



THE ROLE OF ETHICAL LEADERSHIP IN THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF AFRICA

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ABSTRACT

African leaders ought to be a crucial source of ethical guidance for their underlings and should at the same time be responsible for moral development in organisations. However, due to lack of ethical leadership in almost all sectors of life, we are undermining our economic and social future. This paper examined the role of ethical leadership in the sustainable development of Africa as its major aim. The doctrinal research method was adopted, and the data collected were both primary and secondary comprising of both hard copies and online source materials. It was discovered that substantive part of Africa is underdeveloped because of the bad leadership, corruption, ethnic manipulations, and dysfunctional institutions among others. The lack of selfless and ethical leadership on the part of our leaders has been a major setback to the development of Africa despite the huge potentials that the continent has in terms of both natural and human resources. It was recommended that ethics should be taught in schools and the civil society should introduce initiatives that would raise awareness about moral principles and selfless leadership. In conclusion, we cannot move forward as a continent if our leaders persist in their unethical manner of leadership. Thus, we must unite as a people to begin to change the narrative and make Africa a better place for living.



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1.0 Introduction

The deficit crisis of ethical leadership poses enormous challenges to Africa. The performance of any nation, in seeking to achieve its set goals, to a large extent depends on its leadership. The reason being that effective leadership translates into prudent public policy formulation and implementation, as well as good public service delivery, to meet the needs and aspirations of its citizens. In this post-independence period, there have been ceaseless searches for the rationale behind the depressing trajectory of African economies. Some Asian economies (South Korea and Malaysia) that were in the past decades faced with similar development challenges are currently been hailed as “economic miracles”,¹ while the situation in Africa is been described as a “disaster”

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¹ Y Akyuz and C Gore, “African Economic Development in a Comparative Perspective”, *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, [2001] (25) (3) 265-288.

and a “tragedy”.² The reasons for such poor performance include institutional and structural weaknesses, limited attention to private enterprise development, poor governance, management incompetence and limited staff motivation.³

Indeed, Africa’s poor economic development despite its vast wealth or resources is retrogressive as a result of weak leadership. Leadership in Africa is typically ineffective and characterized by susceptibility to the complex global economic system. Paradoxically, the majority of the elite group in Africa who rose to leadership positions appear to have been educated in Western countries, but still lack the capacity to adapt or translate the ideas they have learned to address Africa’s developmental challenges.⁴

Due to a lack of ethical leadership in almost all sectors of life in Africa, we are destroying our continent that sustain us, undermining our economic future, dismantling the trust in democratic government that protects and empowers us, undoing the sense of shared interests that allows us to see and speak and work with each other, and unravelling the threads of community that nurture us. Bad leadership manifested by persistent human rights violation, bad governance, dysfunctional statutory institutions, political patronage, electoral fraud, manipulation of ethnic differences, corruption and personalisation of power hinder the prevalence of peace and social justice. Powerful political elites feed on the state, prey on the weak, use national resources for self-aggrandizement, and deprive citizens of collective goods such as medical care, good education and employment. When people’s human needs are not met, protracted social conflicts and wars are inevitable.⁵

Ethical leadership is simply a matter of leaders having good character and the right values or being a person of strong character.⁶ An ethical leader is a person living up to principles of conduct that are crucial for him or her. To be an ethical leader, one needs to adhere to a more universal standard of moral behaviour. Leading ethically is believed to be a process of inquiry, asking questions about what is right and what is wrong and a mode of conduct – setting the example for followers and others about the rightness or wrongness of particular actions.⁷

Sustainable development refers to the continuous improvement in the living standard of citizens and the structural transformation/changes in the productive and distributive input and output systems of the economy.⁸ It is the efforts of government (Federal, State, or Local) to improve

² J Kuada, “Culture and Leadership in Africa: a Conceptual Model and Research Agenda”, *African Journal of Economic and Management Studies* [2010] (1) (1) 9-24.

