

Sustainability Leadership and Ethical Perspectives

Zuhair Hasan¹, Rayan Esmaail², Zulaikah AlBusaidi² & Cam Caldwell²

¹ Atlanta, Georgia

² Modern College of Business and Science, Muscat, Oman

Received: September 25, 2023 Accepted: October 15, 2023 Online Published: October 23, 2023

doi:10.5430/bmr.v13n1p9

URL: <https://doi.org/10.5430/bmr.v13n1p9>

Abstract

The failures of leaders in the 21st century have reached crisis proportions, as evidenced by the alarming trends of “Quiet Quitting” and “The Great Resignation” (Jamali & Caldwell, 2023). Beck and Harter (2023) reported that 82% of people promoted to positions of leadership were the wrong individuals and 58% of employees in a 2018 survey indicated that they would rather trust a stranger than their boss (Damron, 2018). For organizations to reverse this trend of ineffective leadership, they must develop a sustainable leadership approach that incorporates true ethical principles (Hasan, 2022).

The purpose of this paper is to address the need for “Sustainability Leadership” in modern organizations and to emphasize the importance of ethical leadership (Stouten, Van Dijke, & De Cremer, 2012). We begin this paper by defining Sustainability Leadership (SL) and emphasizing its importance as a leadership framework. After defining SL, we then identify how SL meshes with seven different leadership perspectives. We suggest eight propositions that leaders and organizations can test related to each perspective’s contribution to SL. We conclude the paper by identifying four contributions of this paper for leaders and organizations

Keywords: Sustainability Leadership, Ethical Perspectives

1. Defining Sustainability Leadership

Leadership is a central element in developing and promoting organizational sustainability, (i.e., Elkington & Upward, 2016; Opoku et al., 2015; Suriyankietkaew, 2013). Creating sustainable organizations is challenging in a world where reality is “constantly changing, uncertain and unpredictable, nonlinear, emergent, self-organizing, adaptive, and existing as interconnected webs of relationships” (Burns, 2016, p. 1). The complexity of the modern world and the obligations owed by leaders and organizations have been redefined as society has recognized the ethical obligations that leaders and organizations share and the inevitable consequences that are on the horizon if stakeholders do not unite in the quest for common solutions (Anderson, Ndalamba, & Caldwell, 2017).

Sustainability includes economic viability long-term. In his research about sustainability in organizations, Harvard University’s Michael Porter (1998) defined economic sustainability as an organization’s ability to maintain long-term competitive advantage. However, with the increased emphasis on the ethical responsibilities of organizations of all types, the definition of sustainability also incorporates the triple bottom line responsibilities of social responsibility to society, an environmental obligation to do no harm, and a citizenship obligation to be an active participant in resolving the problems of both present and future generations (Henriques & Richardson, 2013).

In addressing the responsibilities of sustainable leadership, the University of Michigan’s LaRue Hosmer (2010) proposed a model for ethical decision-making represented in Figure 1.

