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Educational Leadership, Management, and Administration Skills for Achieving Sustainable Development

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In this first issue of Volume 33 of Educational Leadership and Management Studies we include articles from local and international authors with different experience in leadership, management, administration and sustainable development. The theme of this issue is Sustainable Leadership for Achieving Sustainable Development in Cameroon poignantly comes at a time in history when humanity as a whole is in search of innovative ways to managing globally shared challenges. Today, the Far North, Southwest and Northwest Region in Cameroon faces long-standing ills like identity crisis, hunger, selfishness, hatred, war, genocide, kidnaping to disaster and disease; from insect invasion and terrorism, to climate change and poverty as grand challenges that need large-scale interventions of government and the international community (Tchoumbou et al., 2023).

In the political, economic, cultural, social, sociological, philosophical, and environmental spheres of life, managing these local and globally common problems such as Improving access to quality education (SDG4), promote good health and well-being for all (SDG3), achieve gender equality (SDG5), end poverty (SDG1), hunger (SDG2) and reduced inequality (SDG10), decent work and economic development (SDG8), climate change (SDG13) and protect the environment (SDG15), peace, justice and build strong institution (SDG16) and create partnerships (SDG17) and many more are thus a *sine qua non* can be translated literally as "Without which, not." for human existence all over the world (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2015; Commonwealth Secretariat, 2023; African Union, 2015; United Nation, 2014a; 2014b; 2023; United Nations Secretary-General, 2015; Kouzes & Posner, 1995; Tchoumbou et al., 2023). Moreover, while the consequences of the global financial crises have rocked the world's economies since late 2007, leaving no country untouched.

Low-income countries (LICs) like Cameroon are being hit hard by the global financial crisis. They are facing a sharp contraction in export growth. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows, and remittances are lower than committed aid. The implications of ongoing global economic, political, cultural, environmental and social problems cannot be overemphasized, but the imperative of providing sustainable leadership in order to achieve sustainable development for future generations is a major endeavour that we all must contribute towards (African Union, 2015; Ebot-Ashu, 2024; Tchoumbou et al., 2023; MINEDUC, 1998; MINSUP, 2001).). However, overcoming these challenges especially in the Cameroon context requires sustainable leadership at the individual, organizational, national and institutional levels (Ebot-Ashu, 2024; SDG Knowledge Hub; 2018; Suriyankietkaew et al., 2022).

The United Nations Secretary-General's synthesis report, *The Road to Dignity by 2030: Ending Poverty, Transforming All Lives and Protecting the Planet*, released in December 2014, represented a key milestone in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda process for peace building and achieving sustainable development goals (The Commonwealth Secretary-General, 2002; Commonwealth Secretariat, 2015; African Union, 2015; United Nation, 2014a; 2014b; 2023; United Nations Secretary-General, 2015). The Commonwealth and many other international organisations are advocating for individuals, communities, organisations, nations over the globe to understand that people are at the centre of sustainable development and, in this regard, strive for a world that is just, equitable and inclusive, and encouraging them to commit to work together to promote sustained and inclusive economic growth, social development and environmental protection and thereby to benefit all (United Nation, 2014 a; 2014b; 2014c; United Nations Secretary-General, 2015; United Nations, 2023; Commonwealth Secretariat, 2023).

Agenda 2063, the Africa we want forwarded by the African Union Commission emphasis the need for individual, communities and nations to be advocates of tolerance, respect, understanding, moderation and religious freedom which are essential to the development of free and democratic societies, and recall that respect for the dignity of all human beings is critical to promoting peace and prosperity for all (United Nation, 2014a; 2014b; 2023; United Nations Secretary-General, 2015; Commonwealth Secretariat, 2023). The Cameroon National Development Strategy 2020-2030 framework advocated for the development of human capital and wellbeing of Cameroonians especially youths and women. The orientations of this national development strategy, which covers the second decade 2020-2030 of Vision 2035 which aims at making Cameroon "an emerging and democratic country united in its diversity", has the following four overall objectives: (i) curb poverty to a socially acceptable level; (ii) become a middle-income country; (iii) attain the level of Newly Industrialized Country; and (iv) strengthen national unity and consolidate the democratic process (NDS30, 2020). Other frameworks or policy documents regulating education in Cameroon that resonates with studies provided for this issue includes: The Educational Law of 1998 and the Higher Educational Law of 2001 which initial and continuous training of higher education students and other learners in the intellectual, physical and moral domains. These policies accept that diversity and understanding the richness of our multiple identities are fundamental to the Commonwealth's and United Nation principles and approach (United Nation, 2014a; 2014b; 2023; United Nations Secretary-General, 2015; Commonwealth Secretariat., 2023).

