

Striving for Effective Leadership in Africa: A Case for Ethical Leadership

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ABSTRACT—*This article attempts a case for ethical leadership in Africa. The study reveals that ethical leaders have strong personal characters: passion to do the right; are proactive; consider stakeholder's interests; are role models for decision-making in their group; and make transparent decisions. Linking these features to the current socio-economic problems that beset the continent of Africa, the study concludes that much of this suffering could be averted if post-colonial African leadership would commit itself to setting a blueprint for what the corporate culture should be in terms of shared goals and values.*
Keywords: African, Blueprint, Corporate culture, Ethical culture, Ethical leadership, right

I. Introduction

The ability to influence others towards a shared goal or a personal goal has been generally referred to as leadership. According to Truman, “leadership is the ability to get others to willingly move in a new direction in which they are not naturally inclined to move on their own” (O’Neil, 2008, para. 2). Woltring (2002, para. 4) has defined leadership as the “process through which an individual tries to influence another individual or a group of individuals to accomplish a goal.” Similarly,

Manuscript received Sept. 18, 2015; revised Feb. 10, 2016; accepted Feb. 20, 2016.
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Minderovic (2001, p. 379) defines leadership as the “ability to take initiative in planning, organizing, and managing group activities and projects.” Another definition by Chemers (1997, p. 1) suggests that “leadership is a process of social influence in which one person is able to enlist the aid and support of others in the accomplishment of a common task.” Ubegbe (1999, p. 282) has further defined leadership as the “process of creating the subordinates’ identification with the group’s mission and creating their desires to achieve the group’s goal.” Though these definitions appear different from each another, common emphasis may be inferred: leadership as a process, influence, and the accomplishment of common goals. Hence leadership implies an ongoing process through one’s ability to plan, mobilize, and supervise resources and activities that focuses on the achievement of generally shared purposes within a group.

In an attempt to understand the whole idea of leadership, scholarship has produced several theories. Traits and attributes theories of leadership were one of the first theories to be developed. Dating back to 1841, these theories focus on answering the question, “who is leading?” The great man theory, included in this category, suggests that individuals who become leaders are born with certain traits that enhance their ability to stand out of the lot and exert leadership influence over others (Hollander, 1990). The hereditary genius, proposed by Galton (1869), is another example of individual theories in this category. This theory proposes that leadership status derives from heredity.

Other categories of theories developed after World War II (1939–1945). One of these is behavioral theories. This genre of theories stressed that by observing different dimensions of leadership, one may distinguish the nature of leadership and leader activity from behavioral patterns of effective leaders (Chemers, 1997). Another category during this period includes the contingency and situational theories of leadership. Theories in this category generally focus on enlisting particular behavioral characteristics of effective leadership in relation to situations; hence the term ‘great event theory.’ Individual theories within this category include contingency theory of leadership (Fiedler, 1967); situational leadership model (Hersey, 1969); and path-goal theory of leadership (House, 1971). The category of transactional theories also developed during this period. These theories emphasize the dynamics of the exchange between leaders and their followers within a group (Hollander, 1990; Costanzo, 1982).

Other relationship and influence-oriented theories of leadership have developed. Individual theories within this category include implicit leadership theory (Calder, 1977), leader-member exchange theory (Graen

& Ginsburgh, 1977), and Pygmalion theory (Eden, 1990). The underlining notion for theories in this category is in-group perception and expectations in the leader-follower relationship enhance leadership efficiency. From the 1980s, new-genre theories of leadership have dominated leadership research. Individual theories within this category include charismatic, inspirational, transformational, and visionary leadership (Bass, 1998; Bryman, 1992), and authentic leadership (Gardner, Avolio, & Luthans, 2005; Avolio, Bruce & Gardner, 2005). Ethical leadership may be included in this category. Generally, these theories emphasize symbolic leader behavior, visionary and inspirational messages, emotional feelings, ideological and moral values, individualized attention, and intellectual stimulation within the leader-follower relationship.