³ JO Okpara and P Wynn, “Determinants of Small Business Growth Constraints in a Sub-Saharan African Economy”, *SAM Advanced Management Journal* [2007] (72) (2) 24.

⁴ SA Ochola, *Leadership and Economic Crisis in Africa* (Kenya Literature Bureau Nairobi, 2007).

⁵ JW Burton, *Conflict: Human Needs Theory* (St Martin’s Press, 1990).

⁶ RE Freeman & L Stewart, *Developing Ethical Leadership* (Business Roundtable Institute for Corporate Ethics, 2006) 2.

⁷ Voices 360, *Lack of Ethical Leadership: A Clear and Present Danger to Sustainable Development* (Voices 360, 2019) <<https://www.voices360.com/community-development/lack-of-ethical-leadership-a-clear-and-present-danger-to-sustainable-development>> Accessed on 21st May, 2021.

⁸ JA Ojobo, ‘Tax Evasion and Avoidance in Nigeria: Implications for Sustainable Economic Development’, *Abuja Journal of Administration & Management* [2005] (4) (2) 27.

the environment and the living condition of the people in such a way as not to negatively affect generations to come.⁹

In addressing the issue of unethical leadership in Africa that has been affecting sustainable development, the paper is divided into eight sections. It commences with an introduction. Section two highlight the factors influencing ethical leadership. Section three make an overview of the African leadership landscape, while section four points out the link between ethical leadership and sustainable development. Section five highlights the findings of the work and discusses the results. Section six makes a concluding statement about the findings together with its policy implications. Section seven proffers viable recommendations to the challenges identified and section eight points the limitations encountered at the course of carrying out the research.

2.0 Factors which influence Ethical Leadership

2.1 Fairness

Fairness and justice are measured based upon past events, perceptions or both and are formed upon the reflection of the merits of the event that has taken place.¹⁰ Fairness is an important attribute of ethical leadership and the display of fairness by leaders is likely to influence how employees receive information, instructions, and positive/negative criticism of their work efforts. There has been a significant amount of research conducted by scholars on the topic of fairness because according to them it plays a very important role in not only defining ethical leadership but also in forming the bases for effective organisational leadership.¹¹ There are four justice dimensions that could ultimately measure fairness and how it should be displayed by leadership, namely, distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice.¹²

2.2 Integrity

The bond of trust between leadership and employees is established on the fact that employees feel that leaders have created a culture of integrity in the organisation. The definition of integrity would consist of actions based on values accepted by the society. Integrity is based on three key principles namely, authenticity with self, authenticity with others and keeping commitments. Leaders who display integrity promote open communication, involvement in decision-making and transparency when interacting with employees; these values are consistent with ethical leaders.¹³

2.3 Power Sharing

⁹ RI Adebayo, 'Ethno-Religious Crises and the Challenges of Sustainable Development in Nigeria', *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa* [2010] (12) 214.

¹⁰ FJ Landy & JM Conte, *Work in the 21st Century: An Introduction to Industrial and Organisational Psychology* (Wiley, 2010) 500.

¹¹ Van Dijke, et al, 'When does Procedural Fairness Promote Organizational Citizenship Behavior? Integrating Empowering Leadership Types in Relational Justice Models', *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes* [2012] (117) (2) 1.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ KW Parry & SB Proctor-Thomson, 'Perceived Integrity of Transformational Leaders in Organisational Settings', *Journal of Business Ethics*, [2002] (35) (2) 75.

Power sharing does not mean dividing decision-making responsibilities only but rewards, outcomes and resources as well.¹⁴ Ethical leadership is centred on individuals work together as a group or team in order to obtain a common goal and it therefore involves the sharing of responsibilities. Since ethical leadership is based on transformational leadership and authoritarian leadership, it therefore means it is based on a partnership, using principles such as: exchange of purpose, right to say no, joint accountability and absolute honesty.¹⁵

2.4 Honesty

All actions taken by ethical leaders should be based on honesty because trust, integrity, fairness, and all involve honesty. Organisations are concerned about the individuals who represent them hence they introduced integrity tests to test honesty. The steps an organisation can take to ensure ethical behaviour and honesty are Code of Conduct or Ethics, Ethics Committee, ethics training and whistle-blowing Policy or mechanisms.

