Sustainable and Effective Leadership: Navigating Decision Making for Management Success

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Abstract: *This article delves into the concept of sustainable leadership within the contemporary global society, emphasizing its role in integrating ethical and sustainable business practices, diversity, and inclusion. The emergence of the Sustainable Development Goals SDGs highlights the need for leadership that addresses economic, social, and environmental challenges. Sustainable leadership transcends traditional models, steering organizations toward long - term objectives that align with societal, economic, and environmental domains. The article explores the fusion of sustainable leadership and effective decision - making, advocating for an ethical and collective approach that empowers stakeholders. Drawing from expert's insights, it discusses the importance of incorporating ethics into leadership to foster strategic decision - making and highlights real - world examples of leadership failures due to the lack of ethical considerations. By providing a platform for inclusive decision - making, effective leaders facilitate adaptive responses to adversity, driving sustainable relations and long - term gains for all stakeholders.*

Keywords: Effective Leadership, Sustainable leadership, Effective decision - making, Ethical leadership, Sustainable development, Diversity, inclusion

1. Introduction

Effective leadership in the contemporary global society goes beyond generating profits to integrating sustainable business practices that include diversity and inclusion. It is more than achieving an organization's objectives for a certain quarter to achieving long - term objectives. When the world ushered in the Sustainable Development Goals in 2015, it also introduced into the limelight a budding concept for leadership that would help to solve challenges crosscutting economic, social, and environmental spheres. Sustainable leadership, therefore, emanates as the kind of leadership style that should be incorporated in every business model as it helps businesses to be versatile in adjusting their regulatory and policy frameworks relative to social, economic, and environmental domains. Sustainability leadership moves past basic transformational and accountable organizational leadership to one that steers the development of society, the environment, and the economy. It is being perceived as the kind of leadership the society wants as it not only promotes organizational success but national progress as well by ensuring that businesses thrive amidst dynamic and versatile economic, environmental, and societal changes. As a result, it is pertinent for organizational leaders to have the needed sustainable leadership skills required to attain the SDGs. It is recommendable that businesses should now consider sustainable leadership as the governing business model because of its holistic nature as the world gears to attain the SDG's. Sustainable leadership is effective in promoting employee commitment, motivation, job satisfaction, organizational trust, acceptability to change, and overall productivity and performance. Sustainability leadership is yet to mature as a concept, and as there are intensified calls to embrace this model, those in management must understand how they can adopt it and why. While there is so much advocacy on effective leadership, what happens in practice is different, leading to a need for insight into the

different leadership styles relative to driving sustainable practices, inclusion, and diversity. Sequentially, leaders need information on the kind of leadership styles they display and understand their organizational cultures. They also need to know how to transition to the desired culture and leadership style in driving sustainable practices, diversity, and inclusion as a way of supporting the attainment of the world's SDGs.

Effective Leadership and Decision - Making
The topic of effective leadership in decision - making is debatable as different researchers and scholars differ in what they regard as effective leadership to drive effective decision - making. While some scholars believe that a hierarchical approach where the leader dominates the process is the most effective, others believe that a collective approach is the ideal one. However, in seeking to attain sustainable development, a more collective approach is needed, as indicated in this article. Effective leaders in contemporary society should seek to empower their followers to aid in strategic decision - making. What matters is not what leaders think but their ability to incorporate a range of views from all concerned stakeholders to facilitate effective and strategic decision - making leading to sustainable development.

Effective leadership to guide strategic decision - making should be ethical. Even though some business leaders have great business ideas, the failure to integrate ethical implications is a major setback. The Law School of Harvard has given a detailed description of effective leadership in steering decision - making through an interview with Don A. Moore, a professor at the University of California, and Max Bazerman, a professor at Harvard Business School, moderated by Deepak Malhotra, who is also a professor at the Harvard Business School. There was an emphasis on the essence of ethics throughout the interview (Shonk, 2023). Bazerman stated that some renowned business leaders, such as Uber's Travis Kalanick, WeWork's Adam Neumann, and Theranos' Elizabeth Holmes, failed to thrive because they

did not factor in the element of ethical leadership in their business models (Shonk, 2023). The experts were advocating for decision leadership that goes beyond changing the hearts and minds, what is termed as persuasion, to creating cultures, norms, systems, and environments that facilitate effective decision - making through empowerment. Decision leadership, nonetheless, is seemingly integrated into sustainable leadership, which seeks to incorporate all aspects leading to sustainable development for which decision leadership is part.