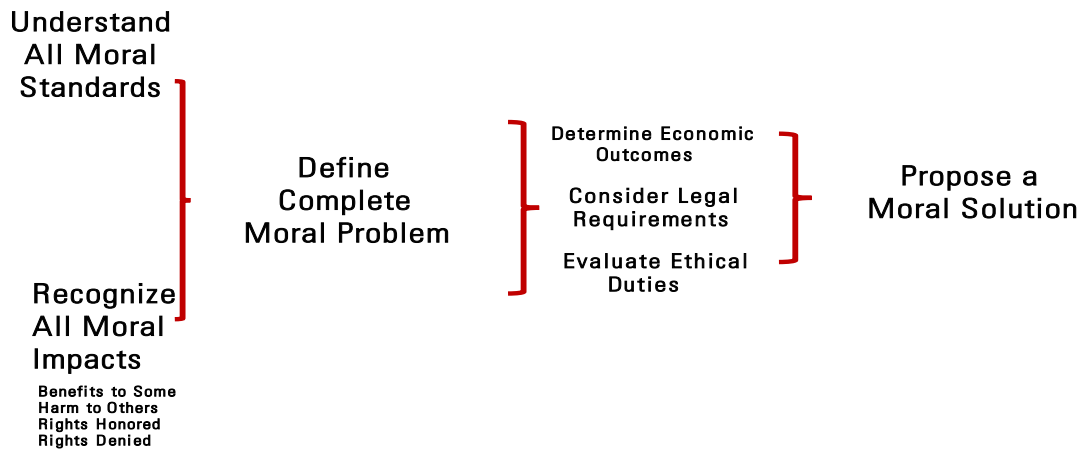


Figure 1. The Hosmer Model

Consistent with Hosmer's model, the leader's responsibilities include recognizing the impacts of leadership decisions on the present and future stakeholders (cf. Friedman, 2009). Those responsibilities are affected by decisions that incorporate legal, economic, financial, and ethical duties as leaders evaluate options and propose a moral solution regarding the decisions that they make (Caldwell & Anderson, 2020).

Understanding the implications of sustainability leadership requires that those who lead recognize their obligations to the individuals and the organizations that they serve (Chen, 2012). Economically, the obligation to create a sustainable competitive advantage requires creating an organization that delivers world class products or services that are "great" rather than simply "as good as" the competition – and Jim Collins (2001, p. 1) famously declared that "Good is the enemy of great." Collins (2001, Chapter 1) explained that for companies that lacked a distinctive competitive advantage, the issue was not whether they would go out of business but when their demise would occur.

As an ethically virtuous standard of leadership, SL includes behaviors, practices, and systems that create long-term value for all stakeholders and enables leaders to optimize the creation of new value by so doing (cf. Bendell & Little, 2015). Peterlin and colleagues (2015) explained that organizations have a responsibility to the greater good of society, and that SL is responsible for making decisions that take into account pro-social and pro-natural ecological and social dimensions.

Other scholars agree with the importance of ethically based leadership perspectives that adopt a long-term commitment to the achievements of organizations and that emphasize creating organizational sustainability. For example, McCann and Sweet, (2015) found that leaders in the financial industry encouraged ethical behaviors among employees focused on the long-term performance of the organization rather than pursuing short-term profit-taking that often hamstrung organizations long-term. This recognition of the need to honor long-term obligations due to future stakeholders and even future generations was similarly emphasized by Thomas Friedman (2009) in his critique of the 2008-2009 worldwide fiscal crisis.

Leaders of organizations have come to realize that a sustainable business strategy was not only economically beneficial but could also contribute to the good of the environment and could benefit society (Winsemius & Guntram, 2013). Echoing the wisdom of Mary Parker Follett (2013) nearly a century ago, Mary Ferdig (2007) recognized that sustainability leadership involves taking responsibility for understanding and acting upon sustainability challenges and incorporated the philosophy of "power with" rather than "power over" others in the quest to solve challenging societal problems.

In writing about the importance of creating a critical mass of employees committed to achieving environmental and social sustainability, Galpin and Whittington (2012) identified the importance of leadership style as a critical element in creating sustainable organizations. The extensive research by Gallup has confirmed that leaders throughout the world have typically failed to engage and empower their employees or to use the human capital in their organizations to productively address sustainability objectives and recommend that leaders who seek to create sustainability adopt a

transformational leadership approach (Clifton & Harter, 2019). Sustainability leadership demonstrates a commitment to the long-term welfare of all stakeholders in acknowledging the complex moral responsibilities of leadership (Caldwell & Anderson, 2019; Caldwell, Hayes, & Long, 2010).