2.5 Role Clarification

A competitive edge over rival organisations could be gained through the maximisation of employee capabilities and how organisations do this is by assigning individuals to areas where they can potentially excel and enhance both the organisations and their own personal goals. Employees who do not know their status within an organisation are unproductive, disruptive and as a matter of fact costly. One of the characteristics of an ethical leader is to clarify employee roles. Ethical leaders can only fulfil this objective by providing simple and clearly communicated goals to employees about what they are expected to do in the organisation.¹⁶

3.0 Overview of the African Leadership Landscape and its Effect on Sustainable Development

There have been several anomalies under the stewardship of post-independence African leaders. Infrastructural development in many African countries has fallen into disrepair and currencies have grossly depreciated during high costs of living compounded with unemployment, poor healthcare, falling educational standards and lower life expectancies. Ordinary life has been put under pressure coupled with the deterioration in general security, increased crime and corruption and the diversion of public funds into concealed offshore accounts, as well as prevalent civil war emanating from officially sanctioned ethnic discrimination.¹⁷

All societies in the world require positive development in terms of socio-economic and politico-cultural dimensions of their countries. In societies where people live in freedom and prosperity, leaders of such societies broadly give priority to issues upon which the common good of their people depends, resulting often in a further developed and even freer people. However, political development in Africa has been influenced and characterized by flaws most often in the form of attitudes of political actors, which over time have become frequent and peculiar to the continent. In its extreme, these trends in leadership flaws have become part of the political culture of the

¹⁴ PT Coleman, 'Implicit Theories of Organizational Power and Priming Effects on Managerial Power-Sharing Decisions: An Experimental Study', *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* [2004] (34) (2) 321.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Don Murray & Associates, Seven Steps to Role Clarification (Teambased, 2006) <<http://www.teambased.com/images/pdf/Seven+Steps+to+Role+Clarification.pdf>> Accessed on 21st May, 2021.

¹⁷ EA Nasir, Emerging Leaders (Nasir's Chronicles, 2010) <www.nasirchronicles.com> Accessed on 23rd May, 2021.

African system. Even though these weaknesses are common beyond African systems, the dimension in which they manifest themselves in Africa and the impact they have on the socio-economic and political evolution is not only peculiar but deplorable for the continent. These leadership flaws that have affected sustainable development are as discussed below.

3.1 Unconstitutional Leadership Behaviours

One of the several leadership issues borders on disregard for the respective Constitutional provisions by some political African leaders. The seizure of power and rule by oppression are both common phenomena in Africa that greatly influence political developments on the continent, especially the transition to democracy.¹⁸ The 1960s has been described as the “decade of coups in Africa”. Most coups during this period involved military takeover, and by 1975, an estimated half of all countries on the continent had military or civil-military-led governments. Election, as the mechanism to select rulers, was greatly undermined and “disqualified” in unitary/centralized states of post-independent Africa. Within the period 1960-1970, more than 20 coups were conducted in Africa.¹⁹

Examples found in the 1960s coup decade include the following: in Togo, Etienne Eyadema killed President Silvanus Olympio in 1963 and later in 1967, took over and stayed in power through an oppressive and tyrannical rule until his death in 2005;²⁰ in Congo-Brazzaville, the government of Abbe’ Youlou was overthrown in August 1963; in Dahomey, Colonel Christophe Sogho overthrew President Maga in December 1963; again, the overthrow of President David Dacko of Central Africa Republic in January 1966 and that of President Kwame Nkrumah by General Ankrah in February 1966 are just a few of the total number of coups in the continent. Indeed, in Malawi, the president, Kamuzu Banda bluntly made a statement to the effect that he was ready to detain up to ten thousand or one hundred thousand to maintain political stability and efficient administration in the country.²¹ Unfortunately for Africa, these leaders neither ensure political stability nor do they run efficient administrations because of greed and love for power.