Effective leaders will provide their associates and followers with the platform needed to make effective decisions that can benefit the business, and this is explored further in this article in subsequent sections. The discussion by Moore, Bazerman, and Maholtra showed that effective leaders will not just seek to change the mind, but the they also need to draw in usable tools to effect the change. For example, during the need for covid - 19 vaccines, employers did not just need to convince employees to get the jab but they also needed to bring the vaccine closer to the employees. An effective leader, thus, should make critical decisions in the event of adversity when there is urgency and limited information to act as a guide, mainly by creating the platform to effect the needed change. As a result, the contemporary leadership paradigm is recommended because it entails liaising with enlightened stakeholders to make quick and effective decisions within the shortest time possible. Effective leadership ensures that the decision - making process is not based on theinterests of a few but targets the needs of all stakeholders to establish sustainable relations for long - term gains.

Influence of Leadership Styles on Organizational Decision - Making

There are different types of leadership styles which can be grouped into three levels as indicated in table 1 shown below. The first level consists of those leadership styles that do not accommodate sustainable practices, diversity, and inclusion. The second level are those that are partially aligned with sustainable practices, diversity, and inclusion, while the third level encompasses those that fully integrate these elements. Ineffective leadership is linked to high turnover that evidently leads to

A wastage of resources due to a demanding recruitment process. Nowadays, as more attention is focused on effective leadership, there is a remarkable shift in leadership styles from a transactional approach to a transformative one to attain strategic effective decision - making. The latter focus on developing subordinates to achieve short - term organizational goals. Perterlin et al. (2015) state that there are three traits that effective leaders should have to make strategic decisions, namely:

- Consideration of others' interests
- Focus on long - term effects
- Utilization of leadership as a steward of available resources

The table below is an analysis describing the leadership styles, their skills.

Table 1: Analysis of Leadership Styles and Level of Suitability to Sustainable Leadership

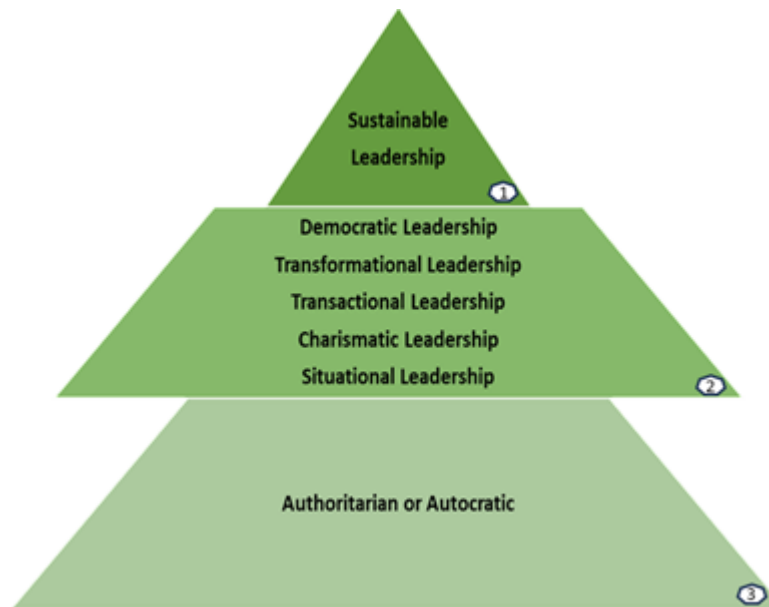| Leadership style	Leadership skills	Suitability to sustainable practices, diversity, and inclusion
Authoritarian or Autocratic	Decision - making	First level
	Problem - solving	
	Communication	
	Time - management	
	Stress - management	
	Risk - takers	
Democratic leadership Transformational leadership Transactional leadership Charismatic leadership Situational leadership	Team player	Second level
	Communication	
	Transparent	
	Embraces diversity	
	Mentor/Coach	
	Active listener	
	Inspirational	
	Emotionally intelligent	
	Sociable	
	Upholds governing policies, rules, and procedures	
	Static	
	Influential	
	Visionary	
	Humble	
	Courageous	
	Adaptable/flexible	
	Directional	
	Pro - active	
Sustainable leadership	Motivational	Third level
	Pro - active	
	Promotes personal development	
	Adopts diversity and inclusion	
	Governed by a shared vision	
	Not limited to organizational	

Figure 1: Management Style Tree

An autocratic/authoritarian leadership style does not consider the views of the members, although the decision - making process is fast. Leaders do not have to engage in lengthy decision - making processes because they make instant decisions as needed. On the flip side, these decisions do not reflect the interests of all members likely to be affected. Vladimir Putin is an example of an authoritarian leader because his word is final, and he does not accept input from anyone. Instead, such a leader compels individuals to do what he wants to achieve his goals (Huang et al., 2023; Linden & Wilkes, 2022). Such leaders make significant decisions on their own even though the outcome does not always result in successful ones, as in the case of Putin, whose initial thoughts were that he would capture Ukraine in a month. These leaders have clear goals and do whatever is necessary, including indulging in unethical actions to pursue their interests. The success of organizations run by authoritarian leaders is not guaranteed since it is dependent on a leader's intelligence and wisdom.