In this article, the framework for reflecting on leadership is based on the notion of ethical leadership. The core idea of ethical leadership seems to be predicated on the belief that “values are the glue that can hold things together, and values must be conveyed from the top of the organization (Treviño, Pincus-Hartman, & Brown, 2000, p. 128).” In agreement with Treviño et al (2001), Hennessy (cited in Butts, 2008, p. 119) states that “ethics must begin at the top of an organization. It is a leadership issue and the chief executive must set the example.” Previous literature has found positive linkages between organizational performance and ethical leadership. One study, in particular, concludes that leaders who communicate respect for others as well as concern for the welfare of their followers can enhance job performance, satisfaction, and organizational culture (Alimo-MetCalfe, Alban-MetCalfe, Bradley, Mariathasan & Samule, 2008) that may increase productivity in general. Similarly, Muller and Turner found that the ability of a leader to make sound judgment enhances productivity (Muller & Turner, 2010). Piccolo, Greenbaum, Den Hartog, and Folger (2010) have suggested that ethical leadership increases task significance, which, in turn, results in improved performance.

The drive of ethical leadership is the incorporation of morality in the value system of an organization. This may create an ethical culture that emphasizes both the desire and practice to be moral from the leader down to the follower. This is because leaders play a “key role in transmitting and diffusing values, norms, and code of ethics” (Ferrell & Ferrell, 2001, p. 64). Such leadership attitude is able to induce “increased efficiency in daily operations and decision making, employee commitment, product quality improvements, customer loyalty, and improved financial performance” (Ferrell, Maignan, & Loe, 1999). Dwelling on the

incorporation of ethical principles in an organizational culture, some have stressed that a strong ethical culture induces efficiency in decision making which involves all interested parties in the venture (Trevino & Youngblood, 1990).

The purpose of this article is to provide justification for ethical leadership in Africa from the viewpoint of religion and morality. This purpose will be achieved by examining existing literature on ethical leadership, identifying the primary cause of socio-economic and religious problems in Africa, examining the role ethical leadership may play in eliminating, or reducing, some of these problems, and identifying religious and moral factors that encourage ethical leadership attitudes. Suggestions for using ethical leadership in Africa have been included. Our main argument is that ethical leadership may impact the ability of a country to meet its responsibilities. An ethical leader, therefore, will strive to motivate, inspire, and guide followers towards the achievement of established common goals. Thus, an African leader may influence the morale and the general behavior of followers depending on how such a leader becomes morally conscious in decision making, delegation of responsibility, resolution of conflicts and interaction with followers.

II. The Notion of Ethical Leadership

Since the collapse of Enron in 2001, studies on leadership seem to throw more light on the role of ethics in the corporate environment. Among the other causes of the collapse of Enron is the apparent flaw in ethical standards of the company (Thompson, Thach, & Morelli, 2010). This flaw in ethical leadership caused unimaginable woes to all stakeholders of Enron (Ferrell & Ferrell, 2011). As if the business world has not picked a cue from the fall of Enron, flaws in ethical standards continue to characterize the corporate environment (Plinio, Young, & Lavery, 2010). Flaws in ethical standards of the corporate world usually manifest in the falsification of documents, well-publicized scandals, tax-evasion, fraud, and other misrepresentations in doing businesses. The alarming rates at which these indicators occur would seem to call for ethical leadership in the business organization.

Perhaps the need for ethical leadership may be seen in the many definitions that scholars have given to it. One of such is that ethical leadership stresses “good character and the right values or being a person of strong character” (Freeman & Stewart, 2006, p. 2). Noting the core focus of ethical leadership, Greenleaf (1977, p. 20) states “Service to

followers is the primary responsibility.” Heifetz (2006) confirms that providing directives to followers to enable them to deal with conflicts is the preoccupation of the leader. Arguably, a notable definition of ethical leadership is that it is “the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making” (Brown, Treviño, & Harrison, 2005, p. 120).

