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Yvette Lynne Bonaparte
North Carolina Central University, bonapartephd@gmail.com

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YVETTE LYNNE BONAPARTE, MBA, PH.D.
DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA

Abstract

Values have been defined as a generalized enduring organization of beliefs about the personal and social desirability of modes of conduct or "end-states of existence" (Klende, 2005). The congruence of personal values and organizational values represent an important opportunity for positive business results and outcomes (Klende, 2005). Based on the results of this qualitative study among transformative African American women leaders in the pharmaceutical industry, it is possible that value congruence may be a factor in the success experienced by these study participants. Three value themes are reported to describe the leadership values of these study participants. They are: "people," "think," and "company." These value themes are supportive of tenets that comprise the transformative leadership model.

Introduction

Leaders have the ability to communicate vision as well as model openness, risk taking, and reflection. They recognize that colleagues will inevitably be challenged by risk aversion, excessive demands, and slower-than-desirable rates of change (Herbert, 2015). Leaders provide support and advocacy for others. They inspire followers to embrace a common vision while concomitantly appreciating diversity of opinions. Within an organization, leaders possess certain shared core values: social responsibility, equity, and commitment to change (Herbert, 2015).

Values and Value Congruence

Values serve as a foundational influence of behavior, action, and decision-making (Miller-Stevens, et al 2015). Organizational values are viewed as the standard by which decisions can be prioritized and opportunities evaluated. Values have been defined as a generalized, enduring organization of beliefs about the personal and social desirability of modes of conduct or "end-states" of "existence" (Klenke, 2005). This includes both recognition and an understanding of how values impact day-to-day decisions (Klende, 2005).

Individual behavior related to decision-making can be influenced by a desire for value congruence. Individuals may seek decisions that illustrate and are reflective of their own values and beliefs. Similar approaches to achieve and support value congruence can be found between individuals and organizations (Hosack & Paradice, 2014).

Congruence of values held by individuals and values held by an organization represents the opportunity for positive results (Klenke, 2005):

> Value congruence predictable produces positive outcomes and affect that will result when an individual's values are congruent with those of other persons or entities (i.e., supervisor or an organization) …. Value congruence enhances organizational climate and culture. In organizations where employees and managers share similar values, strong corporate cultures evolve driven by the organization's mission and vision (Klenke, 2005, p. 61).

Additionally, value congruence has been credited with providing teams with a context for motivation, information-sharing, and innovation in addition to constructive evaluation (Mitchell et al, 2012).

Transformative Leadership

Caldwell (2012), defines transformative leadership as "an ethically based leadership model that integrates a commitment to values and outcomes by optimizing the long-term interest of stakeholders and society and honoring the moral duties owned by organizations to their stakeholders" (Caldwell et al, 2012, p. 176). Beliefs and values serve both as a foundational element of an individual transformative leader's identity and as an important consideration with respect to advocacy and the demonstration of moral courage (Shields, 2011).

There are *seven tenets* that represent the core components of transformative leadership: 1) acknowledgement of power and privilege and its impact both individually and organizationally from a broader societal view; 2) organizational focus on purposes that are related to equity, excellence, public and private good, along with individual and collective advancement; 3) deconstructing and reconstructing knowledge frameworks; 4) balancing critique and promise; 5) bringing about deep and equitable change; 6) working toward transformation; and 7) demonstration of moral courage and activism.

It is tenet 7 that requires the transformative leader to possess a clear sense of self, and an understanding of his/her beliefs and values (Shields, 2011). It is also this tenet that recognizes the dichotomy that transformative leaders may need to address to ensure their ability to be impactful through the challenging of traditional norms and the construction of alliances within a dominate power structure (Shields, 2011). This tenet highlights the transformative leader's ability to leverage thinking, collaboration, and the need to act with integrity and purpose.