Democratic leadership style is participatory because followers are given a chance to share their views. Democratic leaders involve their subordinates in making decisions, where leaders can either collect ideas and make decisions after evaluating them or engage stakeholders in making a collective decision facilitated by the leader. Democratic leadership is deemed an ideal leadership style because it supports creativity and innovation, which are pertinent in steering sustainable practices (Fang et al., 2019; Salma, 2023). Advanced forms of democratic leadership are shared and inclusive leadership styles, where leaders gather diverse opinions and allow individuals to be actively involved in implementing ideas. Han Seong - Sook adopted an inclusive leadership style as the former CEO of Naver because she allowed employees to present their opinions and implement them (Fang et al., 2019; Salma, 2023). Nonetheless, without specific goals engrained in sustainable development, it is limited in its efficacy to promote sustainable practices geared toward the achievement of long - term goals. The decision - making process takes time because the leader has to consider all suggestions alone, and

it is also time - consuming and tiring when directing a large group.

The paternalist leadership style is similar to the autocratic/authoritarian one but differs in that whereas authoritarian leaders are dictators, paternalist leaders act like parents. The paternalistic leadership style incorporates benevolence to authority and morality so that the leaders show concern for the well - being of the followers in their decision - making process. The paternalistic leadership approach is mainly relevant to communist societies, which have a high regard for parents (Harvard Law School, 2022). Paternalistic leaders make all the decisions on behalf of their subordinates based on what they perceive to be the needs of others, although these may not be a true reflection of what subordinates need.

The transactional leadership style is similar to the autocratic one because the leader asserts that subordinates should follow the existing standards, policies, and laws, although it is not clear whether these legal entities are developed collectively or individually. The two can be linked to the trait theory, which states that leaders exhibit their leadership styles based on their characteristics and competencies (Sethuraman & Suresh, 2014). Transactional leaders adopt a transactional approach relative to the subordinates' adherence to the already governing laws and associated procedures through a reward/punishment system. Transactional leaders are task - oriented; hence, they do not involve others in making decisions about the rules, policies, and policies but act as implementers of what exists.

Transformational leadership entails engaging the followers to achieve long - term objectives. Transformational leaders develop goals with their subordinates and promote innovation and change to achieve these goals. Bass and Avolio (cited in Güngör et al., 2016) highlight four traits of transformational leaders in running their operations. The first trait is that these leaders are influential and charismatic, such that they earn respect and trust from their subordinates; hence, they can easily drive them toward reaching the

desired goals. The second trait is that they are inspirational and motivational by encouraging followers to embrace success. The third trait is that they steer personal development instead of filtering members. Transformational leadership is seemingly engrained in trait theories and participatory theories with the former applauding the combination of personal characteristics and competency. The latter advocate for the integration of the views and input from subordinates to engage in a collective decision - making process (Sethuraman & Suresh, 2014). Therefore, such leaders understand the strengths and weaknesses of their employees and work towards improving their inadequacies so that they do not act as impediments to attaining desired goals. The fourth trait is that transformational leaders are supportive of their followers' innovative and creative thoughts to steer positive change.

Charismatic leadership entails the inherent nature of an individual to get his subordinates to obey every command based on the Greek meaning of charism as a divine gift. As a result, charismatic leaders have exceptional qualities to steer progress and make effective decisions, which they can persuade their followers to embrace. Charismatic leadership style is engrained in the great man theory, which dictates that leadership is inherent and not acquired (Sethuraman & Suresh, 2014). It can be deemed to be the positive aspect of an authentic leader, while authoritarian/autocratic leadership can be considered to be the negative dimension. Authentic leadership is a display of genuineness to one's predisposition (Center for Creative Leadership, 2020). Unlike transformational leadership, charismatic leadership seeks to create a kind of dependence on the leader in making decisions. Transformational leadership, on a different note, seeks to empower followers through training and related activities so that individuals gain the confidence they need to be self - efficacious, as discussed by Mittal (2015).