Incorporating the insights of the many scholars who have written about SL, we define the term as *the virtuous commitment to ethical stewardship that honors the long-term financial, environmental, social, legal, and ethical obligations that leaders and organizations owe present and future generations.*

2. Leadership Perspectives and Sustainability

In writing about the importance of creating a critical mass of employees committed to achieving environmental and social sustainability, Galpin and Whittington (2012) identified the importance of leadership style as a critical element in creating sustainable organizations. Consistent with that perspective, we suggest that SL integrates the best elements of a broad range of leadership perspectives that engage and empower the members of their organizations in honoring responsibilities owed to society (Friedman, 2009). In this section we identify seven leadership perspectives that fit the criteria of SL and offer eight propositions about the specific contributions of each perspective to our definition of SL.

2.1 Transformational Leadership

Transformational Leadership (TIL) is a leadership perspective that enables individuals and organizations to improve themselves through achieving positive change (Bass & Riggio, 2006). TIL empowers people to excel beyond their previous potential by providing a clear vision and motivating people to achieve a worthy goal (Givens, 2008). Leaders create the capacity to change by emotionally connecting with colleagues and inspiring them to be innovative in the pursuit of outcomes that redefine what is possible (Antonakis, 2012).

In writing about the nature of leadership, James MacGregor Burns (2010) observed that leadership and ethics are much like two sides of the same coin. TIL is ethically rich and consists of four fundamental elements (Caldwell & Anderson, 2019b).

Idealized Influence – Leaders are the ethical role models of those whom they lead and serve.

Inspirational Motivation – Leaders seek to encourage and inspire others to go beyond their past best performance.

Intellectual Stimulation -- Leaders constantly strive to learn, grow, and improve to achieve effective change.

Individualized Consideration – Leaders emphasize that the welfare, growth, and wholeness of each individual is important.

Leaders who honor the TIL perspective acknowledge that they owe an ethical obligation to pursue the best interests of their organizations and the individuals whom they lead while guiding organizations through the change process (Sendjaya, 2005).

Consistent with this review of TIL and its relationship to SL, we offer our first proposition.

P1: Leaders who are high in incorporating the ethical perspectives of TIL are perceived by their colleagues as more aligned with SL's commitment to sustainable organizations than leaders who rate lower in those four perspectives.

2.2 Servant Leadership

Servant Leadership (SvL) is “a philosophy and set of practices that enriches the lives of individuals, builds better organizations and ultimately creates a more just and caring world” (Purdue Global, 2020). Robert Greenleaf (2002) declared unequivocally that the servant leader is a servant first in her or his relationship with others. SvL pursues that which is in each individual's best interests rather than that which is in the leader's personal self-interest (Ludema and Cox 2007, p. 343).

SvL is an ethically-based framework which incorporates Gilligan's (2016). Ethic of Care and demonstrates leaders' commitment to the welfare, growth, and wholeness of those with whom they labor (Çelikdemir, 2022). Max DePree (2004, p. 11) emphasized that building relationships with individuals rose to the level of an ethical obligation of the leader to “be a servant and a debtor” to colleagues and employees—but DePree also noted that this relationship included the leader's responsibility to “define reality” in dealing honestly about expectations required to meet the needs of the organization as well.

We offer a second proposition about SvL and its ethically based contribution to leading others.

P₂: Leaders who are perceived to be high in adopting principles of the Ethics of Care and Servant Leadership are able to create more sustainable organizations than organizations with leaders lower in adopting the Ethics of Care and Servant Leadership.

2.3 Charismatic Leadership

Charismatic Leadership (CL) generates the commitment and followership of others based upon the leader's personal ability to establish connection with others and her/his ability to inspire others in the pursuit of a worthy goal (Conger, 2015). This connection reflects the conviction of followers that inspires them to achieve unprecedented results (Conger, Kanungo, & Menon, 2000, p. 748). Charismatic leaders typically advocate a moral purpose that may often rise to the level of a "calling" for themselves and for those whom they lead (Lussier & Achua, 2009).

Charismatic leaders inspire followers to transcend their own self-interest for the greater good (Brown & Trevino, 2006) and when those leaders honor the values that they espouse they model the way and are able to serve as role models of ethical values and principles (Kouzes & Posner, 2023). The alignment of values and the degree to which followers' commitment meshes with the charismatic leader's calling or purpose are the basis for their connection with the charismatic leader (Hayibor et al. 2011). The importance of this purpose is a fundamental element of the charismatic leader's ability to motivate others (Ciulla, 2014).

