

Servant Leadership Style: A Key to Effective Good Governance and Sustainable Public Service Delivery in Africa

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How to cite this paper: Pillay, S. S., & Kikasu, E. T. (2024). Servant Leadership Style: A Key to Effective Good Governance and Sustainable Public Service Delivery in Africa. *Open Journal of Political Science*, 14, 52-80.

<https://doi.org/10.4236/ojps.2024.141004>

Received: November 15, 2023

Accepted: January 19, 2024

Published: January 22, 2024

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Abstract

This paper reviewed and examined works of literature on leaderships styles, with a focus on servant leadership that reflects to be a key approach to enforcing and executing effective public administration, good governance, achievable policies, and sustainable public service delivery in Africa. Ethical leadership, service orientation, sustainable development, accountability, transparency, prioritizing the needs and well-being of others, etc., are among several key components of the main frame of servant leadership that can engender effective good governance and sustainable public service delivery in Africa. It's significant to recognise that Africa still remains poor and fragile in terms of strengthening public administration, good governance, implementing public policies and ensuring sustainable public service delivery. It's also unimaginable to observe the best practice of servant leadership style in a poor and fragile public administration and public policy environment. Africa is a diverse continent with a wide range of cultures, traditions, and social norms, so the effectiveness of servant leadership can vary from one country to another. While Servant leadership can be mirrored as a valuable approach for effective good governance and sustainable public service delivery in developed countries, most African countries are facing several challenges when endeavouring to practice or implement servant leadership style. Until today, many African citizens are experiencing a lifetime history of authoritarian leadership style, where leaders are exerting a strong control and authority over their inhabitants. Unfortunately, servant leadership, with its emphasis on collaboration and empowerment of citizens, most often clashes with authoritarian and traditional norms, making it difficult for emerging democratic leaders to adopt and practice efficiently this approach. As the authoritarian leadership and traditions influence strongly political and socio-economic

conomic governance in Africa, emerging democratic leaders with limited resources including financial and human resources are facing challenges to implement servant leadership style and to address the basic needs of their followers. This paper suggests an approach or tools that could reinforce the confidence of emerging democratic leaders to workout efficiently and effectively servant leadership style in the continent.

Keywords

Servant Leadership Style, Public Administration, Public Policy, Good Governance, and Sustainable Public Service Delivery

1. Introduction

Servant leadership is a philosophy that emphasizes serving and prioritizing the needs of citizens, rather than the leader's own interests (Kenton, 2023). The challenges facing emerging democratic leaders in Africa are many. The route to ascending into power and implementing servant leadership style that addresses the delivery of basic needs to their followers, such as access to education, health-care, and economic opportunities, is barricaded by all manner of political repression by most governing parties in the continent. Therefore, it becomes quite unreasonable for servant leadership style to thrive in Africa. Kenton (2023) and Stauffer and Maxwell (2020) asserted that the goal of servant leadership is to achieve authority over power through interactions with people, whether in an administrative or collaboration capacity. The aspirants of servant leadership style are advocate of decentralized administrative structure. This type of leadership involves leaders who interact with citizens in political or administrative decisions making. Due to their personal relationship with citizens, these leaders are better able to decide how to keep people supporting good governance and acknowledge efforts for efficient public service delivery.

In countries where servant leadership philosophy is governing political and socio-economic events, significant impacts are observed in various ways, particularly in the realms of ethical decision-making, business, education, and social change (Meuser & Smallfield, 2023). Servant leaders typically emphasize ethical behaviour and values. Aspirants of servant leadership style are committed to lead by considering ethical decision-making, which can have a ripple effect throughout the continent, and promote a culture of integrity. It is imaginable that a focus on the growth and development on all spheres of life, including political and socio-economic domains, can achieve better administrative performance, when a leadership style governing people is able to meet the basic needs. It can be predicted that the usage of servant leadership style in the continent can lead to good governance and improve public service efficiency and innovation (Meuser & Smallfield, 2023). Different attributes associated with leadership styles practiced in the continent and linked to political and socio-economic con-

sequences are examined in this paper. It also examines the African leadership perspective, the effects of culture on African leadership and an approach to promoting servant leadership style as a key factor to public administration and public policy best practice in the continent. Stimulating and enforcing servant leadership style in the continent could allow emerging democratic leaders to implement efficient administrative change and administer a better public service delivery for African citizens.

2. Background of Leadership Styles in Africa

According to [Stauffer and Maxwell \(2020\)](#), servant leadership is a leadership style that prioritizes the needs and well-being of others. In the context of governance and public service delivery, servant leadership involves leaders who are dedicated to serving the interests of the people and putting their needs first. The rationale for carrying out servant leadership studies in the African context is to understand the effectiveness of leadership philosophy that focuses on serving the needs of African citizens and helping them develop and perform to their full potential. Studying servant leadership helps to determine its impact on the success of public administration, policy best practice, good governance, and quality public service delivery. In addition, servant leadership emphasizes the empowerment and development of individuals ([Gumede, 2023](#)). Studies in this area allow to understand the extent to which servant leadership practices can contribute to citizens engagement and motivation. Therefore, implementing effective leadership approaches could enhance citizens satisfaction, commitment, and productivity. It can also create a positive and effective leadership practices, creating healthier and more engaging administrative environments, and ultimately improving institutional outcomes in real-world leadership contexts ([Kenton, 2023](#)).

In many developed countries, servant leadership principles and values have been applied to support various social change and community development initiatives. It has made significant inroads in various socio-economic sectors, including the field of health and education on how medical practitioners, educators and administrators interact with people, creating more positive and conducive environments ([Ellahi et al., 2022](#)). In Africa there is a wide variety of leadership philosophies that are shaped by a complex web of socio-political, cultural, and historical influences. Africa is a large and diverse continent with 54 nations, each with distinct leadership traditions and practices. However, significant common patterns and historical influences can be found in African leadership styles today. Therefore, it's critical to recognize that Africa is not a homogenous region and that different nations' leadership philosophies might differ substantially from one another. Leadership philosophies vary greatly across the continent due to elements including historical occurrences, cultural variety, and the level of economic development, which play crucial roles in shaping leadership styles across the continent. Leadership philosophies may also change throughout time in reaction to shifting political, social, and economic forces. Unfortunately, de-

spite the wave of servant or democratic leadership style in Africa, until today many countries are still experiencing a lifetime history of authoritarian leadership style, where leaders are exerting a strong control and authority over their citizens (Sackey, 2021).

Servant leadership, with its emphasis on collaboration and empowerment of citizens, most often clashes with authoritarian and traditional norms, making it difficult for emerging democratic leaders to adopt and practice efficiently this approach, and ensure the effectiveness of good governance and sustainable public service delivery. The challenges facing emerging democratic leaders in Africa are many. According to Lituchy et al. (2017), the combination of past linkages, traditions, and indigenous habits are among the factors, which have created unique leadership styles that are distinctly African. As a result, Africa remain affected by challenges obstructing its ability to overcome its socio-economic and administrative problems, develop its full potential, and defend itself from environmental and human exploitation due to the lack of strong and effective leadership. Accordingly, it is critical to understand that leadership challenges have a deep root in Africa. They are firmly ingrained in what has been gained over many generations. They describe the past generations of where we are coming from, who we are as people and, more crucially, how we cooperate, communicate, and interact one another. Therefore, considering the foundations and effects of leadership in Africa today is more crucial than ever since diversity drives innovation and creativity, and as growth and development depend not only on transactions and people mobility, but most importantly on leadership philosophy guiding public administration and public policy operations.