3.2 High Cost of Governance

High cost of governance in Africa is seen as a hindrance to sustainable development. For instance, in Nigeria, it has been observed that 70% of the continent’s revenues are expended on less than 20% of the population (20% are members of the National Assembly, the executive arm of government, and other public sector workers).²² Also, on a yearly basis, it has been observed that the recurrent expenditure of the national budget of the nation keeps increasing while that of the capital expenditure meant for capital infrastructural development keeps decreasing. Out of

¹⁸ JA Alemazung, ‘Leadership Flaws and Fallibilities Impacting Democratization Processes, Governance and Functional Statehood in Africa’, *African Journal of Political Science and International Relations* [2011] (5) (1) 30-41.

¹⁹ JM Wangomeby, *Military Coups in Africa: The African Neo-Colonialism that is Self-Inflicted* (Global Security, 1985) <www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report/1985/WJ.html> Accessed on 22nd May, 2021.

²⁰ M Meredith, *The State of Africa: A History of Fifty Years of Independence* (Free Press, 2005).

²¹ Ibid.

²² T Olaopa, *The State of Public Administration and Sustainable Development in Africa: Towards a Bold and Functional Public Administration* (Lecture delivered by Dr Tunji Olaopa at a Conference organized by the Department of Public Administration, Lagos State University, Ojo, Nigeria in 2016).

the total budget of NGN4.60 trillion or US\$28.75 billion in 2010, only NGN1.80 trillion or US\$11.15 billion, that is, 39% was set aside for capital infrastructural development expenditure of the Federal Government budget of NGN4.92 trillion or US\$30.75 billion in 2013, only NGN1.50 trillion or US\$9.38 billion, that is, 20.6% was set aside for the same purpose, and at the same time, over 79% of the national budget for the year was set aside for recurrent expenditure.²³

A similar trend replicated in the subsequent budgets for 2014-2020. The amount set aside for recurrent expenditure in the nation's national budget is expended mainly on the maintenance of public officials, in particular, members of the legislative and executive at the national level. For instance, the House of Senate in Nigeria with 109 members has 54 standing committees, and the House of Representatives with 360 members has 84 standing committees. On the contrary, the United States of America with 100 Senate members and 435 House of Representative members have 21 committees each with four joint committees. Each member of the Nigerian National Assembly receives NGN121, 000 or US\$756.25 for daily lunch excluding other allowances such as tea and sitting.²⁴

3.3 Corruption and Unaccountable Governance

Leadership in Africa is seriously plagued with issues of corruption and poor or unaccountable governance. According to a report by the BBC's Africa Analyst, Elizabeth Blunt in September 2002, corruption in Africa was said to cost the continent nearly USD150 billion. Corruption and embezzlement of state resources belong to the worst examples of immoral practices of political societies in Africa and places the continent at the fore front of the world corruption league table. Thus, bad governance in African countries can also be considered to result from the lack of statesmen in the position of Governors. Corruption and state robbery is endemic in almost all African countries and is a serious flaw in African leadership. In addition to corruption, kleptocracy and the unjustified amassing of State' resources by some irresponsible leaders have stunted development and exacerbated the level of poverty. Furthermore, embezzlement of state funds accounts for a meaningful proportion of funds that could have helped improve the impoverished state of Africa if properly invested in developmental projects.

In 2009, Transparency International (TI) filed a case against three African presidents for embezzlement. According to Ti these leaders, Omar Bongo of Gabon, Denis Sasou Nguessou of Republic of Congo and Teodore Obiang Nguema of Equatorial Guinea, embezzled millions of euros from their respective countries.²⁵ It must be noted that despite the oil produced in Gabon and Equatorial Guinea and with a population of less than 2 and less than 1 million, respectively, a vast majority of the people in these countries live in abject poverty.

