COMPASSIONATE RATIONALISM LEADERSHIP AS A NEW LEADERSHIP PARADIGM FOR UNIFICATION LEADERSHIP OF KOREA

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Abstract - This study aimed to propose and conceptualize compassionate rationalism leadership as a new paradigm for unification leadership of Korea. It analyzed the main areas of leadership that a unification leader must perform in the social field and presented core reference values. Furthermore, it presented multidisciplinary arguments and criteria for establishing a unification leadership paradigm. The study also emphasized the necessity of compassionate rationalism leadership by analyzing the characteristics and limitations of existing traditional leadership paradigms. Compassionate rationalism leadership provides an integrated model for unification leadership based on the integrated logic of rationalism and compassionism, encompassing eight components: rational situational judgment, strategic forecasting, logical problem solving, optimized performance management, inclusive humility, empathetic consideration, trust-based empowerment, and altruistic cooperation.

Keywords - Compassionate Rationalism Leadership, New Leadership Paradigm Of Unification Leadership, Unification Leadership,

I. INTRODUCTION

The Korean Peninsula has been divided for over 80 years, leading to a reality where the majority of South and North Korean residents do not perceive the necessity of unification. In this situation, the issue of unification must be recognized not merely as a political discussion, but as a fundamental challenge that dictates the survival and future of the Korean Peninsula's inhabitants. The 21st century is characterized as an "era of crisis," with complex challenges such as climate change, global pandemics, and geopolitical conflicts occurring simultaneously. This highlights the importance of outstanding leadership to overcome these crises. Particularly, the experiences of North Korean defectors reveal the oppression of the North Korean regime and the identity confusion they face in South Korean society, indicating that the reconstruction of a subjective identity for unification leadership is essential in preparing for a unified Korean society(Choi, 2016).

While existing leadership paradigms such as individual trait theory, behavioral theory, transactional theory, transformational theory, and ethical leadership theory have been proposed for unification leadership, these traditional theories have shown limitations in adequately explaining the unique characteristics of unification leadership.

Therefore, this study aims to systematically conceptualize 'compassionate rationalism leadership' as a new paradigm for unification leadership of Korea.

The specific research questions of this study are as follows: First, to analyze the main areas of leadership that a unification leader must perform in the social field and to specifically present the core reference values that a unification leader should pursue. Second, to present arguments and criteria for establishing a leadership paradigm for unification leadership from multidisciplinary perspectives including history, politics, economics, psychology, and literature. Third, to analyze the characteristics and limitations of existing traditional leadership paradigms in explaining unification leadership. Fourth, to describe the conceptual framework and content of compassionate rationalism in the context of unification leadership by first explaining the rationalism paradigm, then describing the compassionism paradigm, and finally explaining the integrated logic of these two paradigms, thereby attempting to conceptualize 'compassionate rationalism leadership' in relation to unification leadership.

As a research method, this study reviewed and analyzed social science literature covering perspectives on inter-Korean unification, leadership, policy, administration, social welfare, economics, psychology, and philosophy to propose a new concept.

II. CONCEPT AND FUNCTIONS OF UNIFICATION LEADERSHIP

Unification leadership can be defined as the core concept of 'leadership that various stakeholders, including the state, organizations, and individuals, must demonstrate to achieve peaceful unification of the Korean Peninsula. This encompasses the abilities, attitudes, and practical approaches of individual leaders to overcome division and achieve sustainable peace and prosperity. Unification leadership is not

merely confined to institutional integration or economic development; it aims to build social trust and achieve psychological healing of the community based on universal values of human dignity and respect for life. It focuses on mediating ideological, cultural, and political conflicts resulting from division and promoting harmony(Kim, 2020).