3. Materials and Methods

Before discussing the materials and methods, it seems crucial to meaningfully understand that the implementation of servant leadership in Africa could vary across the continent and relies on several factors including cultural, social, and economic contexts. This paper discusses servant leadership as a modern political leadership style. Despite the presence of traditional leadership models, the implementation of servant leadership in modern African politics is mixed (Msila, 2014). While some African leaders have embraced servant leadership principles and actively work towards the betterment of their societies, others have been criticized for neglecting their responsibilities and putting personal agendas first (Modise & Raga, 2023). Many African societies have long embraced the principles of servant leadership, where leaders are expected to prioritize the needs and well-being of their communities. Unfortunately, several countries in the continent are still facing numerous socio-economic challenges such as poverty, corruption, and inequality (Gumede, 2023). These challenges often make it difficult for servant leaders to implement their vision effectively and serve the needs of their communities. This paper increasingly highlights on inspiring servant leadership values and principles in Africa's public administration systems. Consequently, the Af-

frican Union (AU) will have to play a significant role in promoting servant leadership across the continent, demonstrates the importance of good governance, transparency, and accountability among African leaders and provides platforms for African leaders to share best practices and learn from each other.

3.1. Methods

An extensive literature review assisted to structure, describe, and understand servant leadership style as a key to effective public administration, public policies best practice, good governance, and sustainable public service delivery in Africa. Literature reviewed was found critical in comparing the role and characteristics of servant leadership style in the New Public Service (NPS) paradigm from the New Public Management (NPM) theory. By critically examining literature in this field and by analysing theories developed on different types of leadership styles, it was considered by most studies that servant leadership is close to the future of effective public administration, effective public policies, and efficient public service operations (Awasthi & Walumbwa, 2023; Hai & Van, 2021; Sawan et al., 2021; Sullivan, 2019). This implies that whether in Africa or in any other developing continent, servant leadership in government could uphold democratic citizenship norms and acknowledge the significance of community and civic participation. Since they are the closest stewards of their communities, literature reviewed highlighted that governments are expected to establish greater lines of contact and maintain a laser-like focus on promoting assertive citizenry. While both public administration and servant leadership place a high emphasis on service, ethical administration, collaboration, transparency, accountability, and a citizen-centered approach; most literature demonstrated that they are closely related. Thus, sustainable public service delivery is closely related to the servant leadership approach. In order to achieve sustainable results in the provision of public services, servant leadership encourages a culture of service, ethical decision-making, stakeholder participation, and a long-term focus.

3.2. Materials

3.2.1. Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

The servant leadership style is currently a concept that is becoming more and more popular in leadership studies. It is viewed as a holistic approach to work, a sense of community, and power sharing in leadership decision-making (Gomez, 2022). Theoretically, servant leadership is considered in the framework of New Public Management (NPM) and New Public Service (NPS) paradigm, according to Awasthi and Walumbwa (2023). They emphasised that servant leadership is closer to the future of public service, implying that servant leadership in government upholds democratic citizenship norms and acknowledges the significance of community and civic participation. Therefore, the New Public Service-concept is supported by the servant leadership model. **Table 1** draws the theoretical comparison between NPM and NPS and the role they play in line with public policy and public service delivery.

Table 1. Comparison between NPM and NPS Concepts in terms of Public service delivery and public policy implementation.

New Public Management (NPM)

- NPM involves the public choice theory, which is primarily predicated on the idea that citizens and public agencies have a relationship like to that of a market and customers, with the former being self-interested persons engaged in transactions characteristic of the market.
- Democratic principles like fairness, representation, involvement, and justice are all weakened by NPM. Some academics have even gone so far as to claim that NPM is extinct since some of its models and ideologies resulted in disastrous policy decisions and that a new public service-oriented philosophy is required.
- Government openness and accountability are in crisis as a result of NPM reforms.
- The public sector has faced harsh criticism for its underwhelming performance through NPM paradigm. Losing the fundamental idea that the purpose of government is to serve the people also poses a risk. Significant changes have emerged in the way governments should operate in the modern era to address the technological, social, and economic environmental concerns that are arising in the geopolitical environment.
- etc.

New Public Service (NPS)

- NPS is all about placing the needs and interests of the public at the center of public administration.
- The three core public service traditions—discourse theory, organizational humanism, and community and civil society models—form the basis of NPS. Though there is a wider role for individuals in the public service process, the notion of democratic citizenship considers people as self-interested consumers. Being a good citizen entails playing a part in the community and fostering a spirit of inclusion and service to the public interest.
- The principles of the New Public Service (NPS) paradigm are ingrained in servant leadership. By promoting the public service values of equity, democracy, accountability, and citizen participation, NPS places a strong emphasis on empowering and serving citizens. Similarly, the government's emphasis on "Honourable Bureaucrat" and "Responsible Administrator" shares traits with servant leadership, including exhibiting ethical behaviour, showing compassion, empathy, and fostering community trust.
- Government officials in NPS must be impartial, responsive, fair, wise, and free from corruption.

The development and empowerment of their staff members to reach their full potential is the primary goal of servant leaders. Servant leaders focus on four key areas that are applicable to government organizations: serving multiple stakeholders outside the organization, such as the community and society, focusing on service orientation in all actions, and consistently exhibiting ethical behaviour. They also rely on one-on-one communication strategies to build strong, long-lasting relationships with employees and the community.

- With the complicated world of unforeseen administrative and operational issues, as well as the ongoing and growing demand for resources, government leaders require new ethical leadership. Additionally, the introduction of IT-enabled services is raising the need for an accountable and transparent government. Workers/people under the direction of servant leaders are involved as complete persons—heart, mind, and soul—rather than just as performance instruments to achieve organisational objectives.
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Continued

- The necessity for servant leadership in government organizations is apparent since it is a critical leadership strategy. Community-focused leadership styles are necessary for government entities. Serving as a servant leader offers a solid basis for meeting community needs. Leaders in government are guardians of the principles of accountability and governance. They must defend people's (workers') rights and serve as role models for the department heads. As a result, they must comprehend the regional arrangements of administrative thought, community dynamics, and political reasoning. Government administrators may find that servant leaders provide a compelling example since they treat their staff members with a nurturing style that is awakening, engaging, and developing.
- Servant leaders support the democratic narrative of the common good while also exhibiting moral character and bravery. Therefore, we contend that the following seven aspects of servant leadership are essential in this regard: prioritizing subordinates, assisting them in developing and succeeding, empowering, mending hurt feelings, adding value to the community, acting morally, and possessing conceptual talents.
- Beyond just being a voter or a customer, people must play a more active part in their communities according to the new public service delivery models. Since they are the closest stewards of their communities, governments must establish greater lines of contact and maintain a laser-like focus on promoting assertive citizenry. By elevating citizens' engagement in service delivery, the role of servant leaders in doing good for society and the larger community highlights the pluralistic model of public service. In that regard, as citizens have grown to be collaborators and creators of public services, leadership positions in government must quickly change.

Source: Adapted from [Awasthi and Walumbwa \(2023\)](#).

Table 1 point towards that a servant leader, according to [Awasthi and Walumbwa \(2023\)](#) is motivated by the fundamental principles of serving and advancing the community in order to have a long-lasting effect on society as a whole. Servant Leaders also have self-awareness. In order to make a significant and long-lasting difference in the local community and society, servant leaders concentrate on the best ways to include, empower, and enable a variety of stakeholders. [Hai and Van \(2021\)](#) asserted that the concept "leadership style" was not publicly used until 1970. The ancient monarchy gave rise to the servant leadership approach as it was widely acknowledged that leadership should serve the people and the nation. [Sawan et al. \(2021\)](#), argued that [Greenleaf \(1977\)](#), [Yukl \(2013\)](#) were the first to put forward the concept of servant leadership. They defined servant leadership as a style of administration in which the needs of people or followers are given priority. Therefore, servant leadership focuses on the responsibility of leaders to serve their followers, prioritizing their welfare, advancement, and progress. Its congruence with the ideals and concepts of public service, ethical resource management, and successful governance makes it frequently linked to the field of public administration. Therefore, the concept servant leadership appears to have an interaction with good governance/public administration and sustainable public service delivery. This paper offers a description of the nexus between servant leadership style and public administration, public policy, and sustainable public service delivery.