3.4 Weak Governmental Institutions

Another major challenge to sustainable development in Africa is the issue of weak governmental institutions such as ministries and government departments. The challenge is that those heading these institutions that ought to implement government policies and programmes for

²³ ON Awojobi, 'High Cost of Governance and Development in Nigeria: A Case Study of Goodluck Jonathan's Administration (2011-2014)', *International Journal of Innovative Research and Studies* [2014] (3) 585.

²⁴ O Nzeshi & D Ogbodo, 'Education, Security gets Highest Votes in Proposed 2013 Budget' *This Day Newspaper* (Lagos, 11th October, 2012) 6-7.

²⁵ Transparency International, *Global Corruption Report 2004* (Transparency International, 2014) <www.globalcorruptionreport.org> Accessed on 23rd May, 2021).

development are not competent for the position they hold, yet they see themselves as larger than the institutions they are meant to head and as such are not accountable for their actions.²⁶ As a result, public officials capitalize on the weak governmental institutions to defraud the people by taking decisions that are not in line with developmental goals of government.²⁷ For instance, the Federal Minister of Agriculture in Nigeria, Adamu Bello, ripped off the nation through the inflated price of fertilizer at NGN3.5 billion or US\$21.87 million from the award of NGN14 billion or US\$87.5 million fertilizer contract to two companies belonging to an Indian in 2004.²⁸ Higher price for fertilizer means the higher farming cost for the ordinary farmer and higher cost of farm produce to the citizens. The high cost of farm produce is more likely to discourage people from buying the required quantity per household, which is likely to affect the income of farmers who would have brought about development by their contribution in agricultural production and by so doing deny Nigeria of the needed development.

3.5 Weak Multicultural Political Systems

The forced unification of diverse ethnic groups and cultures into “nation-states”, an outcome of the colonial arbitrary division of the continent, is one major characteristic of modern African States. Africa as a continent has a unique make-up known as “nation of nations” which considers the ethnic groups in each nation as micro-nations.²⁹ The diversity in ethnic groups in many of the new independent states has resulted in the creation of parties along ethnic lines. Ethnic division in Africa laid the foundation for tribalist-politics which, in turn, encouraged clientelism and neo-patrimonial politics. The result is a political setting that opposes democratic states and hampers their respective transitions to become successful and functional democracies.³⁰

Democracy’s characteristic value on equality and rule of law poses a threat to the advantaged and privileged power holders and their political clients in ethnically divided societies in Africa. Due to fear of losing power, rulers rely on division resulting from the ethnic plurality as a mechanism for consolidating their stay in power in a neo-patrimonial order.³¹ One of the strongest, most alluring, and at the same time most dangerous forms of clientelism, is the mobilization of ethnic identities.³² Ethnic division provides a fertile ground for political mobilization along patron-client networks. Moreover, ethnic division or tribalist-politicking has a disenfranchising effect on democracy because it deprives voters of the power to hold their politicians truly accountable through common action with other voters across the land.³³

Contrary to patrimonialism defined by Max Weber (1978) as a system where military and administrative personnel owe their positions of responsibility to the ruler, neo-patrimonialism in Africa combines elements of patrimonialism and rational bureaucratic rule.³⁴ Unlike in patrimonial systems where there is one patron, the ruler, neo-patrimonialism revolves more around the arrangement of services and resources between clients and political patrons.

²⁶ A Oladoyin, ‘Due Process and the Governance of Public Fund in Nigeria’, *Covenant Journal of Business & Social Sciences* [2006] (1) 119.

²⁷ ON Awojobi (n-33).

²⁸ *Ibid*, note 27, 127.

²⁹ BF Eboussi, *Democracy in the Throes of Tribalism* (Friedrich Ebert Stiftung and Gerddes, 1997).