There is also situational leadership, where leaders' task - oriented approach, power, and relationship with subordinates tend to change based on the situation. Situational leadership is the one kind of leadership style that comes close to comparing with sustainable leadership but lacks the consistency that is required to run organizations. Employees are still dependable on the leader to solve issues as they are not sure which leadership approach will adopt in various situations (St. Thomas University, 2014). Sustainable leadership supersedes situational leadership, which is deemed to be better than transformational leadership, through sustainable practices, where flexibility is part. Flexibility is the main principle that defines situational leadership, and as a result, a leader adopts different leadership approaches to suit a momentous development process. Situational leadership entails adopting an array of styles, as indicated by various theorists. Nonetheless, the latest theoretical approach, according to Blanchard and Hersey, relies on the development of both the leader and the followers (St. Thomas University, 2014). More information on linking leadership to employee developmental level/readiness can be accessed here https: //online. stu. edu/degrees/education/what - is - situational - leadership/ or "Effective leadership styles" by Sethuraman and Suresh (2014).

It is evident that all these leadership styles tend to overlap in one way or another, but sustainable leadership is grounded in all the positive elements of these leadership styles. While autocratic leadership is a quick decision - making process, sustainable leadership seeks to apply relevant platforms to facilitate effective decision - making through a culture that empowers followers and delegates leadership roles. Sustainable leadership supersedes the charismatic leadership style in effective decision - making because the leader does not strive to sell a particular agenda but creates leadership roles through which a leader gains solutions representing the interests of all in various groups. Sequentially, the leader does not have to spend a lot of time making decisions, which is the case for transformative, shared leadership, and democratic leadership styles.

Leadership and Sustainable Practices
It is evident that it is only sustainable leadership that adopts a dynamic approach to address the environmental, economic, and societal needs; hence, it can be summed up in an interconnected gears, as indicated below.
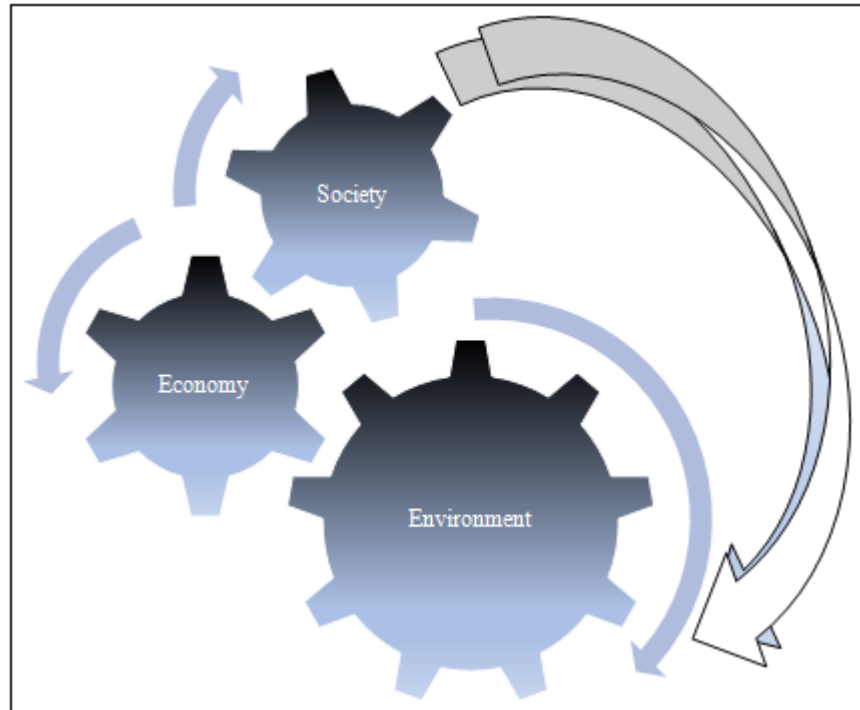
Figure 2: Sustainable Leadership System

An effective leader is innovative in driving sustainable practices that help to promote sustainable development. According to the International Institute for Sustainable Development [IISD] (2018), an effective leader needs to adopt living processes which include creativity, awareness, resiliency, and adaptivity to drive sustainability. Therefore, an effective leader should embrace innovation and creativity, which are better obtained through diversity and inclusion by giving individuals space to tap into their talents and potential.

The role of an effective leader is not to offer solutions but to create platforms on which everyone will work towards sustainable development, and in the process, hasten the decision - making process. The IISD (2018) notes that effective leaders should not be afraid of the conflict, tension, and uncertainty linked to diversity but should see it as a means of devising viable solutions. As a result, effective leaders who seek to drive sustainable practices should first understand their character in relation to the world to devise how to work effectively with others. The essence of self - evaluation is to comprehend one's belief and associated cultural system and position it in the context of others to embrace inclusion.