The domain of unification leadership is broadly categorized into six areas, focusing on the roles of individuals and organizations pursuing unification. First, administrative leadership aims for efficient operation and system trust-building through policy coordination and administrative system integration(Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012). Second, supervisory leadership enhances members' expertise and leadership capabilities, providing an environment for growth as mediators and leaders based on a positive belief in lifelong learning(Lewicki, 2010). Third, instructional leadership supports members' psychological healing and emotional stability, promoting harmony between North and South Korean residents(Frankl, 2020). Fourth, organizational cultural leadership focuses on adjusting cultural differences and forming a new communal identity(Galtung, 1996; Alexievich, 2015). Fifth, team leadership promotes collective cooperation through collaborative decision-making and shared goal setting(Lewicki, 2010). Sixth, empowerment leadership strengthens members' autonomy and responsibility, simultaneously achieving individual and organizational growth(Galtung, 1996). Furthermore, the reference values that a unification leader should pursue through leadership activities include ethics, liberty, efficiency, equality, equity, and social justice(Bagnall, 2004; Chapman, Cartwright & Mcgilp, 2006; Choi, 1992; 2011; Kim, 1996; Koo, 1997; Psacharopoulos & Woodhall, 1985). These values suggest that leadership in diverse and complex areas must be integrated to build trust and cooperation in organizational management and to create new social values. Therefore, leaders are required to possess the capacity to perform multifaceted roles based on these reference values, thereby achieving both organizational efficiency and sustainability.

III. ARGUMENTS AND CRITERIA FOR THE LEADERSHIP PARADIGM OF UNIFICATION LEADERSHIP OF KOREA

To establish a paradigm for unification leadership, various arguments and criteria must be considered. First, political representation and socio-cultural integration of North Korean residents after unification are key arguments. The German unification case shows that despite legal integration, East German residents failed to secure political representation, leading to long-term alienation and accumulated dissatisfaction(Kim, 2020). South Korea's assimilationist approach could result in disrespect for North Korean residents' identity; thus, practical political education and autonomy must be ensured for North Koreans to become political subjects. South Korea should respect North Korea's sentiments and dignity, gradually build trust, and provide opportunities for North Koreans to reconstruct their social identity.

Second, the choice of economic system is a critical factor determining a nation's development and decline. Inclusive institutions ensure sustainable economic growth and social stability, whereas extractive institutions lead to economic stagnation and structural inequality(Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012). North Korea's economic stagnation is a necessary outcome of its regime's control strategy, while South Korea tends to use unification as a political tool. The persistence of class structures within the defector community raises concerns about structural discrimination after unification; therefore, establishing a fair and inclusive economic system based on constitutional principles is essential.

Third, the Third Way signifies a balanced integration of Eastern compassionism and Western rationalism. Korean society developed within a tradition of compassionism but faced difficulties during modernization due to a lack of dynamic adaptation. After liberation, a gradual convergence with Western rationalism emerged, with Christian worldview's truth (rationalism) and love (ethics) serving as a crucial bridge between Eastern and Western values. The Third Way aims to create a more mature society by mutually transforming different value systems for individuals and communities. Unification leadership must balance Eastern and Western values, respecting the history and culture of both sides while developing objective analyses and practical plans for economic, political, and social institutions.

These arguments and criteria for the unification leadership paradigm encompass not merely technical and functional integration but also the aspiration for justice, psycho-emotional and socio-cultural integration, internal integration and social inclusion, structural and multi-layered social integration, and relational and inclusive leadership that fosters an inclusive society.

IV. LIMITATIONS OF EXISTING LEADERSHIP THEORIES FOR THE UNIFICATION LEADERSHIP PARADIGM

Existing major leadership theories have limitations in fully explaining the characteristics of unification leadership.

A. Individual Trait Theory

While focusing on analyzing unique leader traits, it oversimplifies the consistency between specific

leader traits and behaviors, failing to adequately reflect the influence of background and context. It also tends to limit leadership to a few charismatic leaders, making it difficult to broaden the scope of leadership development and training(Bass, 1990; Choi, 2011; Gouldner, 1950; Rose, 1992). The class society of North Korea and the elite-centered social structure of South Korea further restrict the practical application of this theory.

B. Behavioral Theory

It complements trait theory by viewing leadership as a learnable skill, but the relationship between leader behavior and performance is not clearly elucidated, and it fails to present universal leadership behaviors effective in all situations(Bryman, 1992; Choi, 2011; Northouse, 2010; Yukl, 2002). Particularly, the social exclusion and political prejudice experienced by North Korean defectors in South Korean society make the application of behavioral theory even more challenging.