3.2.2. Servant Leadership Style and Public Administration

According to [Awasthi and Walumbwa \(2023\)](#), since both public administration and servant leadership place a high emphasis on service, ethical administration, collaboration, transparency, accountability, and a citizen-centered approach, they are closely related. By implementing servant leadership principles in the public sector, government agencies can operate more effectively and ethically and legally, which can improve the community's general well-being. **Table 2** displays the nexus between Servant leadership and public administration.

Table 2 implies that serving and offering effective and efficient public service delivery are key aspects of the role servant leadership plays while assuming public administration responsibilities. **Table 2** also suggests that for the long-term wellbeing of individuals, leaders have the primary duty to assist followers in accomplishing shared objectives by promoting common growth, empowerment, and constant collective effort. [Sawan et al. \(2021\)](#) argued that prior to understanding how to lead, it is essential to have experience of serving. Different effects result from these two actions. Before becoming a servant, a person who becomes a leader will use his power to influence others to carry out his agenda. His tendency is to use others to further his own agenda. On the other hand, if someone chooses to serve before leading, he will provide his finest abilities as a gift for the benefit of others. Instead of its position, its service or sacrifice is what gives it power.

These are the people who have established the high standard for service, thus they are qualified to be leaders because deep desire to help and serve others breeds servant leadership. According to [Sullivan \(2019\)](#) cited by [Sawan et al. \(2021\)](#), serving-oriented leaders constantly strive to be the greatest while actively supporting or helping their subordinates in their personal and professional development. They concentrate on making the best use of every opportunity to support their subordinates for their growth and development. [Sawan et al. \(2021\)](#) identified ten attributes that make a leader who serves others. These include empathy, recuperating, persuasion, awareness, understanding, foresight, stewardship, dedication towards putting people's growth first, and community. In addition, goodwill assertion, emotional healing, wisdom, persuasive mapping, and organizational stewardship are the five characteristics of leadership service that seem to be philosophically and empirically separate. These traits are frequently utilised to measure servant leadership. [Hai and Van \(2021\)](#) listed the effects of servant leadership in public administration, which consist of the following:

- By providing effective public service delivery or by equipping people (team member) with the tools they need to be productive, the servant leader facilitates the government/organisation achieve its objectives.
- The servant leader succeeds in closing the disparity by helping followers develop a feeling of social identity, which has a very good psychological impact on the followers (individual who works).

Table 2. Nexus between servant leadership and public administration.

Servant leadership	Public Administration
Public Service Ethos: Serving others first is at the foundation of servant leadership, which is consistent with the basic ideals of public administration, which place a strong emphasis on serving the public interest and furthering the common good.	Public Service Ethos: Serving the community's needs and concerns is a common duty for public administrators, and servant leadership supports them in upholding a strong commitment to public service.
Ethical Leadership: Servant leadership places a strong emphasis on making moral decisions and managing resources responsibly.	Ethical Leadership: In public administration, upholding the public's confidence and guaranteeing accountability and transparency in governmental actions depend heavily on moral leadership.
Empowerment and Empathy: Encouraging their followers and showing compassion for their needs are the goals of servant leadership.	Empowerment and Empathy: More effectiveness and responsiveness in public administration might result from empowering employees and demonstrating empathy.
Collaboration and Teamwork: Collaboration, teamwork, and the inclusion of other viewpoints are all encouraged by servant leadership. Effective governance and public service delivery require collaboration and teamwork among different stakeholders. Servant leaders promote a culture of collaboration and inclusivity, where everyone's voice is heard, and contributions are valued.	Collaboration and Teamwork: Effective teamwork is crucial in public administration to effectively address complicated public concerns and deliver public services.
Accountability and Transparency: Servant leaders encourage transparency in their acts and hold themselves accountable to their followers. Servant leaders prioritize accountability and transparency in their actions and decision-making. They take responsibility for their actions and hold themselves and others accountable for the outcomes. They also ensure that information is shared openly and transparently to build trust among the public.	Accountability and Transparency: Accountability and transparency are essential concepts in the public sector that guarantee the prudent use of public funds and the holding of public servants accountable for their deeds.
Citizen-Centered Approach: Prioritizing the well-being and satisfaction of the general people is encouraged by servant leadership.	Citizen-Centered Approach: Addressing the needs and concerns of the public is the responsibility of public administration.
Long-term Sustainability: A focus on long-term sustainability and the training of future leaders is common in servant leadership. Servant leaders embrace the concept of sustainable development. They prioritize long-term solutions that consider social, environmental, and economic aspects to ensure the well-being of future generations.	Long-term Sustainability: This perspective is essential in public administration for developing programs and policies that benefit the community in a long-term beneficial way.
Service Orientation: Servant leaders have a strong service orientation towards the public. They genuinely care about the well-being of the citizens and prioritize their needs when making decisions. They are accessible, responsive, and strive to provide effective services that meet the needs of the people	

Source: adapted from Sullivan (2019), Sawan et al. (2021), and Awasthi and Walumbwa (2023).

- The effectiveness of public service delivery (or the effectiveness of individuals) is positively impacted by servant leadership, and the effectiveness of the public administration and public policy as a whole is positively impacted as well.

3.2.3. Servant Leadership Style and Public Policy

According to Coetzer et al. (2017), servant leaders have a strong service orienta-

tion towards the public. They genuinely care about the well-being of the citizens and prioritize their needs when making decisions. They are accessible, responsive, and strive to provide effective services that meet the needs of the people. The nexus between a particular leadership style and its effects on the formulation, execution, and results of public policies is examined in the intriguing and timely topic of the relationship between servant leadership style and public policy. Such as examined above, a leader who practices servant leadership prioritizes serving their followers and the community at large. Values like empathy, humility, service, and a concern for the welfare of others define this leadership style (Awasthi & Walumbwa, 2023). It's crucial to keep in mind that, although while servant leadership ideas might have a good impact on public policy, the success of this strategy may differ based on the particular political and cultural setting. According to OECD (2013), public policy is shaped by a variety of circumstances, including political beliefs, resource limitations, and outside pressures. As such, not all policies can be designed or executed using a servant leadership approach. Accordingly, the nexus between servant leadership and public policy is that it can result in more ethical, inclusive, and successful policy creation and execution, which will eventually improve public welfare and advance the common good (Coetzer et al., 2017). But it's crucial to understand that there are many different leadership philosophies that can affect public policy, and that the influence of servant leadership can change depending on the circumstances and environment. **Table 3** Illustrates common factors that foster the link between servant leadership style and public policy.

Considering **Table 3**, it be understood that there are a number of relationships between servant leadership and its tenets and the formulation, carrying out, and assessment of successful public policies. Therefore, the application of servant leadership principles can improve public policy's quality and influence by encouraging moral, human-centered, and compassionate methods of decision-making and leadership (Eva et al., 2019). These guidelines encourage cooperation, responsibility, and openness all of which are critical for creating and carrying out public policy. As an illustration, with focus on equity and social justice, servant leadership promotes a commitment to equity and social justice. This can lead to public policies that address disparities and promote fairness in areas such as healthcare, education, and economic opportunity (Meuser & Smallfield, 2023).