While sustainable leaders must integrate the views of others in the decision - making process, it is pertinent to identify the relevant stakeholders. Effective leadership leading to sustainable development entails including belief systems from various communities across geographical zones and diverse political and cultural networks (Peterlin et al., 2015). Decision - making effects are not limited to an organization only, but to the wider society. The IISD (2018) states that an effective leader has a vision and long - term objectives. As a result, it is important to ensure there is harmony across stakeholders and that the organizational goals are aligned with the environment and larger society.

Three levels of sustainability practices define sustainable leadership, and they are hierarchical. Each level of these sustainability practices promotes and supports the practices that are next along the hierarchy. The first level is made up of basic practices or foundation practices, and as the name suggests, are the basic practices that set the pace for subsequent practices (Liao, 2022). These practices dwell on people development relative to both internal and external stakeholders. Sustainable practices seek to establish long - term relationships and not merely seek to gain profits. An example of a sustainable practice is choosing to sponsor a long - term supplier to bolster them in the event of a crisis instead of always seeking the lowest bidding supplier, which is likely to impede innovation and progress. The second level is the high - level practice that entails the exchange of information and collaboration. The third level entails key performance drivers that consist of the outcomes, such as a technology that helps to minimize carbon footprint.

Another sustainable practice is behaving ethically by respecting and heeding the interests of all. Such sustainable practices tailored to empowering others create a synergistic relationship where individuals seek to give back relative to what they get. Hence, customers become loyal while investors re - invest in the business using their dividends, and employees are even willing to go the extra mile for their companies. Shonk (2023) highlighted the essence of upholding ethical principles as they guide leaders in developing sustainable policies in line with the morals of society. Leaders who adopt ethical principles are mindful of the effects of their actions on others.

The defining element of sustainability leadership is sustainable development. While ethical leadership governs the leader - follower relationship, sustainable leadership examines the essence of ethical principles in promoting future prosperity through sustainable development. Sustainable leadership gives everyone the power to

challenge what is not aligned with economic, social, and environmental prosperity. As a result, sustainable leaders will never make decisions alone due to the limiting bounded rationality effect when decisions are made by a single individual (Schwarz et al., 2022). When individuals make decisions on their own, they fail to integrate varied options to guide them in making rational decisions. Therefore, an effective leader who promotes positive change and strategic decision - making should craft goals and objectives on how to attain the vision and mission, as well as the strategies to aid in achieving these goals.

Instead of imposing the desired goals and associated outcomes on stakeholders, and especially subordinates, an effective leader promotes strategic decision - making by ensuring that all stakeholders are on the same page. Hence, everyone needs to understand the philosophy of the organization and its goals concerning the ecosystem, as implied by Dawson and Carlsson (2022). Effective leaders will not take it upon themselves to direct and implement change; rather, there are delegates to represent the needs of everyone so that all stakeholders' interests are addressed. Therefore, a decision - making team will guide the leader in making effective decisions geared toward sustainability.

Given that sustainable leadership seeks to empower present and future generations to enhance their potential, the leader assigns specific roles to different individuals according to their potential. Effective leadership is about empowering others so that they are aware of their potential and use their skills for greater business success. McQuerrey (2023) notes that sustainable leaders identify individuals with leadership abilities and mold them to become effective leaders. Given the dynamic triple - bottom - line model of sustainability leadership, an effective leader must delegate leadership responsibilities to potential individuals as a sustainability measure that promotes collective gain. When individuals are given leadership roles, they promote quick decision - making by heading groups at various levels because sustainable leadership oversees the sustainable development of a complex system.

The decision - making process is no longer about the short - term effects but long - term ones. An organization that thrives amidst disaster is likely to run under sustainable leadership that ensures an organization continues to thrive financially, socially, and in an environmental - friendly manner. The typical example of the changing climate should be the pinnacle for which all businesses should strive to adopt sustainable leadership. Strategic decisions should now be geared toward preventing further damage to the environment while still ensuring that organizations and businesses continue to enjoy their profits.

The decision - making process in every organization is mainly directed by the prevailing organizational culture, which is synergistically linked to sustainability leadership. Therefore, given the three elements of sustainable development, a leader should seek to adopt an organizational culture that promotes innovation that sustains the environment through collaboration. Sequentially, the innovation element involves activities geared towards economic growth, while environmental sustainability ensures the preservation of green spaces, and collaboration advocates for harmony and cohesion needed in societal development.