Our third proposition addresses the role of CL in achieving sustainable organizations.

P₃: Organizations with leaders who are modeling the ethical values of Charisma Leadership are more effective in being sustainable than organizations with leaders who do not model their organization's values.

2.4 Level 5 Leadership

Level 5 Leadership (L5L) was described by Jim Collins (2001) as the integration of personal humility with a fierce resolve to accomplish previously unachieved organizational outcomes. Leaders in the most successful organizations who adopted this L5L perspective were understated individuals who did not seek the acclaim of others but focused on the success of their organizations (Penn, 2019). L5L leaders "look in the mirror" and take personal responsibility when organizational problems occur but "look out the window" and give credit to others when their organizations succeed (Singh, 2008).

The L5L perspective's focus on the ethical responsibilities of leadership emphasizes the obligation of leaders to achieve meaningful outcomes that add value to society while involving others as full partners who receive credit for their role in achievements (Caldwell, Ichiho & Anderson, 2017). Giving others credit for success is intellectually honest, morally fair, and recognizes that employees in today's knowledge, wisdom, and service economy are key to providing the quality of experience that customers receive (Wiley & Kowske, 2011). The ethical perspective of L5L leaders is based upon the query, "What can I contribute?" rather than "How can I personally benefit?" (Caldwell, 2012).

Consistent with our review of L5L's contribution to leadership, we offer our fourth proposition.

P₄: Organizations with leaders who model the humility and fierce resolve of Level 5 Leadership are more effective in being sustainable than organizations with leaders who do not model those values.

2.5 Principle-Centered Leadership

Principle-Centered Leadership (PCL) is a highly ethical leadership obligation to honor duties owed to others based upon a commitment to values and principles (Covey, 2006). PCL is based upon the assumption that leaders choose to comply with universal principles and values that are widely accepted and common to all cultures (Lewis 2001). These principles and values produce predictable desirable outcomes that achieve results and benefit others (Covey, 1992).

The ethical obligation of PCL is to apply correct principles in all of one's dealings with others in the pursuit of creating a better society and enriching the lives of others (Covey, 2005). The identification and implementation of those virtue-based principles reflects the duties owed by leaders to society and to individuals and groups within it (Hosmer 2010). Those principles honor others as valued "Yous," or as valued ends, rather than inconsequential "Its," or as simply the means to achieving one's self-interests (Buber, 2008).

P₅: Organizations with leaders who adopt universally accepted values and principles in their interactions with others are more sustainable than organizations with leaders who do not adopt those values.

2.6 Covenantal Leadership

Covenantal Leadership (CovL) is a leadership model that emphasizes the leader's obligation to constantly pursue new insights and greater truths in the quest to serve society and make a better world (Caldwell & Hasan, 2016). In developing the leadership perspective of CovL, Moses Pava (2015) integrated the roles of the leader as a teacher, role

model, servant, exemplar of proper conduct, and the creator of new meanings. Citing Moses, as a great example of CovL, Pava (2001) viewed leadership in the Judaic tradition as noble, highly ethical, and committed to empowering others.

In CovL, the leader is engaged in a partnership with others to benefit society and to assist others in the process of continuous improvement and personal growth and views its responsibilities as a sacred and covenantal obligation (Caldwell et al., 2012). CovL honors relationships with followers by personal example and by helping others to recognize their personal responsibility in the pursuit of truth and the creation of new meaning (Fischer & Schultz, 2017). Aligned with this review of the role of CovL, we present our sixth proposition related to SL.

P₆: Organizations with leaders who adopt the Covenantal Leadership perspective about their covenantal obligation to discover new meanings are perceived by others as more sustainable than organizations with leaders who do not adopt the Covenantal Leadership perspective.