3.2.4. Servant Leadership Style and Sustainable Public Service Delivery

According to Ringson and Matshabaphala (2023), the interaction between a servant leadership approach and long-term public service delivery is a crucial topic for research and application in the field of public management and administration. Gomez (2022) asserted that a leader's fundamental duty as a servant to the followers and the community they serve is emphasized by the leadership concept known as "servant leadership." Comparatively, sustainable public service delivery describes public organizations' capacity to continuously offer the public high-

Table 3. Servant leadership and Public policy.

Servant leadership style	Public policy
Accountability and Transparency: Transparency and accountability for one's activities are expected of servant leaders.	Accountability and Transparency: Building trust between the government and its constituents can be facilitated by more accountable and transparent policy processes and implementation.
Empowerment of Public Servants: Public servants can be empowered by servant leadership if they are given the resources, direction, and assistance they need to perform their duties well. Servant leaders empower their followers and encourage them to take ownership of their work. This involves providing them with the necessary resources, skills, and opportunities to succeed and grow in their roles.	Empowerment of Public Servants: Consequently, this may result in public services that are more responsive and effective.
Ethical Decision-Making: A major focus of servant leadership is making moral decisions. It is expected of leaders to behave in the community's best interests.	Ethical Decision-Making: This may result in more moral policies that reflect the ideals of the society they are meant to serve.
Long-term Focus: Having a long-term outlook is common among servant leaders.	Long-term Focus: This can have an impact on the creation of sustainable policies that take into account the welfare of future generations rather than just short-term, politically motivated choices.
Measuring Outcomes: The goals of servant leaders are frequently those that benefit others.	Measuring Outcomes: This could result in a stronger focus on gauging how policies affect the welfare of communities and residents when it comes to public policy.
Stakeholder Engagement: Servant leaders put the needs of their stakeholders and followers first.	Stakeholder Engagement: When it comes to public policy, this implies that decision-makers can interact with a range of communities, people, and interest groups to learn about their issues and take their opinions into account. This may result in responsive and successful policy.
Inclusivity and Collaboration: Servant leaders are renowned for working together and being inclusive. They encourage cooperation and try to include all parties involved.	Inclusivity and Collaboration: This strategy can result in more inclusive and participatory policy making procedures in the framework of public policy, guaranteeing that the needs and viewpoints of all citizens are taken into account.

Source: Adapter from Coetzer et al. (2017) and Awasthi & Walumbwa (2023).

quality services while considering long-term social, economic, and environmental effects. This implies that sustainable public service delivery is closely related to the servant leadership approach. In order to achieve sustainable results in the

provision of public services, it encourages a culture of service, ethical decision-making, stakeholder participation, and a long-term focus (Fobbe & Hilletoft, 2021). Servant leaders take into account the social and environmental effects of their activities and work to build public organizations that are more suited to meet the changing requirements of their communities (Hou et al., 2023). However, the factors linking servant leadership and public policy are similar to those linking servant leadership style and sustainable public service delivery. For example, Table 2 discussed factors like empowering people, followers, or employees; collaboration and teamwork; ethical decision-making; and stakeholder engagement. The understanding of relationship between servant leadership and public policy is well described in Table 3. In addition to these factors, the link between servant leadership style and sustainable public service delivery is illuminated in Table 4 below.

According to Shayan et al. (2022), in times of emergency or crisis, servant

Table 4. Servant leadership style and Sustainable public service delivery.

Servant leadership style	Sustainable public service delivery
Adaptability and Continuous Improvement: Delivery of sustainable public services necessitates flexibility and a dedication to ongoing development.	Adaptability and Continuous Improvement: It can take time for more sustainable practices to emerge since servant leaders are frequently more receptive to criticism and learning.
Long-Term Focus: Servant leaders usually perceive and evaluate things for a long time and don't focus only on the present moment and today.	Long-Term Focus: Making choices that give sustainability first priority when providing public services requires having a servant leadership mindset.
Resilience: Delivering public services in the face of difficulties like natural disasters, economic downturns, or social crises requires public organizations to be resilient, which can be fostered under servant leadership.	Resilience: Public organizations with greater resilience are better able to continue providing services under challenging circumstances.
Innovation: Innovation is a major factor in sustainability, and servant leaders foster it. Servant leaders are committed to continuous improvement and learning. They seek feedback and input from their followers and the public to identify areas for improvement and implement necessary changes.	Innovation: When public institutions embrace innovation, they can develop methods to deliver services that are both more environmentally friendly and efficient.
Fostering a Culture of Service: The practice of servant leadership encourages a service-oriented culture in government agencies. Those that choose this leadership style put the needs of their team members and the general public first.	Fostering a Culture of Service: By doing this, they foster an environment in the workplace where public employees are more likely to concentrate on providing services in an efficient and long-lasting manner.

Source: Adapted from Ringson & Matshabaphala (2023), Fobbe & Hilletoft (2021) and Hou et al. (2023).

leaders can offer guidance and stability. In order to handle difficult conditions and uphold their commitment to sustainable service delivery, public service organizations can benefit from their focus on meeting the needs of others. Therefore, **Table 4** displays the key role servant leadership could play in promoting sustainable public service delivery. It asserts that by putting the needs of the general public and the organization's employees first, servant leadership may be extremely effective in fostering sustainable public service delivery. The objectives of successful public service delivery and sustainability are well-aligned with this leadership style, which places a high value on helping others and supporting their personal and professional growth. In addition, the principles and objectives of sustainable public service delivery are in line with the people-centered leadership style that is encouraged by servant leadership (Hou et al., 2023). Moreover, servant leaders can assist public service organizations in making long-lasting, beneficial effects on their communities and stakeholders while upholding the level of quality and sustainability of their services by putting a high value on the well-being of both the general public and employees. Thus, the following section highlights about models of leadership styles in Africa and challenges obstructing the emergence of servant leadership in the continent.

3.3. Models of Leadership Styles in Africa and Challenges Obstructing the Emergence of Servant Leadership in the Continent

Although servant leadership is frequently lauded for its beneficial effects on public policy and sustainable public service, as well as for organisational culture and people satisfaction (employee satisfaction), it is not lacking its limitations (Kenton, 2023). In other words, while there are many benefits to servant leadership style, such as increased engagement, optimism, and long-term success, it might not be appropriate in all circumstances or organizational cultures. The main drawbacks to take into account when implementing this leadership style are the time and effort needed, the possibility of being taken advantage of, and the difficulties in handling a crisis (Kenton, 2023; Gomez, 2022). In addition, the fact that few leaders have experience with it; it may be difficult to change culture in order to adopt servant leadership style. Also, decisions may take time, which can be problematic in emergency situations; or workforces may be given more responsibility than they can handle. However, advantages to servant leadership include the fact that leaders gain the respect of their staff; staff members feel appreciated, and that management is considering their needs; a common vision exists; leaders take staff input into consideration, which is likely to enhance creative efforts; and individuals can grow professionally in a nurturing environment (Kenton, 2023; Gomez, 2022). Thus, circumstances and the followers' and leaders' desire to adopt this strategy determine how effective servant leadership is.

