An Evaluation of the Interface between Ethical Leadership and National Development in Nigeria

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Abstract

The interface between ethical leadership and national development in Nigeria is a misguided one due to the bedevilling problems of the evils of corruption and poor governance structure in Nigeria. Nigeria as a country has been bedevilled by the fundamental problems of leadership, followership, corruption, infrastructural deficits, mismanagement of human and natural resources and ethnic sentiment. The concepts of ethical leadership and national development are interrelated concepts because the concept of ethical leadership serves as a springboard for national development. The objective of this paper is to reveal the indispensability of ethical leadership to national development of any country and that ethical leadership has critical importance because it could lead to radical social change or social transformation. The concept of national development, on the other hand, has become an elusive concept in Nigeria due to disconnect between leadership structure, democratic sustainability or accountability and national development. The concept of national development is a multifaceted or multidimensional and holistic concept. It presupposes the philosophy, psychology, education, morality, culture, technology, socio-political and the economic sufficiency or adequacy of a people in a country. The concept of national development is an all-inclusive or all-embracing concept that deals with societies' welfare and the overall well-being of a people. The concepts of ethical leadership and national development are geared towards human betterment or human improvement. This paper adopts the analytical framework in discussing the interface between ethical

leadership and national development. The paper concludes that leadership is deeply rooted in human-centeredness and it is interfaced with national development.

Keywords: Ethical Leadership, Governance Structure, Interface, National Development, Nigeria

1.1 Introduction

Leadership remains the key for social transformation. From time immemorial, the ultimate aim of a nation is development. Some countries are termed developed nations for attaining a certain level of development while others are still in the process of reaching this level of development. Development has been given various definitions by scholars. Development means different thing to different people. For Chuka, people differently define the term development (Chuka, 2006, 75-76). For Naanem, it means modernizing a basically traditional society, with the aim of attaining self-sustained economic growth (Naanem, 1975, 45). However, development remains one of the fundamental factors of any country. According to Ofuebe, development is a process of actualizing people's capacity to live a better and a more rewarding life (Ofoebe, 1998, 15-1622). However, there are some factors that play a crucial role in national development. Some of these factors are employment, security, political order, peace, human capital development and social reforms. Nnoli in consonance with Ofuebe conceptualizes development as the radical transformation of economics from underdevelopment to developed status (Nnoli, 1981, 19-20). On the other hand, Claude Ake sees development as a process by which people recreate themselves and their life circumstances to realize higher levels of civilization (Ake, 1981, 109-110). For Rodney, development is the ability of a society to tap its natural resources in order to cater for the material and social needs of the generality of the people (Rodney, 1972, 9-10). According to Todaro, development typically involves radical changes in institutional, social, and administrative structures, as well as in popular attitude of a people. Development means human advanced and scientific progression and assimilation. Development starts from the concept of mode of production. Development must…involve progressive changes within the two components of the productive forces and social relations of production (Todaro, 2003, 2-3).

Moreover, this paper is divided into six subsections. Section one is the introductory remarks. Section two focuses on the explanation of ethical leadership. Section three discusses the conceptual clarification of national development. Section four aims at conceptualizing the interface between ethical leadership and national development. Section five is the evaluative appraisal of the interrelatedness between ethical leadership and national development. Section six is anchored on the conclusion. The paper concludes that leadership is deeply rooted in human-centeredness and it is interfaced with national development.

1.2 Ethical leadership Explained

Leadership requires intellectual skills and it is people-oriented. There is interrelatedness between ethical leadership and political leadership. Ethical leaderships pave the way or gives room for political leadership. Ethics is an essential aspect of fulcrum for political leadership. Ethical leadership is a reflection on the personal conduct of a leader. On the other hand, ethics for instance deals with human conducts. A leader must be a person that has a good moral conduct that could lead to the social transformation of any democratic community.

Nonetheless, ethical leadership is a kind of leadership that is anchored on the overall collective interest of the people. Private interest is subsumed under public interest. In other words, public interest takes precedence over private interest. Ethical leadership furthers the common good in normative society. African leaders are fond of self-destructive actions. According to Wangari, instead of working together to further the common good of their communities, they pursued their individual interests, allowing greed and selfishness to thrive among them (Wangari, 2009, 153). Accordingly, Wangari asserts that:

> Leadership is not simply a matter of filling the top positions in a government, institution, or private business. Nor is it a quality restricted to the ambitious, the elite, the politically gifted, or the highly educated. In fact leadership can be demonstrated by those who are marginalized and poor as much as by those who have had all the privileges that society has been able to bestow on them. Indeed, not every person in a leadership position is truly a leader (Wangari, 2009, 111).