We believe that ethical leadership involves an individual influencing others in the organization or group to reach established common goals through his or her inward virtues. In other words, ethical leadership is the ability or authority to guide and direct others toward achievement of a goal through the moral qualities of the leader. These moral qualities include “honesty, integrity, reliability, modesty, trustworthiness, respect, conscientiousness, and fairness (Davis & Rothstein, 2006; Treviño, Brown, & Hartman, 2003; Avolio, Gardner, Walumbwa, Luthans, & May, 2004; den Hartog and de Hoogh, 2009; Kalshoven & den Hartog, 2009; Craig & Gustafson, 1998). Thus the basis of ethical leadership is a personal desire to be ethical and model ethical standards in ways that are visible for other individuals in the organization to see and emulate.

Rawls identifies two main elements here. First, the leader must act and make decisions ethically, and second, the leader must also lead ethically in their attitudes and interactions (Rawls, 1971). Building on Rawls’ elements, three components of ethical leadership may be seen. These are the personal integrity of the leader—also termed the ‘moral person’ component of ethical leadership (Treviño, Hartman, & Brown, 2000); the extent to which a leader is able to cultivate integrity among his or her followers—the ‘moral manager’ component (Palanski & Yammarino, 2009); and the quality of the leader-follower relationship—that which bridges the moral person and moral manager components and facilitates their effects on followers (Brown, Treviño, & Harrison, 2005). Martinez-Saenz (2009) has identified five constructs within ethical leadership. These are altruistic, egoistic, autonomous, legalist, and communitarian. Similarly, Plinio (2009) has proposed that transformational leadership, servant leadership, and authentic leadership are leadership theories that may be correlated to ethical leadership. Sandel (2009) has further noted that current manifestations of ethical leadership reveal elements of three classical ethical theories. These are Utilitarianism Theory, Libertarianism Theory, and Kant’s Ethical Theory.

Ferrell, Fraedrich, & Ferrell (2011, p. 140) have built on Archie Carroll’s “7 Habits of Highly Moral Leaders (2003, p. 7)” to develop

their “Seven Habits of Strong Ethical Leaders.” These habits are strong personal character, a passion to do right, proactivity, consideration of stakeholders’ interests, role models for the organization’s values, transparent and active involvement in organizational decision making, and a holistic view of the firm’s ethical culture. Recognizing that some of these traits are general characteristics of leadership, we have modified these seven habits of strong ethical leaders to create ‘Six Qualities of African Ethical Leaders.’ Therefore, our framework is that since African leaders are a key source of influence on national and continental developments, their personal desire to be ethical as well as their quest to model out the ethical life in performing their various leadership roles will determine the ethical culture within which other Africans (i.e. their followers or citizenry) would contribute to national and continental developments.

A. Ethical Leaders Have Strong Personal Character

Generally, it is thought that strong personal character is the basis of ethical leadership (Ferrell, Fraeueich, & Ferrell, 2011, p. 140). Such strong personal character may be invisible to other members in the group. However, it may be visible through the decisions made by the leader on a daily basis. Leaders with this attribute bring their intellectual-moral skills to bear in the resolution of complex ethical dilemmas that their group encounters. In the situation of complex ethical issues, such leaders act in a manner that reveals a personal desire to maintain group ethical codes and corporate values. The result is that decisions made do not reflect personal desires for comfort or fame. Rather, it results in the achievement of established common goals. The positive effect of such behavior is that it enhances and solidifies the ethical culture of the group and this influences several others in it. Leaders who have strong ethical characters perform their leadership role not on the basis of what they can get out of leadership; but on the basis of serving the interest of the members of the group for whose interest he/she has been given the authority to lead.

B. Ethical Leaders Have a Passion to Do Right

The leader may know the right action to take. But without an emotional connectedness to perform the right action, such knowledge is of little value. Treviño, Hartman, and Brown (2000, p. 128) have correctly pointed out that an ethical leader “must also find ways to focus the organization’s attention on ethics and values and to infuse the

organization with principles that will guide the actions of all employees.” This emotional connectivity to the right action has been perceived as “passion” (Ferrell, Fraedeich, & Ferrell, 2011, p. 141). The passion to perform the right action involves recognition of the value of ethical decision making and a willingness to maintain this value in the face of challenges and tough times. Ethical leaders have the courage to maintain the ethical culture of the group regardless of all odds.