3.3.1. Evidence of Challenges Facing Emerging Democratic Leaders in Africa

Numerous African countries and leaders are experiencing historical and forced

political and socio-economic instabilities, and military takeovers on multiple occasions over the years, resulting in a range of repeated distresses. African regions such as ECOWAS, Central and Eastern African regions are undergoing successive situations of insecurities and socio-economic uncertainties. [Gumede \(2023\)](#) indicates that many African countries, including DR Congo, Mali, Burkina Faso, Central Republic, Niger, Gabon, etc., have been confronting critical and repeated situations of political and social unrest where servant leadership style seems to be absent in terms of public administration practice and public service delivery. In addition, [Gumede \(2023\)](#) emphasised that in many African nations, such as Gabon, Guinea, and most recently, Zimbabwe, multiparty elections are rigged by the ruling party or leader in order to retain power by a mix of persecution of opponents and patronage of supporters. These despotic, dishonest, and inept dictators and administrations that grip onto power in Africa frequently can only be overthrown whether by strong and sustainable actions from democratic leaders, military coups, large-scale upheavals akin to the Arab Spring, or the formation of multiparty coalitions by opposition parties in support of large-scale civil movements. According to [Amusan et al. \(2017\)](#), challenges facing emerging democratic leaders in Africa are many. [Figure 1](#) illustrates some evidence of challenges facing emerging democratic leaders in Africa.

[Figure 1](#) presents the challenges facing servant leadership or emerging democratic leaders in Africa. Components of figure 1 are described as follow:

- **Inadequate resources and capacity:** Limited resources and capacity can hinder the ability of emerging democratic leaders to respond effectively to complex challenges. Insufficient access to funding, technology, trained personnel, and infrastructure can significantly impede their efforts to implement democratic policies and address pressing issues.
- **Historical legacy:** Many African countries still grapple with the consequences of colonialism and historical legacies, including divisive borders, ethnic tensions, and unequal distribution of resources. Overcoming these legacies requires skilful leadership and a commitment to inclusive governance.
- **External interference:** Emerging democratic leaders in Africa often face external interference in their governance from foreign powers, with competing agendas. These interferences can undermine the sovereignty of emerging democracies and create challenges for leaders to implement their policies and priorities.
- **Weak institutional infrastructure:** Many emerging democracies in Africa lack strong institutions, including a robust judicial system, independent media, and a functioning civil service. This hinders the effective implementation of democratic processes and allows for corruption and abuse of power.
- **Political instability:** Africa has witnessed numerous instances of political instability, including coups, civil wars, and violent conflicts. These challenges undermine the consolidation of democratic systems and create hurdles for emerging leaders to govern effectively.

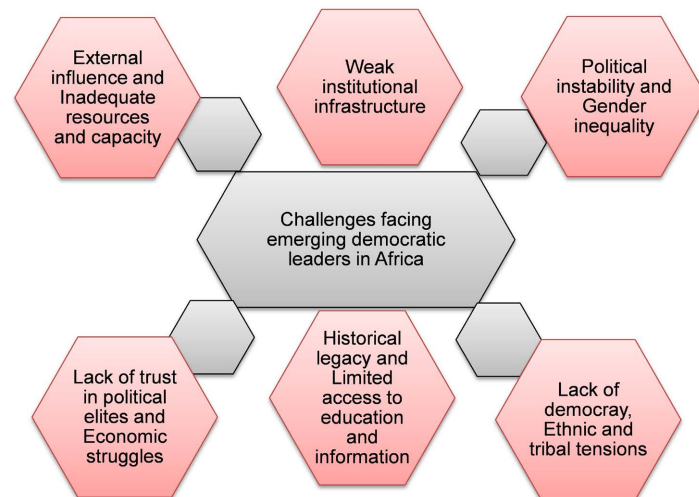


Figure 1. Evidence of challenges facing emerging democratic leaders in Africa. Source: Adapted from [Gumede \(2023\)](#) and [Amusan et al. \(2017\)](#).

- **Ethnic and tribal tensions:** Many African countries are diverse, with multiple ethnic and tribal groups. These divisions can fuel political unrest, as leaders may exploit these differences for their own gain. Managing such tensions and fostering inclusivity is a significant challenge for emerging democratic leaders.
- **Lack of trust in political elites:** Prevailing distrust among citizens towards political elites poses a significant challenge for emerging leaders. Often, these leaders must overcome scepticism and demonstrate their commitment to democratic principles and the welfare of their constituents.
- **Limited access to education and information:** Emerging democratic leaders face the challenge of promoting informed citizen participation when large portions of the population lack access to quality education and accurate information. This can impede efforts to build an engaged and politically informed citizenry.
- **Gender inequality:** Gender disparities remain a significant challenge across Africa. Emerging democracies must confront issues of gender discrimination and empower women to participate equally in politics and decision-making processes. Overcoming deeply ingrained biases requires sustained efforts from leaders to ensure gender parity.
- **Economic struggles:** Many African democracies face significant economic challenges, including high poverty rates, unemployment, and widespread corruption. Economic development is crucial for stability and progress, but leaders often face pressure to fulfil immediate needs, which can undermine long-term socio-economic growth.
- **Lack of democracy:** Examples of lack of democracy and military coups in Africa include countries like Mali disputed election outcome, Guinea's third presidential term dispute, Gabon presidential monarchy, etc.

According to [Gumede \(2023\)](#), to garner support from the public, particularly

the younger generation, the majority of military coup leaders have asserted that they seek to reinstate “democracy (establish servant/democratic leadership style)”, eradicate corruption, or establish security in areas where extremist movements have caused unrest. Some of the leaders of military coups in Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger have also said they wish to bring about “decolonization,” accusing the former colonial power of France of continuing to impact the economic suffering of multitude citizens. Furthermore, [Gumede \(2023\)](#) and [Amusan et al. \(2017\)](#) avowed that colonial powers are still violently and forcefully impacting models of leadership in the African continent and are causing costly political, climatical and socio-economic deterioration and devastation.

3.3.2. Models of Leadership Styles in Africa

Servant leadership is often contrasted with more traditional, authoritarian leadership styles. Comparative studies between servant leadership and other leadership styles can provide valuable insights into the unique benefits and drawbacks of each approach. This knowledge is essential for African leaders and can assist African countries and organizations in identifying the most suitable leadership style for their specific needs and goals ([Rizvi, 2022](#)). Earlier, it was highlighted that in Africa there is a wide variety of leadership philosophies that are shaped by a complex web of socio-political, cultural, and historical influences. It is therefore obvious that the authoritarian leadership and traditions have been influencing strongly political and socio-economic governance in Africa. [Sackey \(2021\)](#) acknowledged that while several countries in the continent are in transition from authoritarian leadership to democratic or servant leadership, African citizens are still experiencing a lifetime history of authoritarian leadership style where leaders are exerting a strong control and authority over their inhabitants. Situation like high levels of socioeconomic inequality; prevalent corruption and nepotism, which are undermining the principles of servant leadership; political instability, which make it difficult for leaders to focus on long-term servant-oriented goals; lack of formal leadership development programs or training that should promote servant leadership principles; and a wide range of cultures, languages, and traditions, which make it challenging to implementing a one-size-fits-all approach like servant leadership, etc., remain a huge challenge for African leaders to navigate and tailor their leadership style to different contexts ([Kenton, 2023](#)). These factors are causing many leaders and citizens to be resistant to change, especially if they are accustomed to traditional leadership styles. [Sackey \(2021\)](#) emphasised that Africa has been less affected by regime change, though, because the region has not seen the proper growth and development due to a lack of strong leadership. According to [van Wyk \(2007\)](#) and [Lituchy et al. \(2017\)](#), models of leadership styles that dominated post-independence in Africa are many. **Table 5** illustrates and describes some of these models of leadership.

Table 5 indicates models of leadership in Africa. It shows that a major obstacle to any social structure in Africa is political leadership. Accordingly, the region requires a regime that is development-focused and has the capacity to lead

Table 5. Models of leadership styles in Africa.