C. Transactional Theory

It explains leadership through the interaction and exchange relationship between leaders and members, contributing to contextual understanding(Fiedler, 1967). However, the mechanisms proposed by the theory are not clear, and it overly relies on situational factors, failing to adequately consider intrinsic elements such as the leader's individual traits and ethical values(Northouse, 2010). The reality of structural distrust and repeated negotiation breakdowns between North and South Korea suggests that transactional leadership is unlikely to be a practical solution in the unification process.

D. Transformational and Ethical Theories

Transformational theory aims to drive organizational change through challenging goal setting and effective vision communication, but it still tends to overly rely on the traits of extraordinary individuals(Burns, 1978; Choi, 2011; Rose, 1992). It has limitations in vision communication and learning within the diverse and unorganized unification process, and its charismatic nature carries the risk of degenerating into autocratic leadership(Conger, 1999; Howell & Avolio, 1993). Ethical leadership focuses on justice and morality, but it risks justifying emotional conflict and revenge among members who have experienced the unethical nature of the North Korean regime.

V. CONCEPTUALIZATION OF COMPASSIONATE RATIONALISM LEADERSHIP AS A NEW LEADERSHIP PARADIGM FOR UNIFICATION LEADERSHIP OF KOREA

Compassionate rationalism leadership is a leadership model that builds upon the framework of rationalistic thinking while complementing its limitations with emotional ethics and human-centered values. It harmonizes rational judgment with emotional empathy, emphasizing human relationships and ethical responsibility, focusing on implementing human-centered, sustainable leadership rather than merely efficient, mechanical leadership.

A. The Framework of the Rationalism Paradigm

Rationalism is a philosophical approach that understands the world and solves problems centered on human reason. It emphasizes the principle of making decisions based on logical thinking and objectivity, with reason serving as a primary cognitive tool to analyze issues, eliminate irrational elements, and suppress arbitrary judgments(Choi, 2011). Rational thinking systematically constructs logical procedures to solve problems, enabling individuals and organizations to derive optimal solutions. The rationalistic paradigm is a systematic approach to policy formulation and implementation centered on reason, with 'predict and control' as its core principle(Mintzberg, 1970). In unification leadership, efficiency and predictability are crucial criteria for policy formulation, and a phased and systematic approach is essential for maintaining social order after unification. However, the rationalistic paradigm must go beyond mere policy efficiency to secure social legitimacy, requiring the maintenance of ethics and moral order.

Limitations of the Rationalistic Paradigm: While rationalism provides logical consistency and efficiency, it has limitations in the context of unification leadership. Human decision-making does not presuppose perfect rationality, and in collective decision-making, egoism, political calculation, and hypocritical decision-making can be amplified(Hogwood & Gunn, 1984). Furthermore, organizational structures and environmental constraints can lead to bounded rationality, and rationality itself is relative, adjusting with procedures, culture, and environmental changes(Niebuhr, 2006). Resource constraints and unmet cost-benefit analyses can introduce irrationality, and an overemphasis on rationality can overlook psychological and social factors, leading to communication breakdowns and an inhumane culture, thereby weakening policy implementation in the long run(Hogwood & Gunn, 1984). Therefore, a strategic approach that balances rationality and irrational elements, considering policy flexibility and situational adaptability, is necessary.

B. The Framework of the Compassionism Paradigm

Compassionism is a leadership approach that understands and empathizes with others' emotions and acts based on this understanding. It complements the limitations of rational decision-making and plays a crucial role in human-centered organizational management. Compassion involves understanding

and sharing others' emotions and includes the practice of care to alleviate and reduce their suffering(Zwillick, 2004). Compassionate leadership accepts others' emotions and situations, serving as a key factor in motivating members and building trust(Zust, 2008).