Operating in a completely transformative way may result in isolation or rejection for the leader. Transformative leaders may, in fact, experience a dilemma in that they may find themselves associated with the dominant structure of authority and power while simultaneously needing to reach beyond and challenge traditional norms to take risks and build alliances in order to advocate for those that are under-represented (Shields, 2011). At the same time, the success of the transformative leader within a given organization likely requires an understanding of the organization's power structure as described in tenet 1 (acknowledgement of power and privilege and its impact) its purpose and goals as described in tenet 2 (organizational focus on purposes).

Methodology

Eight transformative African American women leaders in the pharmaceutical industry participated in this qualitative study. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to gather data regarding their experiences as leaders within the industry, as well as strategies and behaviors that contributed to their success therein. Participants were specifically asked to describe their leadership values.

The text from individual participant responses was aggregated and a content analysis was conducted using NVivo software. A minimum word length of 5 characters was set for words to be included in the text analysis (Stetz, 2012). A word cloud, the visual represention of text (Roderer, 2012), was created for the aggregated text of responses. Word clouds are used in qualitative data analysis to help focus researchers on the important concepts identified by research participants and can serve as indicators for future research (DePaolo & Wilkinson, 2014).

Value themes were determined from the content analysis. In keeping with the practice of hypothesis coding in which predetermined, researcher-generated codes are applied to data, text from participants' responses was coded using predetermined codes. This is an appropriate approach to content analysis and analytical induction of qualitative data (Saldana, 2013). Verbatims were used to demonstrate and support the value themes (Moustakas, 1994). The practice in which paragraph-length quotations as well as embedded quotations gives voice to the participants in the study (Creswell, 2013). The data was triangulated with the use of interview transcripts, interview audio tapes, and field notes.

Findings

Participants in the study all held leadership positions as defined by Northouse (2013); the process used to influence a group of individuals in reaching a goal. All illustrated tenets of transformative leadership. The approximated number of years participants had been employed in the pharmaceutical industry ranged from 10–28. Participants represented multiple functional areas. Titles of participants included vice president, director, and manager. To maintain confidentiality participants, will be referred to as participants A, B, C, D, E, F, G, and H.

Based on the content analysis, three value themes regarding particpant values emerged. They are:
- Value theme 1 – "people"
- Value theme 2 - "think"
- Value theme 3 - "company"

Table 1 provides a list of the most freqently mentioned words in the aggregated response of participants when asked about their leadership values. Each word listed in the table was mentioned at least 10 times by the study participants.

Table 1: **Fifty Most Frequently Mentioned Words – All Participants**

Word	# of Mentions	Word	# of Mentions	Word	# of Mentions
people	75	words	17	opportunity	13
think	59	balanced	17	Allow	12
company	45	managing	17	Skill	12

really	43	definitely	16	transparency	12
values	42	integrity	16	world	12
things	27	major	16	better	11
needs	24	means	16	helping	11
pharmaceutical	23	business	15	example	11
different	21	might	15	learn	11
group	21	someone	15	around	10
change	20	patient	14	church	10
leader	20	another	14	customer	10
leadership	20	coming	14	expectations	10
level	20	genuine	14	great	10
right	20	person	14	higher	10
going	18	probably	14	makes	10
still	17	maybe	13		

Figure 1 provides a graphical representation of the most freqently mentioned words in the aggregated responses of participants.

Figure 1: **Word of Cloud Leadership Values – Aggregated Participant Responses**

"People" is the word mentioned most frequently with 75 occurances. The next most frequently mentioned words are "think," "company," "really," and "values." Each of these words was mentioned at least 40 times by participants. Note that a review of the transcripts support participants' use of the word "really" for emphasis and assertion within the text. The number of mentions of "values" totaled 42. Additionally, it is important to recognize that

the summation of mentions for both "leader" and "leadership" totaled 40. Given that comments related to both "leader/leadership" and "values" permeate throughout the discussion of each of the three value themes ("people," "thnk," and "company"), they have not been highlighted specifically as value themes or sub-themes.

An analysis of the remaining text resulted in the emergence of the following sub-themes: "pharmaceutical [industry]/business [knowledge]" (38 mentions), "right/integrity" (36 mentions), "genuineness/transparency" (26 mentions), "patient/customer" (24 mentions), and "change" (20 mentions). Sub-themes and their presence in the three value themes are summarized in *Table 2*.