Leadership and Diversity

A business is not merely about the employer and employees, but it is a system of entwined relationships of involved parties. Customers/clients, suppliers, investors, political and community representatives in towns, states, and nations where the businesses are located, as well as future generations in the form of students pursuing business - related courses, are part of the stakeholders' fraternity (Peterlin et al., 2015). Obtaining the diverse views of others helps a leader to reflect on the efficacy and pitfalls of their thought processes. Ultimately, an effective leader will level the playing field by putting their biases away and make fair decisions (Bradfield Group MENA, 2022).

Diversity is important in forging a favorable organizational culture that upholds sustainability practices and also represents the interests of various groups of people. Effective leaders should know how to handle diverse teams in the current era of globalization. The leader should understand, accept, and value differences across individuals based on age, gender, disability, nationality, race, ethnicity, and class (Social Talent, 2023). Marriott International has been ranked number one by the largest annual study, Great Places to Work, which offers inclusive services to its guests and extends an inclusive culture to its workforce (Social Talent, 2023). Ultimately, the company can thrive in any part of the world as it highly regards diversity, which represents the face of the world.

Diversity promotes innovation and skills because it taps talent from diverse backgrounds. While it is one thing to have a diverse workforce, it is another thing to ensure that the diverse workforce is adequately engaged in decision - making processes. According to Larson (2017), diverse teams make decisions with better results by 60%. Moreover, a team makes better decisions compared to individuals by 66%. While a team consisting of males only makes better decisions 58% of the time compared to individual decision - makers, teams that are gender diverse make better decisions 73% of the time (Larson, 2017). Therefore, not only is the use of diverse teams sustainable and ethical, diverse teams make better decisions. Professor Francesca Gina from Harvard Business School acknowledges the biases associated with individualized decision - making, and the use of a team improves the architecting process of decision - making through diverse perspectives of a situation.

Leadership and Inclusion

An effective leader ensures that subordinates are aware of the organization's business strategy, including the kind of leadership approach currently applied. When employees understand the operations of an organization right from how management should function, it enables them to raise issues and concerns when things do not run as expected. Given that sustainable leadership is an advanced form of transformational leadership, it can be perceived to be the most effective; hence, leaders should incorporate the views of all their employees.

Sustainable leadership entails involving various stakeholders; hence, the element of inclusion is pertinent because each individual needs to develop healthy relationships with others and develop a sense of belonging. Inclusion entails acknowledging that a business consists of diverse teams, and there is a need for all to appreciate each other's differences as strengths through which individuals can learn from one another. Sustainability leadership adds the concept of sustainability to inclusion by encouraging individuals to work positively as teams to promote a green environment to achieve carbon neutrality and halt the deterioration of climate (Laker, 2022). Nonetheless, given the essence of long - term relations, it is important to gain feedback through stakeholder interviews and surveys to understand a situation and how to address it.

Moreover, sustainable leaders should be committed to employing a diverse workforce. Sequentially, sustainable leaders should organize training and development workshops where employees will learn to work in a diverse workforce while focusing on organizational survival. Moreover, the leader will also need training to understand the essence of and how to integrate the needs of all employees and provide the needed support. Sustainable leaders should understand the dynamics of the changing environment and continually provide resources that enhance organizational learning that empowers individuals to address emerging challenges. For example, during the recession, sustainable leaders will be able to draw relevant stakeholders through the element of long - term relationships to save on costs and reduce wastage. Inclusion entails putting the relevant measures in place to ensure the needs and interests of every stakeholder are addressed to exploit their full potential and sequentially provide extra support when needed.

Strategies to Integrate Sustainable Practices, Diversity, and Inclusion

The integration of sustainability practices, inclusion, and diversity cannot happen without changing the organizational culture because even with all the supportive structures in place if the culture does not uphold these elements, then the existing culture will thwart their integration. Therefore, the first step in integrating sustainable practices, diversity, and inclusion is creating a favorable culture that upholds these aspects. A favorable culture helps an effective leader to lead by example as it sets the pace for others, as indicated by Laker (2022). The culture should seek to empower employees so that they are motivated to take ownership of the organization's success. Sequentially, they are likely to report any deviation or miss from an organization's vision, mission, and values (Shonk, 2023). A leader should engage in self - reflection practices regarding their efficacy as effective leaders in an era where sustainable leadership seems to override all other leadership styles. Effective leaders accept counsel from their subordinates and should keep up with the latest research on sustainable leadership as the most effective leadership approach that has regard for sustainable practices, diversity, and inclusion. The success of Google is based on effective leadership that seeks to be better each time. Sequentially, the company conducts numerous tests annually, and it is no wonder it presents new products now and then to meet the emerging and pre - anticipated needs of its customers.