2.7 Transformative Leadership

Transformative Leadership (TvL) is an integrative leadership perspective that combines ethical elements of each of the six leadership perspectives listed above and was developed as a model of ethical stewardship intended to honor the ethical duties of organizations (Caldwell, 2012). Caldwell and colleagues (2012, page 176) defined the term as “*an ethically-based leadership model that integrates a commitment to values and outcomes by optimizing the long-term interests of stakeholders and society and honoring the moral duties owed by organizations to their stakeholders* (Italics in the original).

Table 1. provided here, briefly summarizes the contributions of the six other leadership perspectives in addressing TvL’s contribution to SL

Leadership Perspective	Ethical Emphasis	Contribution to Sustainability Leadership	Comment
Transformational	Balanced Excellence	Focused on optimizing the goals of the organization while enriching individuals.	Honors duties owed to organizations and individuals.
Servant	Serving the Individual	Achieve the organization’s goals by first meeting individual members’ needs.	Meeting individual needs builds their trust and commitment.
Charismatic	Pursuing a Calling	Accomplishing a noble purpose worth achieving.	Inspires personal dedication at highest level.
Level 5	Achieving Results	Pursuing excellence and giving credit to contributors.	Seeks excellence while honoring others.
Principle-Centered	Embracing principles and values	Honoring correct principles and values to achieve the best possible outcomes.	Identifies and applies correct principles and values.
Covenantal	Creating new truths	Constantly learning to grow and flourish.	Acknowledges duty to constantly improve.

Warren Bennis and Burt Nanus (2007, p. 16) described TvL as “*the capacity to translate intention into reality and sustain it.*” (Italics in the original.) TvL increases the capacity for leaders to earn the trust, followership, and support of others (Caldwell, Hayes & Long, 2010). Goleman (2007, p. 28) described such leadership the ability to “pull the best out of people” in enabling organizations to achieve and maintain a competitive advantage. It is in TvL’s combined set of ethical and moral criteria that appeals to its followers and demonstrates the integrity and character of leaders who adopt its principles and values (Caldwell & Anderson, 2019).

In addressing the significant contribution of TvL, we offer two more propositions that address the sustainability of leadership.

P₇: Organizations with leaders who adopt Transformative Leadership principles are more sustainable than organizations with leaders who do not adopt Transformative Leadership principles.

P8: Leaders that adopt all of the ethical elements of Transformative Leadership are perceived as more trustworthy than leaders who do not adopt all of its elements.

3. Contributions of the Paper

As leaders and organizations reflect on how they can create sustainable and thriving cultures, understanding the ethical obligations that they owe their employees can exponentially improve their ability to build employee trust and commitment. In this review of SL, this paper makes four contributions to both practitioners and to the scholars who study organizational leadership.

- 1) *We explain the nature of Sustainability Leadership and its importance in helping organizations to be successful* (Hasan, 2022). Defining SL and its accompanying characteristics enables individuals and organizations to recognize the importance of honoring duties owed to employees in the quest for sustainability (DePree, 2004).
- 2) *We emphasize the importance of ethical leadership as a factor essential for achieving organizational sustainability* (Ciulla, 2014). As leaders consider the broad range of ethical duties owed to stakeholders, they have a greater appreciation for examining the underlying principles and values implicit in their relationships with others (Burns, 2010).
- 3) *We explain how ethical leadership perspectives contribute to greater organizational sustainability and offer eight propositions for testing those contributions* (Caldwell, 2012). Each of the transformative leadership perspectives that we describe can enable leaders and organizations to achieve productive change and enable organizations to accomplish their objectives more fully (Bennis & Nanus, 2007).
- 4) *We provide useful insights about the nature of leadership and organizational sustainability that can generate thoughtful dialogue about leadership and organizational effectiveness* (Kouzes & Posner, 2023). At a time when organizations and their leaders appear to be struggling to retain the commitment, followership, and trust of employees to be sustainable, it behooves leaders and those who study organizations to engage in this dialogue (Clifton & Harter, 2019).