Table 2: **Summary of Value Themes and Sub-themes**

	Value theme		
Sub-Theme	People	Think	Company
Pharmaceutical [industry]/business [knowledge] (38 mentions)		X	X
Right/integrity (36 mentions)	X		
Genuineness/transparency (26 mentions)	X		
Patient/customer (24 mentions)		X	
Change (20 mentions)	X	X	X

Value Theme 1: *People*

The sub-themes related to the "people" theme include right/integrity (36 mentions), genuineness/transparency (26 mentions), and change (20 mentions). Participants discussed their intent to provide not only leadership that illustrates transpency and integrity, but that also credits them as leaders as providing decisions and recommendations.

> *I try to stay true to myself. I try to stay true to what I believe in. And when I say that, it's that I try not to waiver with what the situation is — even though I would say that I am a situational leader and I know how to approach various situations—adapting what I provide and how I provide whatever guidance, information … but it's still with my filter, it's still with my style* (Participant A, personal communication, June 20, 2013).

> *I hope people see in me as a leader, is someone who's honest and transparent, someone who's practical and right. … That I'm giving competent advice that takes into account the pros and the cons and ends up in the right place* (Participant C, personal communication, June 22, 2013).

> *One of the things that I've always been clear about is that I'm ethical; don't ask me to do anything unethical. If you discuss it with me and I'm put in a situation and I'm asked questions, I'm going to be truthful. So, I'm very transparent about* (Participant H, personal communication, July 9, 2013).

The responsibility of a leader to act as a motivating and inspiring cataylst for individuals is highlighted by Participant B.

> *I think that as a leader, it's our responsibility to inspire people to motivate them to do great things, to encourage them. I would say inspirational. I would say analytical, but maybe strategic or analytical is a piece of it as well. I have a desire to think not just how*

to solve these problems, but to really root out the underlying opportunity, and to make a strategic decisions that actually have some long-term consequences (Participant B, personal communication, June 21, 2013).

Value Theme 2: *Think*

This value theme highlights the requirement for leaders to consider alternative views in the context of business objectives and a changing environment. The sub-themes related to the "think" theme include pharmaceutical [industry]/business (38 mentions), patient/customer (24 mentions), and change (20 mentions).

> *Because the world changes around us and we cannot be stagnant in one place, we need to change with the world as it changes. Whether that's acceptance of the millennial generation or greater diversity in the workforce or if it is the more use of technology, we've got to continuously learn and that is what I think makes us stronger leaders* (Participant F, personal communication, June 25, 2013).

> *Innovation — people don't talk about that as a leadership skill, but it really is. You have to be innovative to motivate the sites, to motivate your team, to think of new ideas, things that haven't been done before because the world changes, we kind of have to change with it and we don't always keep up* (Participant D, personal communication, June 22, 2013).

Additionally, the ability to connect various aspects of the business to arrive at well thought-out conclusions and recommendations is emphasized. It is this ability to synthisize information and to embrace continuous learning and a collaborative approach to problems and opportunites that represents the critical thinking requirement for transformative leadership. "You can't just come to the job every day; you have to understand 'how does it work?' How does this intersect and interface with this to really get those long-term results for the organization?" (Participant H, personal communication, July 9, 2013).

Participant A states that an important part of her value set includes:

> *Helping [others] to understand what the physician needs to help that patient more, and/or that staff member, to then help that patient. It really is keeping patients in the forefront so that way we see it from the physician's perspective versus our business, pharmaceutical business perspective* (Participant A, personal communication, June 20, 2013).

Participant H makes the additional point that acting with integrity and authenticity can result in the leader assuming the role of change agent within the organization.

> *Sometimes you can be a change agent and not realize you are the change agent. Just because you are that credible person and people know that you're not going to do some fly-by-night something and that you're true to self. Something that minor you would think, but I mean just things like that, you've got to live who you are. I mean again, when you see me on the street or you see me here, I'm the same person. I mean I don't change, it's too hard* (Participant H, personal communication, July 9, 2013).