Coming back to the range of studies included in this volume 33 offer insights pertaining to Sustainable Leadership, Sustainable Development; Principals' Leadership, Management and Administrative Roles, Conflict Management; Politics on the Freedom of Educational Administration and Management in Higher Educational Institution; Framework to Change your Leadership Style, Challenge yourself, to Grow and Expand your Leadership Capacity; Principals' Leadership Function, Educational Wastage in Secondary Schools; Principal's Leadership Skills, Conflict Resolution, Secondary Schools in Southwest Region of Cameroon. These studies as explained by the authors below and create many opportunities for reflection and possible action by the diverse readership of this international journal.

Sustainable Leadership Practices

The proposed sustainable leadership model prescribed by Ebot-Ashu (2024) divides society into four levels as suggested by Lederach (1997), which can be approached with different sustainable leadership strategies at the macro to the grassroots leadership levels. Global leadership focuses on the competencies, processes, behaviors, and roles leaders must effectively engage in when simultaneously leading diverse groups of people and managing stakeholder relationships globally across multiple cultures. National leadership bodies are effective when it is supportive, developmental, appreciative and sustained organisations. Organizational leadership focused heavily on the company's vision, strategic plan to develop ethically staffs with morality in managing the affairs of any organization. The individual leadership or say grassroots leadership focus on the big picture and on how things are likely to develop far into the future, and they engage with team members on a personal rather than hierarchical level. Where managers aim to keep things stable, leaders innovate and affect change.

Sustainable Development

Ebot-Ashu (2014) introduces a Sustainable Leadership Practices for Achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SLPASDGs) framework with four levels. Global leadership comes from working in partnership with supranational institutions like UN, Commonwealth, NATO, Global funders like the World Bank and IMF supports peace and sustainable development goals organisations, global state powers (USA, China, Russia) and bilateral agencies supporting peace and sustainable development campaigns in the world. National or say top-level leadership are the political, military and religious leaders from both government and opposition(s), or who represent themselves as such with high visibility engaging in piloting sustainable development projects. Regional leadership are government officials, formal leaders in regional organisations in education, health or business, leaders, and prominent people in networks, groups and organizations e.g. (AU, EU, ECOWAS, regional level foundations like, African Development Bank and Asian DB) supporting the development of sustainability. Organisational leadership is exercised by leaders respected in different sectors, e.g., government officials, company, ethnic and religious leaders, academic and intellectuals, humanitarian leaders (NGOs) promoting sustainability. Individual leadership or Grassroots leadership represents local community leaders, leaders of indigenous NGOs, local health and education leaders and refugee camp leaders taking part in sustainable development projects.

The first article by Paidia Aboh Nteh & Frederick Ebot Ashu examines the various ways to improve principal leadership, management and administrative role and responsibilities approaches on conflict management in secondary schools in the Fako Division, Southwest Region of Cameroon. These authors developed a framework demonstrating the potential ways to improve Principal's leadership, management and administrative roles in managing conflicts in secondary schools (Ekombe et al., 2024; Ndeh & Ebot-Ashu, 2023). The principal leadership characteristics for resolving conflict management consists of a good vision, innovative, influencing, establish psychological safety within the school, collaborating, communicating, experience, reduce the barriers to experimentation, create an effective communication system, foster an environment of diversity, give emphasis on the value of teamwork, listening and a means of mentoring younger colleagues and students against conflict (Ekombe et al., 2024; Ndeh & Ebot-Ashu, 2023). Secondly, the principal's management role for conflict resolution consists of planning, organising, controlling, budgeting, training, negotiating and mediating. This as well can be adopted for the principals' executing his or her administrative role to resolve conflicts in secondary schools consists of the social, financial and pedagogic functions (Ekombe et al., 2024; Ndeh & Ebot-Ashu, 2023).

The second author is a well-known scholar Emeritus Professor Therese Tchombe, UNESCO Board Chair, Faculty of Education, University of Buea argues that education leaders in higher education institutions in Cameroon allow politics to impact their freedom of educational administration, management and leadership to the extent that quality and science are compromised. The Emeritus Professor addresses the characteristics of higher education drawn from Fonlon's (1978) reflections on his perceptions of the nature and function of university. Professor Tchombe is begging educational leaders in Cameroon Higher Education to rethink of their role in creating scientific knowledge and to offer humanity services and how the misappropriation of this authority is negatively affecting the quality of education outcomes and manpower turn out to the world work. Evidently much is being compromised; sustainable leadership, sustainable education, sustainable learning and sustainable development on account of poor administration, management and leadership.