Models of leadership styles in Africa	Leadership styles Description
Traditional Leadership	Traditional leadership structures have a long history in many African civilizations. These are frequently based on inherited chiefs or leaders who are in charge due to their age, ancestry, or other important cultural characteristics. In their communities, these traditional leaders are important decision-makers and mediators of disputes.
Colonial Legacy	African colonial history has had a significant influence on leadership philosophies. African societies were subjected to the administrative structures and leadership models imposed by European colonial powers. This has occasionally resulted in a gulf between conventional leadership and Western-style administration, fuelling political unrest in certain countries.
Authoritarianism	Authoritarian dictators have ruled over several African nations for protracted periods of time, frequently using unscrupulous methods to maintain their position of authority. In certain African countries, this has led to a concentration of power and a reduction in democratic pluralism.
Democratic Leadership	Africa has seen an increasing tendency toward democratic leadership in the last few decades. Numerous nations have embraced multi-party systems and democratic constitutions. Regular elections are conducted, with the electorate selecting the leaders.
Ethnic and Tribal Influences	In Africa, leadership styles can be greatly influenced by one's ethnic and tribal affiliations. Leaders are frequently members of particular ethnic groups and may be thought to speak for that groups' interests. In certain nations, this can cause problems between tribes and ethnic groups.
Pan-Africanism	Pan-Africanism, which advocates for cooperation and unification among African countries, has affected diplomacy and leadership on the continent. Renowned figures such as Nelson Mandela, Julius Nyerere, and Kwame Nkrumah were instrumental in advancing Pan-Africanism.
Conflict Resolution	Numerous battles and civil wars have occurred in Africa. While some leaders have utilized force to hold onto power, others have taken a more conciliatory and consensus-based approach to conflict resolution. African leadership styles are also frequently characterized by their mediation and peacekeeping endeavours.
Youth Engagement	The population of the continent is young, and some leaders have realized how important it is to involve and empower the youth in leadership and decision-making.
Women in Leadership	In many African nations, women's participation in leadership positions has been rising, however slowly. By assuming leadership positions in civic society, industry, and politics, women have defied gender stereotypes.
Economic Leadership	In order to solve issues like poverty, unemployment, and economic inequality, leaders in Africa make choices about infrastructure development, resource management, and economic policy.

Continued**Military leadership
(Military coup)**

Over the years, military takeovers have repeatedly occurred in a number of African nations, producing a variety of leaderships. Illustrations of coup leadership in Africa include the following:

- Burkina Faso: President Michel Kafando's transitional administration was overthrown in 2015 following a military coup in Burkina Faso. After assuming power for a brief while, General Gilbert Diendéré came under pressure to resign. After that, elections were conducted, and Roch Marc Christian Kaboré was elected president.
- Sudan: Following months of demonstrations against his administration, the military removed Omar al-Bashir from office in April 2019. General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan headed the Transitional Military Council, which spearheaded the coup. After some time, a transitional government was formed, and in August 2019, the military and civilian factions came to an agreement on power-sharing.
- Mali: In recent years, there have been several military takeovers in Mali. Under the leadership of Colonel Assimi Goïta, a group of military officers ousted President Ibrahim Boubacar Keïta in August 2020. Later on, Goïta became the head of the National Committee for the Salvation of the People (CNSP). Goïta masterminded a second coup in May 2021, toppling the interim administration and seizing control for himself. Following that, he pledged to hold elections in 2022.
- Guinea: In a coup organized by Colonel Mamady Doumbouya, who proclaimed himself as the leader of the National Committee for Reconciliation and Development, Alpha Condé, the president of Guinea, was ousted in September 2021. Doumbouya promised to organize elections in the future and set up a transitional government.
- Niger: Bazoum of Niger was detained and removed from office on July 26, 2023. Bazoum was placed in a room within the presidential compound and warned that he will face treason charges by the military leaders who spearheaded the coup.
- Gabon: A coup d'état in Gabon on August 30, 2023, brought President Ali Bongo's tenure to an end. Only a few hours prior, he was proclaimed the victor of a non-competitive election, granting him a third term in government, and prolonging his family's reign of power beyond six decades. Gabon had been a stable autocracy during democratic and non-democratic revolutions across the continent, despite a failed coup attempt in 2019.

Source: Adapted from Hudson & Towriss (2023), Lituchy et al. (2017) and van Wyk (2007).

with strength and transformation (Hai & Van, 2021). In order to create institutions that will endure longer than a single leader, the region needs leaders with the ability to organize resources effectively and efficiently. A strong political will and a dedication to the goals of their constituents are prerequisites for these kinds of leaders. The challenge of generating social human resources of high

quality faces many African nations. However, in order to maintain social equity, fairness, and harmony between the requirements of various social groups, public sector officials must resolve disagreements. A shift in the mindset and way of thinking of public sector leadership is necessary to draw in and guarantee the engagement of citizens and social organizations in state administration, which is becoming more and more important (OECD, 2017). Consequently, to avoid situations of military coup, leaders in Africa must ensure that social groups have a larger role in decision-making, resource allocation, and public policy administration. In addition, people should be given true ownership rather than just being served. With a servant leadership model, more and more analysis from the public, media, and public leadership, and public sector officials are being held to higher standards of accountability and openness (Swart et al., 2022). In Africa, countries should strive to establish democratic societies, discipline, consensus, justice, civilization, citizen awareness, and law compliance in the face of the numerous obstacles and problems listed above. The servant leadership style is one of the essential leadership philosophies for fostering closeness, trust, and tolerance between supporters and leaders in order to attain equality, advancement, and true democracy in society (Awasthi & Walumbwa, 2023). Public sector leadership has many features, including strong responsibility due to increased control and stakeholder participation, high formalization, and high motivation to further the common good by concentrating more on it.

3.3.3. Models of Servant Leadership Supporting and Promoting Good Governance and Sustainable Public Service Delivery

A servant leadership approach is gaining popularity and can help leaders adapt to a variety of cultural contexts. Conversely, leadership style can be understood as an all-encompassing approach to leadership that draws followers in a variety of ways, including the development of positive relationships, ethics, feelings, and spiritual values (Eva et al., 2019). It also empowers followers to grow as individuals based on the guidance, compassion, and morality of the leader as expected (Steinmann et al., 2018). Becoming a servant leader is a gradual process that starts with the innate desire to serve others more than before. Depending on where they are, a leader must first serve society in order to be organically acknowledged for their leadership qualities. However, a serving leader can be modest and must constantly possess humility, vision, and an openness to new ideas so that everyone can see the benefits of their efforts (Sousa & van Dierendonck, 2015). According to Hai and Van (2021), studies conducted in the field of leadership styles affirmed servant leadership as a successful leadership style. Therefore, in the context of Africa, leaders need innovations in leadership styles, applying servant leadership theories to promote development of public organizations. In addition, Hai and Van (2021), accentuated that servant leadership creates a resonance of the values of belief and emphasizes efficiency through empowerment. Therefore, the following leadership models are suggested as vital in supporting and promoting good governance and sustainable public service de-

livery in the least developed and developing countries (including African countries):

- **A six-dimensional servant leadership model** (Melinda, et al., 2019), that is: voluntary dependence, authentic self, covenant relationship, responsible ethics, spiritual transcendence, influence conversion.
- **A seven-dimensional servant leadership model** (Awasthi & Walumbwa, 2023) that includes empowerment, helping subordinates grow and succeed, putting subordinates first early, emotional healing, conceptual skills, creating value for the community and ethical conduct.
- **The Van Dierendonck's eight-dimensional leadership model** (Van Dierendonck & Nuijten, 2010) includes empowerment, humility, support, authenticity, forgiveness, courage, responsibility, and management.
- **The Wang eleven-dimensional model** (Hai & Van, 2021) includes respect for employees, care for employees, helping subordinates develop and succeed thoughts of desire, ease of approach, willingness to sacrifice, carefree and honest, pioneering spirit, providing guidance to employees on work, social responsibility, and empowerment.