Value Theme 3: *Company*

Sub themes related to the "company" value theme include "pharmaceutical [industry]/business [knowledge]" (38 mentions), and "change" (20 mentions). Participants

highlighted the importance of the alignment of their work and values as leaders with the work that is done within their organization or departments as well as how the work is done.

Participant G indicates that the behaviors and the approaches used by her team for completing their work is as important as the organizational hierarchy.

> *The mission of this team is to build the business solutions that reflect the things that this company, this employer either must do, because of regulation, or should do because of the desire to really create [the company] as an optimal working environment. We all have a critical contribution that needs to be made in order for us to be delivering optimally as a group. … No one person has any higher-level status than another. I'm not very status conscious at all…just make sure that how you get it [work] done is aligned with the behaviors of the company* (Participant G, personal communication, July 2, 2013).

Within the theme of "company," participants' responses also highlight the importance of value congruence. The alignment of their personal values with those of their organizations represent an important component of the themes highlighted by participants. Participant F makes the point regarding the alignment of individual and organizational values. "If I would look at the values that our organization espouses, they would square up with mine; they wouldn't be the same words, but they would definitely fit along with those" (Participant F, personal communication, June 25, 2013).

As leaders within their organizations, they indicate a connection to the purpose of their work. Additionally, their role in shaping the organization's culture is noted.

> *So, I've gotten a lot of satisfaction out of my leadership experience because I feel like I've been able to do a lot to grow the business, to grow and develop my people, and to really shape the corporate culture. That's a very satisfying part of my job* (Participant B, personal communication, June 21, 2013).

Conclusion

The results of this study among transformative African American women leaders in the pharmaceutical industry resulted in the identification of three value themes used to describe their leadership values. The themes were "people," "think," and "company." The presence of the following sub-themes also emerged from the data analysis: "pharmaceutical [industry] / business [knowledge]," "right/integrity," "genuineness/transparency," the "patient/ customer," and "change." The results of this study will be of interest to leaders and those who aspire to be leaders within the pharmaceutical industry.

Value congruence between the participants' individual values and the values of their organizations was apparent. Given that each of the study participants had achieved a degree of longevity within the pharmaceutical industry and had ascended to a leadership position within their organizations, it is possible that value congruence between their individual values and those of their organizations contributed to their success in the pharmaceutical industry.

The alignment of participants' value themes of "people," "think," and "company" and the tenets of transformative leadership was also illustrated in this study; specifically, tenet 1 (acknowledging power and privilege and its impact), tenet 2 (organizational focus on purposes), and tenet 7 (demonstration of moral courage and advocacy) were apparent. It is possible that through the practice and impact of transformative leadership within the

industry over time, study participants have been able to achieve value congruence. Future research may include a quantitative study of transformative leaders within the pharmaceutical industry to determine the degree of value congruence by career stage or years in the industry.

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About the Author

Dr. Yvette Lynne Bonaparte is a collaborative and metric-driven scholar and practitioner in the areas of marketing and leadership. She has a twenty-year track record of success in private industry and has held leadership positions in the areas of brand/product management, customer insights, and program management with some of the world's best-known corporations. She has also consulted with leading organizations within higher education and the health care industry in the areas of strategic marketing, and diversity and inclusion. Dr. Bonaparte's academic accomplishments include degrees from the following universities: Brandeis University (B.A. in economics), Duke University - The Fuqua School of Business (MBA in marketing), and North Carolina A&T State University (Ph.D. in leadership studies). Currently, Dr. Bonaparte is a tenure track Assistant Professor of Marketing in the School of Business at North Carolina Central University in Durham, North Carolina. Her research, which focuses on transformative leadership, pharmaceutical marketing practices and social marketing has been published in peer-reviewed journals and has been presented to both national and international audiences.

Dr, Bonaparte can be reached via email at Bonapartephd@gmail.com.