³⁰ JF Bayart, *The State in Africa: The Politics of the Belly* (Longman, 1993).

³¹ D Acemoglu, R James and V Thiery, ‘Kleptocratic and Divide-and-Rule: a Model of Personal Rule’, *Journal of European Economic Association* [2004] (2) (2/3) 162-192.

³² C Clapham, *Third World Politics: An Introduction* (Billing and Sons Limited, 1985).

³³ J Lonsdale, ‘Political Accountability in African History’, in P Chabal (Ed), *Political Domination in Africa: Reflections on the Limits of Power* (Cambridge University Press, 1986) 141.

³⁴ *Ibid*.

Exchanges in neo-patrimonialism involve the transfer of public resources (for instance money, ministerial positions, and contracts) by the political patrons as a reward for loyalty or support from the people.³⁵ Clientelism, another side of neo-patrimonial rule, is basically the exchange of services or state resources for political support from ethnic-based politicians serving as clients to the ruling patron. Thus, in most countries, where the transition processes of the second liberation is stalled, there still exists the challenge of breaking down this clientele network in favour of *de facto* democratic institutions.

3.6 Poor Resource Management

In a bid for the government to enhance the living standard of the people, Public Enterprises (PEs) were established in Africa. Unfortunately, the poor management of public resources has not allowed the people to enjoy the benefits these PEs should offer citizens. For instance, in Nigeria between 1999 and 2002, the total liabilities of 39 PEs were in excess of NGN1.1 trillion or US\$6.87 billion, with accumulated losses of NGN92.3 billion or US\$5.77 billion. In addition, these 39 PEs “consumed an average of USD3 billion annually in subsidies.”³⁶ Also, an investigation into the activities of the Bureau for Public Enterprises (BPEs) due to poor performance by the Nigerian Senate (Upper Legislative Chamber) in 2011 revealed that the Aluminium Smelter Company of Nigeria built by the Federal Government in 1997 at the cost of US\$3.2 billion was valued by the Bureau of Public Enterprises in-house consultants for just US\$250 million and was eventually sold to a Russian company for only US\$130 million in 2010.³⁷ In the same vein, it was the poor management of public enterprises by government officials that led to the formulation and implementation of public policy of commercialization and privatization of public enterprises to free government from the burden of financing non-performing public ventures and make funds available for development by some past governments in Nigeria. The poor management of public resources has drained the country of the needed funds and infrastructure to attain the goals of sustainable development.

4.0 Link between Ethical Leadership and Sustainable Development

There is a close correlation between ethical leadership and sustainable development. African nations continue to lag in development as compared to nations in other continents. There is an ongoing narrative in Kenya that at independence, Kenya was at par with Malaysia in terms of economic development, about 6.8% of GDP for both. Today, 57 years later, Kenya has declined to 5.9%, while Malaysia has increased to over 40%.³⁸ We are in the third millennium, yet Africa has little to show towards self-reliance and sustainable development. She is still subject to continuous intreating and dependence on foreign aid for the sustenance of her programmes. One doubts the independence of African nations if they continue to rely on their colonial masters for survival. To what extent can a beggar be independent?

Fifty years after the achievement of constitutional independence, African nations seem to have returned to “square one” whereby the former colonial masters must bail out economies in ruins

³⁵ M Weber, *Economic and the Society* (University of California Press, 1978).

³⁶ I., Chigbue, ‘Privatizing the National Economy: The Journey So Far’, In H Saliu, E Amali, & R Olawepo (Eds), *Nigeria’s Reform Programme: Issues and Challenges* (Vantage, 427).

³⁷ DE Gberevbie, AO Shodipo, & FO Oviasogie, ‘Leadership and Accountability: The Challenges of Development in Nigeria Thought and Practice’, *A Journal of the Philosophical Association of Kenya* [2013] (5) 130.