C. Ethical Leaders Are Proactive

Ethical leaders are visionary leaders. They continuously anticipate possible threats to maintaining their ethical culture and organize group resources to avoid these threats or face them head-on. As a precursor, ethical leaders are aware of the needs of both the external and the internal needs of the group. As a result, they “apply or even develop “the best practices” of ethical leadership that exist in their industry” (Ferrell, Fraedeich, & Ferrell, 2011, p. 141). What this means is that ethical leaders preoccupy themselves with both the short-term and long-term goals of their group. However, much emphasis is placed on the latter in their planning.

D. Ethical Leaders Consider Stakeholders’ Interests

Ethical leaders have high positive regard for the diverse interests within the group that they lead. Rather than focus on the achievement of one or two of these interests or to serve the needs of only few in the group, ethical leaders weigh the consequences of each of their decisions on all interests within the group. The implications of this attitude is that the leader becomes aware of these interests in the group and effectively manage them by “actively communicating and cooperating with them, employing processes that are respectful of them, recognizing interdependencies among them, avoiding activities that would harm their human rights, and recognizing the potential conflicts between leaders’ own role as corporate stakeholders and their legal and moral responsibilities for the interests of other stakeholders” (Ferrell, Fraedeich, & Ferrell, 2011, p. 143). By performing their tasks this way, ethical leadership strives to balance the various interests within the group with the objective of making the group exist and achieve its task as a unit.

E. Ethical Leaders Are Role Models for the Organization's Values

The ethical culture of a group may stagnate where leadership attitudes and actions are diametrically opposite to them. In other words, leaders of groups who are not concerned with the ethical culture of the group render those group values insignificant (Ferrell, Fraedeich, & Ferrell, 2011). For this reason, ethical leadership strives to actively serve as role models for the core values of the group. In this way, the Chief Executive Officer or the leader of the group becomes the embodiment of the values of the group. In other words, the decisions and interactions of the leader reveal the values of the group. According to Treviño, Hartman, and Brown (2000, p. 128) “the CEO is thought of as the Chief Ethics officer of the organization, creating a strong ethics message that gets employees’ attention and influences their thoughts and behaviors.” The implication is that the core values of a group become active and effective when leaders live them out. Ethical leaders attract the respect of their followers by living out the values of the group. Bernard (cited in Butts, 2008, p. 140) has noted that “the respect that leadership must have requires that one’s ethics be without question. A leader not only stays above the line between right and wrong, he stays well clear of the ‘gray areas’.” By visibly and intentionally role modeling ethical behavior, “ethical leaders earn the moral right to hold followers accountable for ethical conduct” (Brown & Treviño, 2006, p. 597).

F. Ethical Leaders Are Transparent and Actively Involved in Organizational Decision Making

Ethical leadership builds a corporate culture that encourages “openness, freedom to express ideas, and the ability to question conduct” (Ferrell, Fraedeich, & Ferrell, 2011, p. 143). Even the leader’s conduct is brought under the scrutiny of his followers. Such an attitude of leadership fosters a working environment in which relevant information flows smoothly. In such environment, members within a group may be free to comment on the operations of the group as well as the conduct of the leadership. Also, all members would become free to contribute their ideas to the total growth of the group. This reveals that ethical leaders are constantly “involved in the key decisions that have ethical ramifications” (Ferrell, Fraedeich, & Ferrell, 2011, p. 143). Because they are the embodiment of the core values of the group, their involvement in key decision making instills “commitment and respect for values that provide

guidance on how to deal with ethical issues” (Ferrell, Fraedeich, & Ferrell, 2011, p. 143).