A compassionate leader influences organizational members based on emotion and empathy, transcending reason and logic. This means forming trust and cooperation within the organization through mutual understanding and consideration, rather than mere instruction or control. Thus, a compassionate leader recognizes members' emotional needs and strengthens organizational cohesion based on these needs. The compassionate paradigm acts as a mediator, maintaining the balance between freedom and equality. Compassion is not merely an emotional response but a leadership element that recognizes members' needs and induces practical change. Through this, freedom and equality can harmonize, and justice and human-centered values can be balanced within the organization. The compassionate paradigm signifies a leadership style that practices actions based on ethical values and conscience, connecting to the core principles of unification leadership that involves participating in social activities with members based on democratic ideals. One of the core values that the compassionate paradigm must embody is humility. Humility means a leader's attitude of relinquishing privileges derived from their position and respecting organizational members as equal subjects, based on the recognition that no individual is inherently superior to another. This is deeply connected to the principles of human dignity and mutual respect. A humble leader does not believe they possess absolute solutions; instead, they embrace diverse opinions and solutions within the organization. They actively utilize collective intelligence and experience in problem-solving and create an environment where members can freely express their opinions, fostering horizontal leadership and a collaborative decision-making structure(Raelin, 2003). Trust is another important element of compassionate values. At the organizational level, trust exists on a continuum where belief and certainty are formed, and trust in a leader is based not only on tangible evidence but also on emotional acceptance and expectation(Raelin, 2003). Compassionate values strengthen trust and cooperation within unification leadership and play a crucial role in enhancing members' autonomy and motivation. Ultimately, a compassionate leader must realize a leadership model that recognizes the capabilities of organizational members, fosters a cooperative and fair environment, and ensures the organization's sustainability. The compassionist paradigm can effectively contribute to emotional empathy and trust-building necessary for overcoming the heterogeneity of North and South Korean societies and achieving genuine integration.

C. Integrated Logic and Conceptualization of Compassionate Rationalism Leadership

Compassionate rationalism leadership proposes a new paradigm for unification leadership by combining the efficiency and logical problem-solving abilities of the rationalistic paradigm with the empathy, trust, and inclusiveness of the compassionist paradigm. This approach complements the limitations of rational decision-making with emotional ethics and human-centered values, enabling not only institutional integration but also psychological and cultural integration(Choi, 2011).

Compassionate rationalism leadership simultaneously pursues the efficiency, equality, and equity required by unification leadership, positioning itself as an important alternative leadership that can realize the purpose and intent of unification(Choi, 2011). Specifically, this model provides an integrated framework for unification leadership based on the following eight components(Choi, 2011):

Rational Situational Judgment

The ability to accurately analyze and understand the unification situation based on objective data and logic.

Strategic Forecasting

The ability to predict and prepare for changes that may occur during the unification process, based on various scenarios and considering future uncertainties.

Logical Problem Solving

The ability to systematically and logically analyze complex unification-related problems and derive optimal solutions.

Optimized Performance Management

The ability to maximize efficiency and establish and manage optimal action plans for goal achievement within limited resources and complex environments.

Inclusive Humility

From a compassionism perspective, the attitude of relinquishing superiority based on one's position or knowledge, and respecting and embracing the diverse backgrounds and opinions of North and South Korean residents.

Empathetic Consideration

The ability to understand and empathize with others' emotions and suffering, particularly to emotionally support and care for residents affected by the division's wounds and heterogeneity.

Trust-Based Empowerment

The ability to strengthen members' autonomy and responsibility based on mutual trust, and to empower them to actively participate in the unification process.

Altruistic Cooperation

The ability to cooperate for the prosperity of the entire community beyond individual or specific group interests, and to foster cooperation between North and South Korean residents based on mutual respect and understanding.

VI. CONCLUSION

Compassionate rationalism leadership can establish itself as a suitable leadership model capable of harmoniously realizing freedom and equality, efficiency, and inclusion in a unified Korean Peninsula. This contributes to the theoretical development of unification leadership and provides significant implications for actual unification policy formulation and leadership education. While this study adopted a research method of literature review through social science literature analysis, future empirical research is needed to verify the effectiveness of compassionate rationalism leadership and explore specific application methods.

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