005), ending the suppression of education, promoting equal access to education opportunities (Freire, 1994), enabling students to achieve, allowing schools to undertake reform, increasing learning opportunities, facilitating intellectual growth at the organizational level, and expediting school reform.

However, school reform typically entails conflicts of interests among the principal, directors, faculty, and parents, leading to animosity, disunity, chaos, and turmoil (Sergiovanni, 1995). The well-rounded nature of leaders, therefore, plays a critical role in school reform. Thus, the third path to the virtue of school leadership, which focuses
on school innovation, underlines the need to address conflicts between stakeholders and introduce an effective model of moral politics that is necessary to ensure the rigor of moral leadership practices. Consequently, in the second stage of school reform, leaders focus on addressing conflicts, promoting the positive influence of leaders on the school's self-innovation, and applying leadership strategies to resolve stakeholder resistance to reform (Sergiovanni, 2005). Servant leadership involves designating stewards, instead of managers, as leaders dedicated to serving individuals in different roles (Fontrodona-Felip et al., 2011); meeting varying needs; acknowledging the legitimacy of social opposition; fostering idea exchange with stakeholders; providing resources needed to address different opinions; and improving the legitimacy of resource allocation and relationship rationality (Eacott, 2015). Moreover, stewards should distribute resources without referring to social status, thereby promoting social justice (Sim, 2010) and caring practices, facilitating the development of friendly social networks, preventing negative emotions (Catacutan & de Guzman, 2015), deepening the foundation for interpersonal trust (Brierton et al., 2016), creating favorable conditions for moral politics, and helping to resolve contradictions. In summary, the virtue of school leadership facilitates the fulfillment of the value forms of service, rationality, and empathy, thus building mutual trust to foster intellectual growth at the social level and encourage stakeholders to address their conflicts.

In the third stage of school reform, leaders focus on addressing social contradictions, highlighting the significance of being law-abiding, providing room for discretion, and gaining an understanding of task objectives (Haque, 2004), thus encouraging civic engagement in ethical initiatives, discouraging self-serving interests, promoting the pursuit of the public good (Sergiovanni, 1995), and enhancing the effectiveness of community services (Berreth & Berman, 1997). Leaders highlight the value of transparency in translating differences of opinion into social transformation, defining reasonable roles (Bryk & Schneider, 2002), improving the formulation of questions, evaluating the suitability of external conditions (Frick et al., 2012), increasing the choice of innovation strategies (Sergiovanni, 1995), absorbing resistance, and promoting the formulation of judicious judgments and self-improvement (Bateson, 2000). An emphasis on the value of prudence can help sustain democracy. Accordingly, prudence is akin to phronesis (practical wisdom), which emphasizes enabling idea exchange through dialog, catalyzing social interaction for empowerment to encourage deliberation on decisions (Wilson, 2014), facilitating the development of balanced relationships (Ronald & Anglea, 2008; Zembylas, 2010), and enhancing the ability to formulate quality judgments (Walker & Donlevy, 2008). Leaders promote the value of patience, identify areas that teachers can contribute to, respect others' unique experiences (Ah-Teck & Hung, 2014), and encourage others to make contributions, be selfless (Ciulla, 2005), and pursue the public good at the expense of personal interests. Leaders espouse the value of politeness, adapting themselves to differences of opinion, acknowledging the legitimacy of conflicting views (Sim, 2010), fostering the development of community relationships, satisfying their personal interests and taking self-sacrificing actions (Wilson, 2014), establishing social validity, and promoting collaboration on civil initiatives. In addition, leaders cause considerable positive changes to well-being at the individual, social, and collective levels (Sergiovanni, 2005), thus resolving misunderstandings between stakeholders, enhancing the influence of character traits, and addressing disagreements (Wagner, 2012).

In brief, the value forms that the virtue of school leadership promotes are lawfulness, transparency, prudence, and politeness; together, these value forms enable teachers to teach their students to learn effectively (Bryk & Schneider, 2003) and provide students with the right to learn in a safe, enjoyable, opportunity-filled, and achievement-oriented environment. Moreover, these value forms can encourage in-depth discussions on school visions among leaders, faculty, parents, students, and the representatives of local communities, thus reinforcing the acceptance of the visions and meeting stakeholders’ expectations. This approach results in improved relations in the social context and eases crisis management and strategic planning (Robinson, 2001). Accordingly, stakeholders may be more willing to follow rules on initiative taking, thus improving learning conditions for students, maintaining their best interests (Eyal et al., 2011), and promoting intellectual growth within organizations and society to allow schools to develop sustainably (Bottery, 2016).

Notably, the virtue of school leadership contributes substantially to the body of knowledge of morality, raises awareness of morality, develops morality skills, and expands the imagination of morality (Walker et al., 2007), thus promoting intellectual growth at the individual, social, and organizational levels; motivating leaders to be introspective whenever necessary to ensure personal, social, and organizational improvement (Camerson, 2003); and enhancing schools' capabilities to fulfill their visions.

**Conclusion and Implication**

The virtue of school leadership emphasizes character traits can facilitate intellectual growth at individual, social, and organizational levels.

The virtue of school leadership is a path to fulfill values and appears as a value form. On the basis of the findings, the researcher proposes that the virtue of school leadership comprises three paths to fulfilling value forms. The first path of the virtue of school leadership expands the availability of positive educational reforms. Also, the second path of the virtue of school leadership helps schools realize their goals. Then, the third path of the virtue of school
leadership allows schools to fulfill their visions. Therefore, these three paths can build a rich and useful plan for school transformation.