Moreover, Wangari further argues that many aid and development scholars and practitioners have pointed to Africa's leadership deficit and wondered why it has been so hard to overcome. Some have suggested that the issue of poor governance has been overemphasized as a factor in development failures; in this view, poor countries generally produce poor governance, not vice versa (Wangari, 2009, 111-112). Some scholars have also pointed to Africa's geography-few navigable rivers, many land-locked nations, debilitating diseases like malaria- as inhibiting economic growth.

Moreover, the exercise of good leadership would end government violations of human rights and restrictions on freedoms such as the right to move, assemble, access information, and organize (Wangari, 2009, 111). Worthy of note is that Wangari argues that one might ask: what does it take to produce leaders with such values, whose lives become their message and who humble themselves and sacrifice for the common good? It should not be impossible to find leaders in Africa willing to raise the standard of leadership and to nurture them so that they become beacons for the continent (Wangari, 2009, 112-113).

Worthy of note is that good leadership could decide, for instance, not to sell off Africa's natural resources for such low prices, and then to invest the additional revenue to accelerate human and economic development (Wangari, 2009, 113). Accordingly, good leadership could curtail corruption, one of the most corrosive aspects of poor leadership that has been rife in post-independence Africa.

Furthermore, good leadership would provide the milieu in which citizens can be creative, productive, and build wealth and opportunity. Ethical leadership requires the need for social change. For Wangari, the realization of good leadership could start with an African president or prime minister stepping forward and declaring: we have a problem in our country and as a people. We are cheating and undermining ourselves, and we need to change. It is also up to a critical mass of Africans to recognize that there is a problem of leadership, which in itself would be a step away from stasis (Wangari, 2009, 113-114). Worthy of note is that African leadership is characterized by what Wangari Maathai calls the pathology of power (Wangari, 2009, 114). According to Wangari:

> As long as African politicians are pressured by their constituencies- parliamentary or ethnic- to remain in the government whether they win elections or not, because the people believe the politicians will provide them with patronage, and as long as politicians continue to supply them gifts, handouts, and favours, then any system will be broken. When this toxic combination means that leaders cling to power at all costs-when some of the best and brightest Africans demonstrate that it matters more to be a minister, prime minister, or president than it does not do to promote the welfare of the country or protect its citizens- then neither development nor peace will be sustainable (Wangari, 2009, 114-115).

Ethical leadership can only be sustainable when the people speak out. Ethical leadership is translatable to ensuring the welfare of the people and the people must always speak out when the need arises. As Wangari further asserts:

> In Africa, as elsewhere, democratic space can be created and sustained only when a critical mass of people is aware of the situation and willing to speak out, protest, monitor government actions, and risk harassment, arrest, or even death. That courage, however, also requires a leader (or his backers) who will acknowledge the rights of the people to self-determination and prosperity, and as a result demonstrate leadership that avoids bloodshed or further violence (Wangari, 2009, 115).

In the light of the above, Wangari further heightened his theoretical position by asserting that, on the face of it, it may seem scandalous that a leader has to be enticed by a potential award not to be corrupt or to cling to power, and a damning indictment of the failure of Africa over the last half century to cultivate genuine leadership on a continental scale (Wangari, 2009, 117). As Wangari rightly observed, a leader is considered to have specialized knowledge important for the community's welfare (Wangari, 2009, 119). Accordingly, Wangari further argues that:

> Only Africans can resolve to provide leadership that is responsible, accountable, and incorruptible. It is they who must embrace their cultural diversity, restore their sense of self-worth, and use both to create thriving nations, regions, and the continent itself.it is they who must begin the revolution in ethics that puts community before individualism, public

> good before private greed, and commitment to service before cynicism and despair (Wangari, 2009, 23).

Aghamelu Helen in consonance with Wangari argues that leadership implies an inter-individual relationship in social psychology. Those who are responsible for the practical consequences of human actions are said to be concerned with leadership (Aghamelu, 2009, 140). Aghamelu Helen further asserts that in the African context, the meaning of leadership suggests a shift from the general understanding of the concept and leaders are those who fill the office of leadership. The leader is commonly described as one who goes out, ahead, to show the way (Aghamelu, 2009, 139).

Moreover, ethical leadership sometimes revolves around the principle of government. According to Chukwuemeka Metala, government is a process involving two parties: the leader and the led. Government and the political process, therefore, presuppose leadership and followership as well as the conditions under which their civic and political role complement one another. The nature of the interaction between leadership and followership in traditional Africa also defines what it meant by African political system (Metala, 2009, 107-108). However, ethical leadership is simply grounded on the normative assumption and the normative principle of ethics.