The third paper from Professor Muhammad Idris Assista, Department of Education/ Provost Abdul Wali Khan University, Mardan, Pakistan provides a Framework to Change your Leadership Style, Challenge yourself, to Grow and Expand your Leadership Capacity. This international scholar analyzed current characteristics of leadership, management and administrative paradigm. The author insist leadership is difficult to delineate. It is justice. It is a cup of Adam's ale for a thirsty man. It is not a matter of observing but it is mixing with people. It is looking for what people want (Saeed & Ali, 2019). Leadership is not about power but the force of affection and adoration. It is real service to humanity. It is kind-heartedness, care, sympathy and empathy. It is true spirit of serving others. It is bringing peace and normalcy (Saeed & Ali, 2018). Traditional Leadership styles are autocratic (do as I say), Democratic (do as I do), Laissez-Faire (do as you choose). Empirical literature highlighted other leadership styles that are transactional, transformational, servant leadership, ethical leadership, spiritual leadership, interactive leadership, visionary leadership and authentic leadership styles (Saeed et al., 2020). Good readers are good leaders. Great listeners are great leaders. Great learners are great leaders. to grow and expand your leadership capacity, adopt self-awareness, relational transparency, balanced processing of information, ethical perspective, positive psychological capital, self-justice and social-justice, self-management, social management and social awareness. Great managers are good in planning, organizing, staffing, supervising, visualizing, creating, critical thinking, collaborating, communicating, coordinating, reporting and budgeting are the strategies to grow and expand management capacity. 21st century manager must have positivity, proficient use of information and communication technologies (ICT); believe in human growth and development and Continuous Professional Development and Code of Conduct if he/she wishes to grow and expand his/her leadership capacity. Modern administrator must be optimistic, to be creative, to be communicative, to be collaborative, to be consultative, to be problem solver, to be critical thinker, and to be different every time and to understand their challenges, their problems, their issues; and be a problem solver, a good motivator, performing well under pressure, being loyal, having a positive attitude, eager to learn, taking initiative, helping others, and believe in transparent relationship as a team leader for effective leadership. To achieve the above, constructivist paradigm was adopted to get deep understanding of the phenomena of leadership face challenges, to grow and expand management and administrative capacity and theoretical framework based on Walumbwa et al. (2008), and Saeed and Ali (2019) models were adopted.

The fourth article, by Asek Cherie Ayuk, Frederick Ebot Ashu, & Peter Tambi Agborbechem, investigated Principals' Leadership Functions and suggested Strategies to Manage Educational Wastage in Secondary/High Schools in Cameroon. The study outlines the leadership functions of

principal involves vision, leadership competences, influence, innovation, motivation and inspiration in order to get the right things done (Ayuk et al., 2024). Principals in performing their leadership function need to avail of their school vision to the others members of the school community. Enhance a cordial relation with all and void all forms of discrimination. The students as well need follow-up, sensitization, motivation, discipline in order to enhance their academic performance and progress about the vision of the school. Communication with parents has to flow to keep them informed (Ayuk et al., 2024). Principals should make sure at all times that the school environment is conducive for teaching and learning. Education is a social endeavor and, reducing educational wastage should be a joint collaborative effort although the task lies more on principals and the stakeholders (Ayuk et al., 2024). As revealed in the study, principals in Confessional and Lay Private schools perform their functions more effectively compared to those of the public secondary schools in Cameroon.

The fifth article, by Essombe Ndivé Ekombe, Frederick Ebot Ashu, & Peter Tambi Agborbechem, investigated Principals' Leadership Skills Effectiveness in Conflict Resolution among Staff Members in Secondary Schools in Fako Division, South West Region of Cameroon. The study provides a framework about principals' Leadership skills to resolve conflicts. The framework provides a range on healthy Leadership skills principal must address with staffs and students to resolve conflict: Listening, Counselling, Report, Dialogue, Complain, Communicate, Punish, Disciplinary, Homework, Practical, Didactic material, Mastery, Knowledge, Research can influence Conflict Resolution in secondary schools positively (Ekombe et al., 2024; Ndeh & Ebot-Ashu, 2023). Based on the learning outcomes concluded that conflict resolution is well resolved when the principal and his or her team use their leadership, management and administrative skills in the identification of the conflict, active listening to the parties involved in Open and honest communication, collaboration, problem solving, managing emotions, exercised in the school environment.

In summary, this first issue of Volume 33 of Educational Leadership and Management Studies has sought to capture how sustainable leadership practices could be implemented for achieving sustainable development. To achieve the above objectives, selected studies with influential theoretical frameworks about sustainability leadership, sustainable development strategies are presented. We shall seek to continue to add more value information concerning this subject matter to this shared platform in the issues to follow.

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