III. The Challenge of Leadership in Africa

It would be needless to stress that the continent of Africa is blessed with many natural resources. The vast oil deposits in Nigeria, Sudan, and Angola; the diamonds and cobalt in Democratic Republic of Congo; the rich goldmines in Ghana and Democratic Republic of Congo as well as the timber of Cote d'Ivoire are some of the places that attest to the rich store of natural resources the continent possesses. However, despite the richness in the deposits of natural resources, most people in Africa live in abject poverty amidst underdeveloped infrastructures. In some places, there is an inadequate supply of clean water and food. Other places are too dark. Regrettably, there are more deaths from curable diseases on the continent of Africa. According to McCord, Sachs, and Woo (2005, p. 23) “Africa was the only major developing country region with negative per capita growth during 1980 to 2000; its health conditions are by far the worst on the planet; its soaring population is exacerbating ecological stresses; and despite the policy-based development lending of structural adjustment, it remains mired in poverty and debt.” Wky (cited in Mbah, 2013, p. 144) has observed that “only 15% of Africans live in an environment considered minimally adequate for sustainable growth and development; at least 45% live under poverty line.” Lamenting on the state of poverty and violence plaguing the African continent, Eregha (2007, p. 205) writes “what has happened to Africa in the past four decades can be compared to the effects of a World War. Its crisis is different from anything else found anywhere in the world. No other continent is suffering such acute famine and environmental loss and nowhere else do institutions and skills lag so far behind the problems. No other region of the developing world finds itself in such a steep and steady decline as Africa.” Nyong’o (2001, p. 3) further notes that “malnutrition, high child mortality, lack of access to basic education, homelessness, and various types of social indignity have been dominant features of the decline of human development standards in Africa.” All these are indications that Africa is underdeveloped.

In recent times, several studies on the cause of the dire state of the African continent have been conducted. Two extremes have emerged out of these researches. On the one hand, the current state of Africa is the direct results of the adverse effects of colonialism (Mimiko, 2010, pp.

641–642; Kasongo, 2010, p. 309; Standage, 2005; Arowolo, 2010, p. 7; Rodney, 1983; Alkali, 2003; Obadina, 2000, p. 1). Moyo (2009, p. 67) and Calderesi (2006, p. 163) have even blamed “foreign aids” as the cause of the current deplorable state of Africa. On the other hand, some studies have placed the blame on the state of Africa on its leadership (Afegbua & Adejuwon, 2012; Seteolu, 2004, p. 70; Ake & Onoge, 1995; Agbaje & Roberts, 2000; Adeola, 2007). Ake and Onoge (1995, p. 53), in particular, points out that leadership in Africa “is parochial rather than national; and corruptly converts national resources into its project of primitive accumulation. Ethnic diversity is manipulated to stay afloat to the detriment of national cohesion.” Agbaje and Roberts (2000, p. 154) add that “post-independence leaders in Africa not only personalized power but also privatized the state for the purpose of primitive accumulation, clientelism, repression and all forms of opposition. Instead of using the state for initiating development, African leaders utilized it as a vehicle for terrorizing the citizenry, thereby leading to the disengagement of the populace from the public realm.” With such features of leadership on the continent, it would seem as no surprise to see the abysmal level of development that Africa is noted for. Emphatically, Maathai (2009) states that the only reason why Africa is poor is due to “poor leadership for so many decades.” More strongly, Afegbua & Adejuwon (2012, p. 151) states that “the trouble with Africa is simply and squarely a failure of leadership. There is nothing basically wrong with the African character or political system in operation.”

A survey of the leadership behaviors of some African countries may be very significant in the foregoing discussion. The leadership crisis that has been a feature of leadership styles for about four decades in Nigeria, Ghana, Zaire (formerly Congo-Kinshasa), Malawi, Zambia, Kenya, Central African Republic, and Liberia would seem to indicate that leadership in Africa is to blame for the underdevelopment of Africa (Mbah, 2013). Mbah has termed this crisis “failure of African leadership.” He observes that “From East to West, Central and North Africa, the continent has been inundated with uncharismatic leaders; of little or no vision to move African states to greater heights and perhaps as equal participants in the comity of nations. Consequently, most post-1960s African leaders, both those that came to power through fraudulent election and via the barrel of the gun are all locked up in the culture of plunder and power intoxication. They set their ideas and values more on ‘self’ rather than in ‘national’ context; as such taken retrogressive steps that plunges the states further into socio-economic and political decay” (Mbah, 2013, p. 143).