These models make understand that while traditional leadership is frequently associated with the accumulation of experience and the exercise of power in an individual as a leader, servant leadership places a greater emphasis on the development and well-being of people (staff members and associates) where they belong, as well as shared power in leadership decision-making. In addition to sharing authority and putting others' needs into perspective, servant leadership fosters unity among followers and the strongest possible commitment to achieving (the organization's) shared objectives. This leadership style promotes sustainable development in a way that servant leaders embrace the concept of sustainable development and prioritize long-term solutions that consider social, environmental, and economic aspects to ensure the well-being of future generations. Accordingly, the motive, style, and way of thinking of the leader should be at the center of the contemporary concept of servant leadership. This servant leadership style is very selfless from the fact that the drive of the leader is to be directed towards others and away from a sense of self-direction.

Furthermore, these servant leadership models stipulate that the leader acknowledges that followers are individuals with unique needs, constraints, and aspirations and that they should be inspired to grow into the best versions of themselves. Therefore, when decision-makers consider the interests of the community at large in addition to those of their own concern, they are exhibiting servant leadership style. However, models of servant leadership developed by different studies are necessary and useful to be considered when developing an African model of servant leadership. **Figure 2** proposes a potential framework of servant leadership that could support and promote good governance and sustainable public service delivery in Africa. In other word, emerging democratic leaders should conform themselves with this framework in order to advance

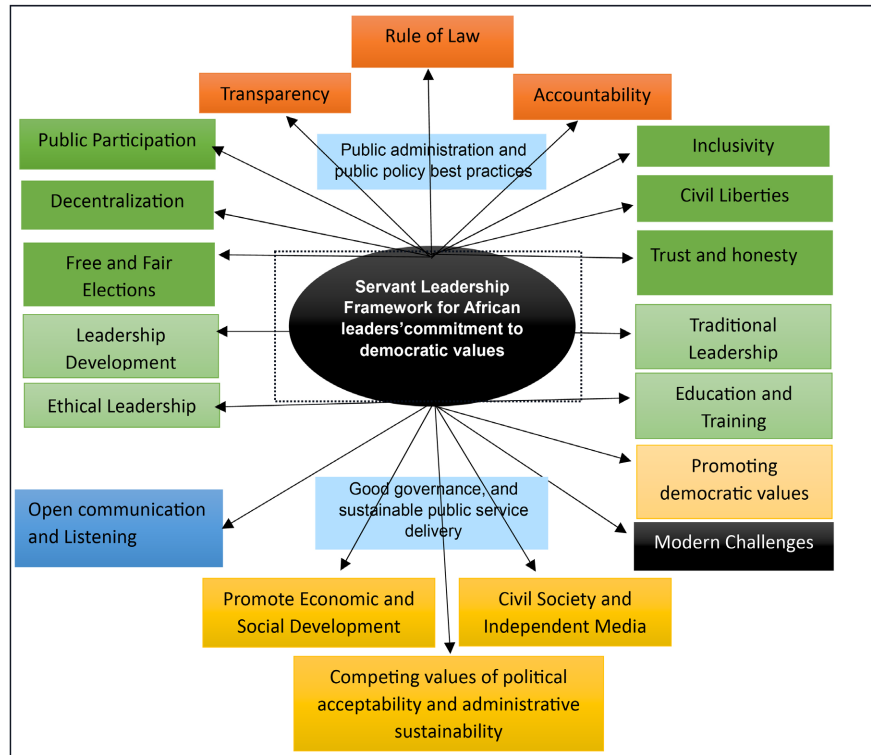


Figure 2. Potential framework of servant leadership style to support and promote good governance and sustainable public service delivery in Africa. Source: Adapted from [Awasthi and Walumbwa \(2023\)](#) and [Hai and Van \(2021\)](#).

African citizens social and economic interests. In addition, servant leaders in Africa should have a wide focus that extends beyond themselves, engage followers deeply, and have a sincere concern for the community's welfare. The next section proposes a framework that advocates for a commitment to democratic values and that encourages leaders to prioritize the needs and well-being of their constituents.

A feasible framework for servant leadership practices in Africa is shown in [Figure 2](#). With the support of democratic values, this framework seeks to promote an atmosphere where the use of servant leadership is not only welcomed but also expected to have an impact on people in positions of authority. African nations can strive toward more efficient and servant-oriented governance by holding leaders accountable to these ideals. It's critical to acknowledge that because Africa is a diverse continent with a vast range of traditions, practices, and social conventions, different African nations will respond differently to this framework's endorsement of servant leadership. As previously stated, servant leadership is a style of leadership that prioritizes meeting the needs of others and the welfare of followers ([Kenton, 2023](#)). Therefore, cultural, and environmental considerations will also affect the efficacy of any servant leadership paradigm in Africa. For the purpose of promoting good governance, best practices in policy, and sustainable public service delivery in Africa, it is therefore essential to com-

prehend the values or principles that characterize servant leadership, as shown in **Figure 2**. According to **Awasthi and Walumbwa (2023)** and **Hai and Van (2021)**, a reflection of **Figure 2**, the following factors will need to be taken into account for the servant leadership model to be effective in Africa:

- **Rule of Law:** Ensuring that leaders are held to the same legal standards as the general public is a result of a strong commitment to the rule of law. This promotes servant leadership and deters the misuse of authority.
- **Cultural Context:** African civilizations or culture frequently emphasize interpersonal relationships, community, and collectivism highly. Leaders are expected to be role models who are concerned about the welfare of their followers in many African nations. In line with these cultural ideals, servant leadership has the potential to effectively promote collaboration and trust.
- **Traditional Leadership:** Due to their responsibility for the well-being of their people, traditional leaders in many African countries have traditionally shown traits of a servant. These conventional values of leadership can be aligned with servant leadership.
- **Modern Challenges:** Africa is confronted with a multitude of contemporary difficulties, such as social injustice, economic inequality, and political instability. By fostering inclusivity and trust, servant leadership—which places a strong emphasis on empathy and helping others—can be a useful strategy for overcoming these obstacles.
- **Leadership Development:** The degree of awareness and training that African leaders have access to may also have an impact on how well servant leadership works there. Programs for developing leaders that support the concepts of servant leadership have the potential to increase their efficacy.
- **Contextual Adaptation:** Although the concepts of servant leadership are universal, effective leadership frequently necessitates contextual adaptation. African leaders may need to modify their servant leadership style to accommodate the particular difficulties and cultural mores of their areas.
- **Communication and Listening:** Proficient communicators and attentive listeners make up effective servant leaders. These abilities can be especially useful in Africa, where it's critical to comprehend the wants and worries of many populations. Openness and transparency in communication. To create a culture of trust and integrity, ethical leaders need to be outstanding communicators. Issues may remain unreported for a very long period in the absence of communication. This could incite animosity and mistrust within organization. Honest and transparent communication with all members of the organization is the primary goal of ethical leaders.
- **Ethical Leadership:** A dedication to the greater good and moral behavior are key components of servant leadership. Serving as a servant leader can provide an alternate strategy that upholds honesty and openness in Africa, a continent where corruption and unethical leadership have been problems in certain nations. Ethical leadership encourage leaders to uphold moral principles

such as integrity, honesty, and dedication to the common good. Leaders should follow a code of behaviour that prioritizes service over self-interest and set an example for others to follow. Ethical leadership is crucial for effective governance and public service delivery. It involves leaders who act with integrity, honesty, and transparency, and who uphold ethical standards in their decision-making.