There is a need to understand one's biases and prejudice regarding diversity and search for ways to address them because a diverse team is more beneficial as opposed to one that is not diverse. Moreover, through this introspection, leaders can delve into their leadership styles and work towards enhancing their leadership skills (Feyes, 2018). Laker (2022) also notes that sustainable leaders need to understand their successes and failures, a process that is possible through self - evaluation and should involve verifiable metrics.

Leaders, therefore, need to undergo training on cultural competence to gain the needed skills to manage diverse groups without prejudice. Al - Zawahreh et al. (2019) talk about the importance of organizational learning to help employees focus on the bigger picture of employing sustainable practices. Individuals grow engrossed in distinct beliefs and values that are not easy to change. However, with organizational learning, individuals can gain useful insight to aid in the application of sustainable practices in reference to collaborative engagement, systemic thinking, and business philosophy (Iqbal et al., 2020). While some leaders have inherent leadership capabilities, others acquire them over time through education (United Nations Global Compact, 2023), and that is why organizational learning is pertinent to guide the integration of sustainable practices, including diversity and inclusion. Employing a diverse workforce is part of sustainability practices because a community can choose to be supportive or unsupportive of a company. The community's reaction depends on its ability to address community interests based on populations recruited as part of the workforce.

Competent leaders will be able to set articulate goals highlighting diversity, such as promotion rates of different individuals on the basis of diversity. There should be a checklist to hold leaders accountable for their efforts to integrate sustainable practices, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace. Laker (2022) states that effective leaders should set measurable goals by indicating what they want to achieve and how they will determine if they have achieved these goals. For example, when targeting proportionate promotion of individuals across racial and ethnic orientations after three years, leaders can set goals by determining the ratios.

Benefits of Sustainability Leadership

Sustainability leadership signals to the employees that the business cares for them and their progress, and by so doing, employees trust their employers more and are more satisfied with their jobs. Sustainable leadership is the epitome of effective leadership because it does not dwell on the leaders' interests but on collective gain (Shonk, 2023). Moreover, through diversity and inclusion, it formulates a shared philosophy that sets the pace for enhanced morale and motivation (Pavithra, 2021). Sustainable leadership also seeks to support the employees/stakeholders and ensures that the interaction between the management and other members is characterized by effective communication and open dialogue.

Sustainable leadership adopts sustainable practices, for example, by embracing diversity which enables them to obtain an array of opinions when devising long - term solutions meant to benefit subsequent generations. Sustainable leadership seeks to involve everyone and incorporate all views aimed at benefiting the business, society, and the environment over the long term and not just in a certain fiscal year. Iqbal et al. (2020) assert that sustainable leadership entails sustainable practices tailored towards collective benefit through valuing employees so that they develop a sense of belonging. It also entails capacity building by empowering employees so that they learn to be self - independent in dealing with issues instead of having to wait for the leader. As a result, this helps to prevent procrastination and helps to solve issues immediately as they arise since employees have developed a sense of ownership in the company's success. Moreover, through sustainable leadership, the leader creates connectedness through a shared vision so that employees' actions are inclined toward achieving the vision.

Overcoming Challenges and Driving Change

A major challenge is varied definitions of sustainability that range from Brundtland's et al. environmental sustainability approach to the triple bottom line approach. As a result, leaders might ignore the social and economic approaches that are pertinent in driving sustainability change. These variations in the conception of sustainable leadership and associated practices can be addressed using scientific literature to understand the effects of incorporating some or all the three elements of sustainability (Laker, 2022). Leaders need to seek maximal benefits that can be attained from a holistic approach to sustainability instead of a partial one.

Another challenge of incorporating sustainable practices is a poor organizational culture. The article asserts the essence of aligning leadership style with organizational culture. Acar & Acar (2014) note that it would be difficult to exercise inclusion in a hierarchical culture, where worker alienation is salient. Nonetheless, to integrate sustainable practices, diversity, and inclusion, it is necessary to have more than one type of culture to realize effective leadership. The clan culture is participatory and flexible, but the level of participation from employees is not certain and does not promote innovation and creativity, which are enlisted in the adhocracy culture (Acar & Acar, 2014). When there is a poor perception of sustainability and the culture is not favorable in promoting sustainable practices, diversity, and inclusion, it becomes difficult to mentor and coach the employees. Moreover, time management becomes an issue due to a lack of focus and precise direction, as implied by Benteh Rahman (2019). An effective leader will need to understand that there is a need for change, which begins from the top. Sequentially, the leader can take effective measures to manage the change process in transitioning to a favorable organizational culture.