Perhaps the failure in leadership may be attributable to the use of “big man” leadership style by some African leaders. In the big man style of leadership, the leader or the president/prime minister virtually makes all decisions concerning the resources of the nation. Based on the notion of the Melanesian “big men,” Sahlins (1963, p. 289) describes this leadership style as one that is based upon self-interest/promotion. It was only when these big men gained a perceived amount of “status” or “an increasing amount of wealth” did some flow back to their followers (Meggitt, 1973, p. 193). The implication of this is that until the leader amasses enough wealth or enriches himself or herself, the whole populace will live in underdevelopment. This would seem to suggest that African leadership serves only self-interest to the detriment of the national/continental interest or the common good. This could explain the high level of scores on corruption by African countries on the corruption index of Transparency International. “Cameroon, Angola, Kenya and Nigeria are among the world’s worst 12 countries, with scores below 2” (Economic Commission for Africa, 2005, p. 16). The effects of such leadership style are extensive. This may include “huge external debt overhang, net capital flight, disinvestments, collapse of social infrastructure, food crisis and insecurity, over-devalued national currency, pervasive poverty, unpopular, repressive and alienating economic policies” (Seteolu, 2004, p. 70). In the wake of inadequate leadership in Africa, how may the concept of ethical leadership be helpful?

IV. African Leadership Failure and Ethical Leadership

The reality of leadership failure in Africa seems to have driven the call for effective and responsible leadership on the continent. Foremost among the voices calling for effective leadership is Kofi Annan, former secretary-general of UN. For him, “Good governance and sustainable development are indivisible. That is the lesson of all our efforts and experiences, from Africa to Asia to Latin America. Without good governance—without the rule of law, predictable administration, legitimate power and responsive regulation—no amount of funding, no amount of charity will set us on the path to prosperity” (cited in Economic Commission for Africa, 2005, p. 2). Similar views are held by other African scholars (Afegbua & Adejuwon, 2012; Adeola, 2007; Obasola, 2002). Some scholars have attributed Botswana’s achievements to good governance (Tsie, 1996; Sebudubudu, 2010). The baseline argument is that effective leadership, manifesting in the form of good

governance, and sustainable development are inseparable. By good governance, reference is made to a type of leadership that is underlined by democracy and communicates such democratic ideology to its followers in terms of respect for human rights and uncompromising high regard for the rule of law. Such leadership style is both development-oriented and socially-inclusive in that it allows “for the management of the economy in a way that enables economic growth, structural change and the judicious use of available resources in a sustainable manner” that includes “minorities and ethnic or religious diversity” (Kuffour, 2011, p. 140).

From the foregoing, the challenge of leadership in Africa may be inferred. The enormity and complexity of it spells an urgent task of leadership in Africa: leadership must establish a transparent and accountable basis for workable economic policies, strategies for poverty alleviation, and a well-defined and implementable strategic developmental plan for infrastructure; leadership must enact public policies that will ensure sustainable environment; leadership must accept responsibility for the positive reconstruction of the African society in all of its facets. Anything short of these may amount to leadership failure.

This would seem to suggest certain requirements for leadership in post-colonial Africa. Paramount among these requirements are the need for leadership to be visionary, possessor of moral intellect, possessor of positive administrative skills, ability to set up functional ethical culture, a personal desire to model out the acceptable ethical life in all relationship in which leadership is associated, and a commitment to achieving the shared goal. Adeola (2007, p. 110) correctly states that “respected, visionary leaders that are of proven integrity are needed to captain the ship of the nations of Africa, such a leader of the people must have vision and mission.” In other words, leadership in Africa should be the embodiment of all that individual nations stand for. To this end, we argue that the search for effective leadership in post-colonial Africa is a search for African ethical leadership.