³⁸ DN Kagame, ‘Responsible Leadership and Sustainable Development in Post-Independent Africa: A Kenyan Experience’, *The Journal of Values-Based Leadership* [2018] (11) (1) 12.

and political institutions that have collapsed.³⁹ This has not been without some cost on the part of Africa. Very similar to what happened prior to the 1884/5, the Berlin Conference — when European missionaries, mercenaries, businessmen, and adventurers plundered the continent for resource exploitation and self-gratification and then called on their metropolitan governments to protect their loot — Africa today has become a “no man’s land.” It is a continent without borders where anybody can come from anywhere and do whatever he/she wants.⁴⁰

The leading question that surrounds many formations regards how leadership along with the headed can work towards achieving sustainable development in a society. Sustainable development concept arises from the fact that African leadership is confronted by traditional development challenges such as poverty, diseases, corruption, hunger, as well as new challenges such as Covid-19 pandemic, environmental destructions, cybercrimes, and globalization.⁴¹

There is a need to strike a common balance to address the duo categories. To achieve a positive outcome, a development that is long lasting must be designed and be implemented. That takes the focus of sustainable development.⁴² How does noble leadership institute a sustainable development? Under normal circumstance, ethical leadership is fundamental to every institution. With ideal ethics, a leader will ensure that he fulfils the socio-economic needs of the group and maintains economic discipline. Lack of ethical or morally upright leadership leads to wastage and embezzlement of public resources, thereby denying the society an opportunity to sustain its development. Unethical leadership had led to the Watergate scandal in 1990 in the USA, economic meltdown in the 2000s besides many economic scandals of huge public resources embezzlement.⁴³ Such a situation impedes the society's sustainable development. Leadership for development must be accomplished; that is, he/she must work with honesty, fair dealing and social responsibility.⁴⁴ With such features, there will be transparency in resource management, equity in the distribution and responsibility in administering environmental issues to the expectation of the future society. In this respect, transformational leadership is preferred since it demonstrates a capacity to seek the fulfilment of human possibilities and improve the community's development in general.⁴⁵

Leadership plays an important role in the institutional progress, like that of an entrepreneur who can be able to propel sustainable development to the next level. An able leadership builds a potential in an organisation by becoming proactive to several challenges, such as scarce resources, both natural and human which result in the creation of an opportunity for growth.⁴⁶ Therefore, moral leadership acts as an explicit catalyst factor in sustaining development. In addition, leadership should be perceived as collaborative, bringing together all groups of mind

³⁹ JNK Mugambi, *From Liberation to Reconstruction* (EAEP, 1995) 50.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

⁴¹ E Nyangena, P Akujah & P Okanga, ‘Ethical Leadership for Sustainable Development in Developing Countries’ *Editon Consortium Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Studies* [2019] (1) (1) 7.

⁴² M Munasinghe, *Sustainable Development in Practice: Sustainomics Methodology and Applications* (Cambridge University Press, 2009) <<http://public.eblib.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=442879>> Accessed on 24th May, 2021.

⁴³ RK Greenleaf, *Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness* (Paulist Press, 2002).

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ BS Flowers, CISL Sustainability Leadership Research Interview (Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership, 2008) <<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/definition/autocratic-leadership>> Accessed on 24 May, 2021.

⁴⁶ RK Greenleaf (n-57).

and reasons. Such inclusive behaviour would result in incorporating all categories of minds necessary for the organization's growth. It will interpret to mean the building of common front to face challenges and to inculcate the feeling of common ownership of decisions. With such respect, leadership becomes a vehicle that steers positive changes expected to sustain development. However, the changes may also come with certain risky decisions which may include punishment of the wrong doors.⁴⁷

Sustainable development is perceived to be a long-term undertaking and integration in nature. It comes along with people's participation, a reflection of their desire and recommendation towards achieving their desires through possible alternative ways. Under such arrangements, people have their say as well as their way. The process considers future generations and their upkeep in terms of environmental management and exploitation. The cost of development is generally expected to be less than environmental destruction. Such positive development places the public at the centre of development.