Various change models have been proposed to help drive change while addressing emerging challenges. These models can serve as a basis for effective leaders in successfully guiding and driving both planned and unplanned changes. Jalagat (2016) notes that effective change management is needed in the pursuit of sustainable practices because it entails addressing both internal and external factors to attain long - lasting positive effects. Therefore, in the current global society, the leaders who have been labeled as ambassadors of sustainable development have a collaborative approach that seeks to address issues at the local and global levels to fit in the current era of globalization. The adoption of change models, such as Lewin's change model, Kotter's 8 - step model, and McKinsey's 7 - model, is necessary as they seek to address resistance by involving the members in an organization (Jalagat, 2016). However, in the pursuit of sustainability, the models should be tweaked to integrate long - term goals. Nowadays, businesses should not steer change without having an outward view of the effects of this change across the world to attain sustainable development.

Successful leaders can navigate through challenges and implement sustainable decisions by integrating the three defining elements of sustainable development: economy, environment, and society. Andrew Griffiths, a director at Planet Mark who previously worked at an electronic company as a business developer, overcame the challenge of resistance and lack of support from management through a buy - in approach that is part of Kotter's 8 - step model (Jalagat, 2016). Griffiths did not have a leadership role while working at the electronic company, but he demonstrated effective leadership skills in advocating for a recycling project and proved that one does not have to hold a leadership position to display effective leadership skills. Griffiths garnered support from like - minded colleagues and approached the manager to implement a recycling drive in the company (Macleod, 2023). Thereby, the case of Griffiths justifies the need for sustainability leadership which embraces inclusion because it helps to draw quality views and ideas from others even though they do not hold positions where their views matter.

Effective Leadership and Organizational Culture

Sustainable leadership currently stands as the only leadership style that is effective enough to attain sustainable development through sustainable practices. According to Liao (2022), sustainable leadership was borne from the concept of sustainable development by the Brundtland Committee towards the end of the twentieth century. Later on, various scholars, including Pearce and Turner as well as Weale (cited in Liao, 2022) proposed models that incorporated the environment. However, it was Elkington and Rowlands, who created the tricycle of sustainable leadership in the 1999 "Cannibals with forks: The triple bottom line of the 21st - century business. " Hence, the first phase in creating an organizational culture that adopts sustainability practices, diversity, and inclusion is effective communication and open dialogue.

Effective communication and open dialogue are pertinent in creating a shared vision and associated objectives. An open dialogue helps to eliminate power distance, which often acts as a barrier to democracy due to bureaucratic and conditioned practices that impede creativity and innovation (von Peter, 2023). Therefore, the executive, which is often the top management of an organization should begin the change process by realizing that sustainability leadership is a

win - win for the firm, environment, and society at large. Nowadays, consumers are sustainability - driven, and they factor in some sustainability factors when choosing their brand. Therefore, the top management should begin the process of culture change by understanding the concept and aligning it with the organization's values to facilitate its permeation to the whole organization.

Drawing from the approach used in creating sustainable development goals, it is not only about addressing challenges but also ensuring there is equality. Equality is attained by involving all stakeholders in deliberating and solving issues. The mere process of involving all members and communicating with them about the business strategy and associated policies, as indicated by Dawson and Carlsson (2022), sets the pace for developing a culture that supports sustainable leadership. Organizational culture and leadership must be synergistically linked as one reinforces the other. The inclusion of all relevant stakeholders helps to integrate all views into a company's philosophy to ensure all groups are equally represented.

2. Conclusion

For a long time now, attention has been on limiting leadership styles that focus on the internal operations of an organization without considering how an organization is related to the environment and community at large. The sustainability element, however, is seemingly misconceived because some leaders focus on the environmental element and overlook the social element. Effective leadership is that which seeks to propagate the attainment of long - term goals through sustainable practices engrained in ethical principles, diversity, and inclusion. An effective leader embraces diversity and adopts measures for inclusion to have a collective effort, which will ensure that a company gains success. Collaboration is meant to steer the development of a shared vision and sequential objectives. Moreover, a leader can identify areas for personal development through organizational learning. Effective leaders will also ensure that the workforce is adequately empowered to solve emerging issues without waiting for the leader. Additionally, they will assign leadership roles to potential individuals to lead various groups within an organization as a step towards embracing diversity and promoting inclusion through which leaders can make strategic decisions.

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Open Dialogue as a cultural practice - critical perspectives on power obstacles when teaching and enabling this approach in current psychiatry.