- **Accountability:** It is important to hold leaders responsible for their choices and actions. This entails transparency and financial accountability in addition to accountability for how their policies affect the people they serve.
- **Transparency:** Building confidence in leadership can be facilitated by open and transparent government procedures. To make sure that decision-makers are acting in the best interests of the people, transparency in resource management, budgetary allocation, and decision-making is essential.
- **Inclusivity:** Encourage inclusion in governance by making sure that all opinions and viewpoints—especially those of underrepresented groups—are heard. Leaders are encouraged by inclusivity to take into account the variety of requirements of their constituents.
- **Free and Fair Elections:** Democratic elections provide the people the power to select their own leaders. Ensuring free and fair elections is crucial for advancing servant leadership because it enables leaders to be selected on the basis of their qualifications and dedication to the public good.
- **Civil Liberties:** To hold leaders responsible and make sure they are acting in the public good, it is crucial to defend civil rights including the freedom of expression, assembly, and the press.
- **Decentralization:** Since local governments and communities are more accustomed to dealing with the demands and difficulties of their community, giving them more authority can enable leaders at all levels to serve their residents more effectively.
- **Public Participation:** Promote public participation in the decision-making process. To make sure that their actions and policies reflect the interests of the people, leaders should actively seek out opinions and feedback from the general population.
- **Education and Training:** Provide training and leadership development initiatives that prioritize servant leadership tenets. Urge aspiring and established leaders to study these ideas and implement them in their positions.
- **Civil Society and Independent Media:** Encourage the development of a robust civil society and independent media that can serve as watchdogs by holding authorities responsible and giving the public a forum for scrutiny.
- **Promote Economic and Social Development:** It is imperative for leaders to prioritize policies that foster economic and social growth, thereby mitigating poverty and enhancing the welfare of their constituents.

In order to foster democratic principles and foster an atmosphere where servant leaders may be held accountable for their actions and work toward more ef-

efficient and servant-oriented governance, many other criteria that are not on this list may be helpful. The aforementioned framework can be utilized to foster servant leadership in African contexts, taking cultural values into particular consideration and tailoring it to local demands, even though there isn't a single leadership style that works for all of Africa. It's critical that African leaders understand how their environment is evolving. Consequently, it is important to take into account how cultures and traditional values affect communities' quality of life. Africa's leaders must leverage information technology to increase the quantity of essential public services that are easily, affordably, and successfully supplied to the general people. It should be acknowledged that effective leadership entails embracing and adjusting to technology advancements such as artificial intelligence, big data, and e-governance. These advancements are essential for enhancing public administration, public policy, good governance, and public service delivery.

3.3.4. Servant Leadership Model and Competing Values of Political Acceptability and Administrative Sustainability

In the realm of public administration and governance, it is frequently difficult to strike a balance between the conflicting or competitive ideals of political acceptability and administrative sustainability (Raleting & Nzimakwe, 2022). Since these two ideals frequently clash, finding the ideal balance is crucial to enacting policies and providing public services. To elaborate, these values consist of:

- **Political Acceptability:** The degree to which a program, policy, or administrative decision is in line with the interests and preferences of political parties, elected officials, and the general public is referred to as its political acceptability. Important factors influencing political acceptability (Ejelöv & Nilsson, 2020) include:
 - Politicians frequently rely their choices on what party members or people find appealing.
 - The acceptability of initiatives can be influenced by election cycles, public opinion, and media coverage.
 - Unpopular administrative actions or policy changes may encounter opposition, retaliation, or even failure.
- **Administrative Sustainability:** The capacity of government agencies and institutions to carry out policies, programs, and services in an efficient and long-lasting manner is the main focus of administrative sustainability. Important factors for administrative sustainability are as follows (Mensah, 2019):
 - It takes into account things like staff capabilities, infrastructure, technology, budgetary restrictions, and legal frameworks.
 - The goal of administrative sustainability is to guarantee uninterrupted, effective, and seamless government operations.
 - Policies that lack administrative sustainability run the risk of being poorly implemented, wasting money, and undermining public confidence.
- **Balancing these competing values involves the following considerations**

(Gulosino, et al., 2016 and Binder, 2010):

- **Policy Design:** It is imperative for policymakers to devise policies and initiatives that are feasible to execute within the current administrative frameworks. Rather than implementing drastic changes, this may entail small adjustments to preserve administrative sustainability.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** By interacting with a range of stakeholders—citizens, interest groups, and specialists—policy formulation can become more politically palatable while taking administrative viability into account.
- **Political Leadership:** The way these ideals are balanced is mostly determined by political leaders. They have to make judgments that are well-informed and grounded in a complex knowledge of the political and administrative environments.
- **Communication and Education:** Administratively sustainable policies can become more politically acceptable through effective communication and public education. Increasing public awareness and support is crucial.
- **Institutional Capacity Building:** Enhancing staff training, upgrading technology, and streamlining processes are examples of administrative capacity investments that can increase the viability of policies and initiatives.
- **Adaptation and Evaluation:** It is crucial to continuously assess policy and make necessary adjustments. To strike a better balance, policies that are unworkable politically or administratively should be changed or replaced.

Therefore, maintaining administrative sustainability while maintaining political acceptability is a constant concern in African governance. In order to provide efficient and responsive government services, retain the support of the public and guarantee the long-term sustainability of public administration, successful leaders and policymakers must manage this tension.

4. Summary and Recommendation for Further Studies

There are notable examples of servant leadership in Africa. Unfortunately, its full implementation across the continent still faces challenges. This paper examined works of literature focussing on servant leadership style as a key to effective good governance and sustainable public service delivery in Africa. Most studies have indicated that servant leadership is a vital framework that can ensure and facilitate the public service values of equity, integrity, and service and that it can create value for the community. This paper reinforces the idea that citizens are active partners in public service provisions, and leaders should facilitate the active role of citizens in partnering with governments. In Africa, servant leadership is required to emerge as one such mechanism that can facilitate governments to actively engage with the community and other stakeholders. The broader implication of this paper is in redesigning the leadership styles for Africa that could

facilitate democratic leadership development, good governance, policy best practice and sustainable public service delivery in the continent. Unfortunately, several studies acknowledged that many African citizens are still experiencing and paying the cost of traditional leadership, colonial legacy, authoritarianism, ethnic and tribal influences, and military leadership. Consequently, African societies remain subjected to the administrative structures and leadership models imposed by colonial powers that are supporting anti-democratic leaders. This situation has resulted in a gulf between conventional leadership and Western-style administration, fuelling political unrest in certain countries. Numerous battles and civil wars that are occurring in Africa are mostly occasioned by people that are opposing inherited colonial leadership and authoritarian leadership where some leaders are utilizing force to hold onto power.

Therefore, understand the sustained effect of servant leadership in government could be a key to effective good governance and sustainable public service delivery in Africa. This paper demonstrates sufficiently the benefits of adopting and applying servant leadership as a framework for African leaders' commitment to democratic values. A clear vision and mission statement are key components of effective governance and public service delivery. African leaders need to have a forward-thinking vision for their countries or organizations and establish clear goals and objectives to guide their actions. Servant leaders understand the importance of building strong relationships with stakeholders. They engage with citizens, civil society organizations, and other relevant actors to develop trust, foster dialogue, and ensure effective collaboration. **Tables 1-4** provide key assistance through which servant leadership model best practice could be facilitated in the continent. It is therefore critical that research on servant leadership development should continue to be conducted in a variety of African state with the aim of ensuring effective good governance, policy best practices, and sustainable public service delivery. By adopting this servant leadership style, African countries can strengthen their governance systems and enhance public service delivery to effectively meet the needs and aspirations of their citizens. If well adopted and put into application, servant leadership style could effectively promote good governance, sustainable public service delivery and steer political, public policy, and socio-economic reforms in the African continent.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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