5.0 Findings and Result Analysis

Findings from the paper reveal a great disparity between the leadership situation in the African continent and the attainment of sustainable development. It also affirms a link between effective leadership approaches, like the transformational leadership approach, and the attainment of sustainable development. A critical assessment of the African leadership landscape portrays a leadership landscape marked by every single characteristic of bad leadership. The leadership landscape of Africa paints the picture of one that is struggling to meet the needs of the present, let alone those of the future.

The idea of sustainable development looks at sustainability from three development dimensions – economic, social, and environmental in relation to two-time frames – the present and the future. It advocates the balancing of these three dimensions to ensure the sustenance of humans presently and in future. In view of this, there has been a clarion call at both national and international levels for a change in consumption and production patterns to ensure the availability of resources for future consumption and production. To achieve this, leadership at both national and organizational levels would have to adopt leadership styles that engenders a sense of shared responsibility toward the attainment of this goal; one that is focused on the long-term, and thus would establish systems that would persistently ensure the pursuance of this goal in the future; one that understands the need for collective effort (at both national and organizational levels) toward the attainment of the sustainability goal; one that is willing to learn; and, finally, one that is in itself ethical, and thus would impress upon followers the need to behave in a like manner. This is in view of the fact that the sustainable development agenda is one that requires an all-hands-on-deck approach by way of a collective leadership approach between players in industry (including civil society groups) and government.

However, as can be gathered from the African leadership landscape presented above, it is evident that leadership in Africa lacks this approach to governance or leadership. This situation thus shrouds the possibility of Africa attaining sustainable development. Thus, for African leaders, in both industry and government (especially government), to succeed in forging-on toward the attainment of such a goal, they would have to conduct themselves in a responsible, transparent, and accountable fashion as captured under the concept of good governance.

⁴⁷ R Findlay-Brooks, W Visser & T Wright, 'Corporate Social Responsibility and Regulatory Governance – Towards Inclusive Development?' In JC Marques & P Utting, *Corporate Social Responsibility and Regulatory Governance – Towards Inclusive Development?* (Palgrave, 2009).

6.0 Conclusion

Generally, sustainable leadership is essential for sustainable development of a society. Nurturing an ethical leader is important and will basically determine the transformation speed in overall development. It is collectively agreeable that resources are numerous, but leadership styles have been a let-down in many African societies due to the plundering of public resources. There is lack of public inclusivity in decision making. What African society lacks most is moral leadership. This is the missing link in the sustainable development agenda. Based on the findings, the policy implications are that African leaders resort to effective leadership styles, with a great emphasis on the transformational style, which integrate creativity, vision and participation, as it attempts to create sustainable development for the citizenry in the continent.

7.0 Recommendations

In view of the already identified challenges, the following recommendations are proffered to serve as a solution.

1. National Ethics Awareness (NEA) should be created in the various African countries. The NEA program should focus on values that are vital for good citizenship and on those values that promote democratic governance.
2. The importance of teaching ethics in schools cannot be overemphasized. Moral education is essential for the formation and acquisition of virtues or good characters that are vital for social cohesion and development in a society.
3. Efforts toward encouraging and sustaining ethics and practice in public administration must include the aptitude to exposing public officials that get involved in corruption and misappropriation of public funds.
4. It is very important that leaders are capable to communicate the change which they are about to implement or they have been advocating for the past few years. It is without doubt that this change is quite critical for the future. It is not only critical for the very future you live in but it is also quite critical for the success of the countries in which the leaders resides.
5. Ensuring the building of good personalities from childhood is an intervention towards resolving the leadership crisis. The inner character of the person develops from infancy onward, which highlights the importance of inculcating *Ubuntu* (a quality that includes the essential human virtues; compassion and humanity) in early socialisation processes.
6. Political leadership in Africa will be served well by leaders with a sound spirituality marked by ethical principles and behaviour.