Ethical leadership suggests that leadership possess strong personal character. Given the enormous challenge that confronts the African in post-colonial Africa, ethical leaders are needed to bring their intellectual-moral skills to bear in the resolution of these issues in ways that maintains the values and solidarity of the African people. By this means, leadership decisions will be driven by the quest to achieve the interest of the country and not the egocentric interest of the leader. Also, ethical leaders possess a passion to do the right. With such a positive desire to do the right, African ethical leadership will strive to find ways in which it

will focus the attention of its followers on national values and interest and infuse these interests and values firmly into the fabric of public life in ways that will guide the daily interactions of all, including leadership itself. African ethical leaders will have the courage to fight corruption and any other non-productive means of operation simply because such means waste both present and future opportunities.

Again, ethical leadership involves visionary leadership. This character of ethical leadership will enable African leadership to be proactive in their operations. It will make African leadership aware of both the internal and external needs of their followers and enable them to utilize all resources, not partisan resources, available within their nations in achieving both the short-term and long-term goals of their nations. Ethical leadership will empower African leadership to analyze situations and design a course of action that draws on the strength of all followers. Through this means, all followers may feel ownership of the process and thus perform their best with the objective of achieving corporate interests. Additionally, ethical leadership has high value for the diverse interests that exist within their group. By this means, leadership in Africa will strive to balance the various interests (tribal, ethnic, or partisan) within the group with the objective of making the group exist and achieve its task as a unit. African ethical leadership will communicate respect for the various interests by avoiding activities that have the potential of harming their human rights or identity.

Further, ethical leadership suggests that leaders model the values of the group they lead. By embodying the national values of one's country in their attitudes and actions, African ethical leadership expresses some concern for the ethical culture of the country in a manner that will influence the thoughts and behavior of their followers. The underlining notion is that African ethical leaders have the moral right to hold their followers accountable for acting in ways that contradict national values. Moreover, ethical leadership in Africa will create a leadership atmosphere within which transparency and a critique of all actions, including that of leadership, become major features. Such a leadership environment will serve as a check and balance for African leadership. Besides, it will encourage the free sharing of ideas and productive exchanges that target total growth of the country.

V. Conclusion

This article has attempted to make a case for ethical leadership as a

means of striving for effective leadership in Africa. The idea of leadership suggests that the individual leading have a shared goal and possess the ability to influence his or her followers towards the achievement of those goals. To a large extent, therefore, the ability of a group or organization to reach its goals may be dependent on the leader's capacity to define clear goals and influence members towards those goals. Thus the quality of the leader may determine the achievement level of the group or organization.

In this respect, one might see that leadership in post-colonial Africa reveals a lack of quality—the ability to define goals and influence followers towards their achievements. This lack has been conceived of as leadership failure. This leadership failure shows up in many ways on the African continent. Awfully, a continent that has rich deposits of diamond, gold, cobalt, uranium, oil, timber, etc. does not appear to support the African life. While others live mainly on foreign aid, others either lack drinking water or food. Some even live in abject poverty and others die of curable diseases.

The dire state of post-colonial Africa has been blamed on the adverse effects of colonialism. Some have even blamed foreign aid as the cause of the poverty level of Africans. However, we agree with earlier research that places the blame on the doorstep of African leadership. By employing the big man leadership style, post-colonial African leadership has extensively focused on self-seeking interest of leaders to the detriment of national interest. Where it suits these leaders, they may lay obsolete the nationally acceptable standards in pursuit of their bigoted interests. The results of this has been political instability, diseases, malnutrition, food insecurity, lack of electricity supply, corruption, illiteracy, poverty, and poor or inadequate socio-economic infrastructure that fail to support large scale productions.

Consequently, there have been calls for effective leadership on the African continent.. Many studies have suggested that the main antidote to the leadership crisis in African is visionary, selfless, and integrated leadership. While we agree with these studies, we further make a case for ethical leadership. In our opinion, the search for effective leadership in Africa is a search for ethical leadership for post-colonial Africa. Ethical leadership suggests that leadership possess strong personal character; a passion to do the right; involves visionary leadership; has high value for the diverse interests that exist within their group; model the values of the group they lead; and creates a leadership atmosphere within which transparency and a critique of all actions, including that of leadership, become major features.

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