The virtue of school leadership emphasizes character traits concerning leading by example to create a sense of mutual dependence and promote social transformation, encouraging others to provide further support and reduce teachers’ anxiety; surmounting failures to provide empathetic company and help teachers to adapt; adhering to ideals to reinforce the motivation to achieve high-level goals, improve equal access to education, pursue excellence, and promote professional and organizational development through the fulfillment of value forms, thus enhancing the legitimacy of leaders’ authority and creating a culture conducive to intellectual growth at the individual, social, and organizational levels to help schools fulfill their visions. In brief, the first path of the virtue of school leadership focuses on creating an environment congenial to professional and organizational development, which is fundamental to school growth.

Moreover, the virtue of school leadership, which is predicated on a culture that prioritizes professionalism, promotes the fulfillment of the following value forms: responsibility (strengthening preventive measures, creating a forward-looking environment, and accumulating capital for responsibility), supportiveness (helping others acquire truths and amass capital for sincerity), and dissemination (providing opportunities for others to utilize their capabilities and expand their existing capital). This approach enables teachers to improve their shrewdness, sense of achievement, and ability to enact change, thus enhancing their intellectual growth and personal capabilities and helping them to fulfill the schools’ visions. The virtue of school leadership also involves building a reform-minded organizational culture to promote self-innovation in schools, intellectual growth at the organizational level, and school improvement. Such a culture enhances relational rationality through servant leadership to create favorable conditions for moral politics and cause conflicts of interest among stakeholders; promotes public initiatives; absorbs resistance; balances constructs; explores contributions; establishes communities; expedites intellectual growth at the social level; resolves stakeholder conflicts; and encourages intellectual growth at the organizational and social levels to further the fulfillment of schools’ visions. Therefore, the virtue of school leadership promotes the fulfillment of two sets of value forms related to educational reform to create an ethics-oriented culture and foster the management of ethical organizations, thus laying the groundwork for schools’ improvement.

The first path of the virtue of school leadership leads to two more paths, which guide the fulfillment of school visions in different ways. The second path of the virtue of school leadership was created after the construction of a culture that prioritizes professionalism and promotes value forms that advance the fulfillment of school objectives, intellectual growth at the individual level, and collective efforts toward those objectives. In reform-minded cultures, the third path of the virtue of school leadership promotes value forms that foster innovation in school and enhance mutual trust among stakeholders to prompt them to address their conflicts. This approach can strengthen social cohesion within organizations, drive systematic revolution, promote intellectual growth at the organizational and social levels and progressive reforms within organizations, and enhance the role of education in ensuring constant progress.

The virtue of school leadership constructs a culture predicated on organizational progress and professional development. Such a culture promotes the fulfillment of different value forms, thus encouraging intellectual growth at the individual, social, and organizational levels. Accordingly, the aforementioned proposition also suggests that the positive feelings promoted by the virtue of school leadership cannot be easily identified; instead, the virtue of school leadership can only be evaluated on the basis of the intellectual growth it fosters. This conclusion highlights a growing need to systematically assess the virtue of school leadership on the basis of the intellectual growth of leaders and others. Such an assessment can encourage leaders to maintain positive motivations and, whenever necessary, remind themselves not to distort their motivations. Leaders can then distinguish between positive motivation and perfect mental strength, thus promoting benevolence, furthering the fulfillment of different value forms on the basis of the development of their mental strength, and fostering holistic intellectual development to reinforce efforts at the individual, social, and organizational levels to catalyze progress in school. Therefore, students’ best interests can be maintained, and their abilities can be improved, which will promote the sustainable development of schools and the fulfillment of their visions.

Critically, the value forms fulfilled through the virtue of school leadership can facilitate schools’ sustainable development. A major implication of this proposition is that the virtue of school leadership catalyzes the fulfillment of school visions in two ways: (a) by using power strategies to create an ever-evolving culture and promote the fulfillment of value forms concerning organizational reform and teacher development and (b) by applying leadership strategies to reinforce a social culture based on mutual trust and increase change through negotiation to foster organizational reform. Both approaches can encourage the fulfillment of value forms concerning systematic evolution, thereby enabling steady
progress in educational reform and eventually maximizing educational development.

For the schools all over the world, the implication is that to establish the exam system by using the three paths, as the virtue of school leadership emphasizes positive motivation, which cannot be judged directly. Therefore, it is necessary to discriminate leaders’ virtues through the behaviors revealed from the three paths, which resulted from this research. Furthermore, building a high-quality school culture is the first step for any reform. By doing so, the school will perform systematic transformation more easily. If the leaders only focus on strategies of leadership, it might lead to the result of failing to see the wood for the trees regarding the school reform. The results of this study can be applied to K–12 school systems at the same time, promoting the comprehensive transformation in national education.

Research Limitations

This study discussed the virtue of school leadership and positive leadership motivation from the perspective of personal perception. Perhaps it is the Dunning–Kruger effect of power or cultural enlightenment to make virtue of school leadership become the realization of an echo chamber, which was a limitation of this study. Future research can judge the virtue of school leadership according to the personal, social, and organizational behavior influenced by leadership virtue, so as to better explore the precise mechanisms stimulating school innovation.

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