4. Conclusion

It is folly to suggest that solving the problems of the modern organization is a simple task. Albert Einstein is famous for reminding the world that the significant problems that we currently face cannot be resolved at the same level that we were at when we created those problems. Such is the case with the issues of sustainability and SL. We urge leaders and organizations to reflect upon the degree to which they honor the underlying ethical duties owed to their employees and encourage them to adopt the principles and values of ethical leadership as they strive to become sustainable organizations.

The unfortunate fact that many of today's leaders are not viewed as trustworthy is a well-established reality (Clifton & Harter, 2019). Integrity and honesty have consistently been identified as the primary source of leader credibility, yet the growing distrust in today's leaders suggests that unethical leadership is a major cause of that loss in credibility (Kouzes & Posner, 2023). Although SL would seem to be a major priority for regaining organizational trust and employee followership, the growing evidence suggests that leaders are failing to understand their responsibilities as ethical leaders (Hasan, 2022).

References

- Anderson, V., Ndalamba, K. K., & Caldwell, C. (2017). Social Responsibility in a Troubled World: A Virtuous Perspective. *International Journal of Public Leadership*, 13(2), 98-115. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJPL-10-2016-0034>
- Antonakis, J. (2017). Transformational and Charismatic Leadership. In J. Antonakis & D. V. Day (Eds.), *The Nature of Leadership* (3rd ed., pp. 256-288). Oakland, CA: SAGE Publications. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781506395029>
- Bass, B. M., & Riggio, R. E. (2006). *Transformational Leadership: A Comprehensive Review of Theory and Research* (2nd ed.). NY: Psychology Press. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781410617095>
- Bennis, W. G., & Nanus, B., (2007). *Leaders - Strategies for Taking Charge* (2nd ed.) New York: Harper.
- Beck, R. J., & Harter, J. (2023). *Why Great Managers Are So Rare*. Gallup Press, Found online on September 24, 2023 at Why Great Managers Are So Rare (gallup.com),
- Bendell, J., & Little, R. (2015). Seeking sustainability leadership. *Journal of Corporate Citizenship*, (60), 13-26. <https://doi.org/10.9774/GLEAF.4700.2015.de.00004>

- Brown, M. E., & Treviño, L. K. (2006). Ethical leadership: A Review and Future Directions. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 17(6), 595-616. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2006.10.004>
- Buber, M., (2008). *I and Thou*. New York: Hesperides Press.
- Burns, J. M., (2010). *Leadership*. New York: Harper Perennial.
- Caldwell, C., (2012). *Moral Leadership: A Transformative Model for Tomorrow's Leaders*. New York: Business Expert Press. <https://doi.org/10.4128/9781606492543>
- Caldwell, C., & Anderson, V. (2019a). Transformative Leadership - Practical Applications and Implications for Trust. In C. Caldwell & V. Anderson (Eds.). *Trust, Trustworthiness, and Stewardship: A Transformative Approach*. Hauppauge. New York: NOVA Publishing.
- Caldwell, C., & Anderson, V. (2019b). Love and Transformative Leadership. In C. Caldwell & V. Anderson, *Leading with Love* (Chapter 3). Hauppauge, NY: NOVA Science Publishers.
- Caldwell, C., Dixon, R. D., Floyd, L., Chaudoin, J., Post, J., & Cheokas, G. (2012). Transformative Leadership: Achieving Unparalleled Excellence. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 109(2), 175-187. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-011-1116-2>
- Caldwell, C., & Hasan, Z. (2016). Covenantal Leadership and the Psychological Contract: Moral Insights for the Modern Leader. *Journal of Management Development*, 35(10), 302-1312. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JMD-02-2016-0027>
- Caldwell, C., Hayes, L., & Long, D., (2010). Leadership, Trustworthiness, and Ethical Stewardship. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 96(4), 497-512. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-010-0489-y>
- Caldwell, C., Ichiho, R., & Anderson, V. (2017). Understanding Level 5 Leaders -- The Ethical Perspective of Leadership Humility. *Journal of Management Development*, 36(5), 724-732. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JMD-09-2016-0184>
- Çelikdemir, D. Z. (2022). Servant Leadership and Its Relation to Ethics and Morality. In S. K. Dhiman & G. E. Roberts, (Eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Servant Leadership* (pp.373-396). New York: Springer Nature. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-69802-7_22-1
- Chen, B. (2012). Moral and Ethical Foundations for Sustainability: A Multi-disciplinary Approach. *Journal of Global Citizenship & Equity Education*, 2(2), 1-20.
- Ciulla, J. B. (2014). *Ethics: The Heart of Leadership* (3rd ed.). Goleta, CA: Praeger Publishing.
- Clifton, J., & Harter, J. (2019). *It's the Manager*. Omaha, NE: Gallup Press.
- Collins, J. (2001). *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap . . . And Others Don't*. New York: HarperCollins.
- Conger, J. (2015). Charismatic Leadership. *Wiley Encyclopedia of Management*, 1-2. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118785317.weom110122>
- Conger, J. A., Kanungo, R. N., & Menon, S. T. (2000). Charismatic leadership and follower effects. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 21(7), 747-767. [https://doi.org/10.1002/1099-1379\(200011\)21:7<747::AID-JOB46>3.0.CO;2-J](https://doi.org/10.1002/1099-1379(200011)21:7<747::AID-JOB46>3.0.CO;2-J)
- Covey, S. R. (1992). *Principle-Centered Leadership*. New York: Fireside Press.
- Covey, S. R. (2006). Servant-leadership and Community Leadership in the 21st Century. *The International Journal of Servant-Leadership*, 2(1), 103-109. <https://doi.org/10.33972/ijsl.291>
- Covey, S. R., (2005). *The 8th Habit: From Effectiveness to Greatness*. New York: Free Press.
- Damron, S. (2018). *Workplace Trust: 58% of People Trust Strangers More Than Their Own Boss*. OneModel.com, October 12, 2018 and found online on September 24, 2023 at Workplace Trust - 58% of People Trust Strangers More than Their Own Boss (onemodel.co).
- DePree, M. (2004). *Leadership is an Art*. New York: Crown Publishing.
- Elkington, R., & Upward, A. (2016). Leadership as Enabling Function for Flourishing by Design. *Journal of Global Responsibility*, 7(1), 26-144. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JGR-01-2016-0002>

- Ferdig, M. A. (2007). "Sustainability Leadership: Co-creating a Sustainable Future. *Journal of Change Management*, 7(1), 25-35. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14697010701233809>
- Fischer, K. J., & Schultz, J. (2017). Covenant and Empowerment: Integrative Themes for Organizational Leadership and Behavior. *Organizational Development Journal*, 35(3), 43-67.
- Friedman, T. L. (2009). *Hot, flat, and crowded 2.0: Why we need a green revolution--and how it can renew America*. New York: Picador.
- Follett, M. P., (2013). *Dynamic Administration: The Collected Papers of Mary Parker Follett*. Eastford, CT: Martino Fine Books.
- Galpin, T., & Lee Whittington, J. (2012). Sustainability Leadership: From Strategy to Results. *Journal of Business Strategy*, 33(4), 40-48. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02756661211242690>
- Gilligan, C. (2016). *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*. Boston, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Givens, R. J. (2008). Transformational leadership: The impact on organizational and personal outcomes. *Emerging leadership journeys*, 1(1), 4-24.
- Greenleaf, R. K. (2002). *Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness* (25th Anniversary Edition). Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press.
- Hasan, Z. (2022). *Leading Organizational Sustainability: Behaviors and alues to Master*. Las Vegas, NV: Pensiero Press.
- Hayibor, S., Agle, B., Sears, G., Sonnenfeld, J., & Ward, A. (2011). Value Congruence and Charismatic Leadership in CEO-Top Manager Relationships: An Empirical Investigation. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 102(2), 237-254. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-011-0808-y>
- Henriques, A., & Richardson, J. (Eds.). (2013). *The Triple Bottom Line: Does it All Add Up?* London, UK: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781849773348>
- Hosmer, L. T. (2010). *The Ethics of Management* (7th ed.). Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill Education.
- Jamali, D. R., & Caldwell, C. (2023). Leadership Commitment and the Failure of Trust - What Companies Must Do to Thrive. *Business and Management Research*. <https://doi.org/10.5430/bmr.v12n3p13>
- Kouzes, J. M., & Posner, B. Z. (2023). *The Leadership Challenge: How to Make Extraordinary Things Happen in Organizations*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Lewis, C. S. (2001). *Mere Christianity*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing.
- Ludema, J. D., & Cox, C. K. (2007). Leadership for World Benefit: New Horizons for Research and Practice. In S. K. Piderit, R.E. Fry, & D. L. Cooperrider (Eds.), *Handbook of Transformative Cooperation: New Designs and Dynamics* (pp. 333-373). Palo Alto, CA: Stanford Business Books. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781503625969-015>
- Lussier, R. N., & Achua, C. F. (2009). *Leadership: Theory, Application, and Skill Development* (4th ed.). Mason, OH: South-Western.
- McCann, J., & Sweet, M. (2014). The Perceptions of Ethical and Sustainable Leadership. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 21(3), 373-383. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-013-1704-4>
- Penn, A. (2019). *Jim Collins Level 5 Leadership: The Ultimate Guide*. Shortform.com, December 19, 2019, and found online on September 23, 2023 at <https://www.shortform.com/blog/jim-collins-level-5-leadership/>.
- Opoku, A., Ahmed, V., & Cruickshank, H. (2015). Leadership Style of Sustainability Professionals in the UK Construction Industry. *Built Environment Project and Asset Management*, 5(2), 184-201. <https://doi.org/10.1108/BEPAM-12-2013-0075>
- Pava, M. (2015). *Leading with Meaning: Using Covenantal Leadership to Build a Better Organization*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Pava, M. L. (2001). The Many Paths to Covenantal Leadership: Traditional Resources for Contemporary Business. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 29, 85-93. <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1006499010565>
- Peterlin, J., Pearse, N. J., & Dimovski, V. (2015). Strategic Decision making for Organizational Sustainability: The Implications of Servant Leadership and Sustainable Leadership Approaches. *Economic and Business Review for Central and South - Eastern Europe*, 17(3), 73-290. <https://doi.org/10.15458/85451.4>

- Purdue Global. (2020). *What is Servant Leadership?* PurdueGlobal.edu, April 17, 2020 and found online on September 23, 2023 at <https://www.purdueglobal.edu/blog/business/what-is-servant-leadership/>,
- Sendjaya, S. (2005). Morality and leadership: Examining the ethics of transformational leadership. *Journal of Academic Ethics*, 3, 75-86. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10805-005-0868-7>
- Singh, J. (2008). Impostors masquerading as leaders: can the contagion be contained?. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 82, 733-745. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-007-9588-9>
- Stouten, J., Van Dijke, M., & De Cremer, D. (2012). Ethical Leadership: An Overview and Future Perspective. *Journal of Personnel Psychology*, 11(1), 1-6. <https://doi.org/10.1027/1866-5888/a000059>
- Opoku, A., Ahmed, V., & Cruickshank, H. (2015). Leadership Style of Sustainability Professionals in the UK Construction Industry. *Built Environment Project and Asset Management*, 5(2), 184-201. <https://doi.org/10.1108/BEPAM-12-2013-0075>
- Wiley, J., & Kowske, B. (2011). *Respect: Delivering Results by Giving Employees What they Really Want*. New York: Pfeiffer Publishing.
- Winsemius, P., & Guntram, U. (2013). *A Thousand Shades of Green: Sustainable Strategies for Competitive Advantage*. London, UK: Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781849770330>

Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).