1.3 A Conceptual Clarification of National Development

Development can be defined as the process of growth and progress, whether at the individual, community, or societal level. Development can also be seen as the process of improving the quality of life for individuals and communities, whether through economic, social, or environmental means (Efemini, 2010, 252-253). Worthy of note is that there are a number of philosophers who have written about development. Leadership serves as a springboard for national development. For Asouzu, leadership requires the principle of harmonious complementation (Asouzu, 2003, 155).

Nonetheless, the concepts of national development and leadership are interrelated concepts. Asouzu's in his book entitled "*Effective Leadership and the Ambivalence of Human Interest: The Nigerian Paradox in a Complementary Perspective*" explores the

virtues of a good leader. It is worthy of note that Plato and Aristotle believed that "virtue is knowledge" of the good in functional society. Dukor in consonance with Asouzuian tradition argues that national development through ethical leadership brings about "economic adequacy" (Dukor, 2004, 216). Worthy of note is that Dukor's notion of economic adequacy is in tandem with the Rawlsian principle of the equitable distribution of resources.

It is worthy of note that Oyedele in his book entitled "*Ethical Leadership and Good Governance in Nigeria: A Philosophical Perspective*," explores the relationship between ethical leadership and national development in Nigeria. Oyedele's work provides valuable theoretical insights into the critical importance of ethical leadership in fostering positive change and progress within the Nigerian context. Oyedele argues that ethical leadership is crucial for the national development of Nigeria. He emphasizes that leaders who possess strong ethical values and principles are more likely to make decisions that prioritize the overall welfare of the nation and its citizens. Ethical leaders are guided by a sense of moral responsibility and are committed to upholding the common good, rather than personal gain or self-interest (Oyedele, 2019, 4-5).

Furthermore, Oyedele highlights the contemporary significance of good governance in achieving national development. He asserts that ethical leadership and good governance go hand in hand, as effective governance requires leaders who are accountable, transparent, and committed to the principles of justice and fairness. However, without ethical leadership, corruption and mismanagement can hinder progress and impede national development of Nigeria (Oyedele, 2019, 6-7). Oyedele discusses the role of philosophy in understanding and promoting national development and ethical leadership. He suggests that philosophical perspectives can provide a theoretical framework for analysing and evaluating the ethical dimensions of leadership.

Worthy of note is that, by examining, the ethical implications of leadership decisions and actions, Philosophers can contribute to the development of ethical leadership practices in Nigeria. Oyedele's book underscores the critical importance of ethical leadership in driving national development in Nigeria. He emphasizes the need for leaders who prioritize the common good and adhere to

ethical principles. Oyedele highlights the role of good governance and philosophy in fostering ethical leadership practices. By promoting ethical leadership, Nigeria can overcome fundamental challenges such as corruption and mismanagement of national resources and pave the way for sustainable development and progress (Oyedele, 2019, 6-7). In his book "*Ethical Leadership and Sustainable Development in Nigeria*," Eze, C. explores the relationship between ethical leadership and national development in Nigeria. The author argues that:

> Ethical leadership is crucial for national development in the country, emphasizing the need for leaders to prioritize ethical values and principles in their decision-making processes. The current challenges faced by Nigeria in terms of corruption, lack of accountability, and poor governance have damaging effects on national development. These issues have hindered the country's progress and impeded its potential for development. To address these fundamental challenges, ethical leadership is a solution. Ethical leadership entails leaders who possess moral integrity, transparency, and a dogged commitment to the common good. These leaders prioritize ethical values such as honesty, fairness, and justice in their decision-making processes. By doing so, they create an enabling environment that fosters trust, accountability, and sustainable development (Eze, 2017, 655).

Furthermore, Eze argues that ethical leadership is not only beneficial for the overall national development of Nigeria but also for the psychological development of Nigerians. Ethical leadership can contribute to sustainable economic growth by promoting fair competition, responsible corporate practices and social responsibility. This, in turn, enhances the country's reputation and attracts foreign investments. Worthy of note is that Eze emphasizes the pivotal role of education in fostering ethical leadership and national development. He suggests that educational institutions should incorporate ethical principles and leadership training into their curriculum to develop future leaders who are equipped with the necessary ethical values and principles. By doing so, Nigeria can cultivate a new generation of leaders who prioritize ethical conduct and contribute to sustainable development.

Moreover, the author argues that ethical leaders, who prioritize moral integrity and the common good, can address the challenges of corruption, lack of accountability, and poor governance. By promoting ethical values and principles, leaders can create an environment that fosters trust, accountability, and sustainable development. Incorporating ethics and leadership training in educational institutions can contribute to the cultivation of ethical leaders for the future(Eze, 2017, 670-671). However, Osagie, in his book entitled "*Ethical Leadership and National Development in Nigeria: A Critical Analysis*," delves into the crucial relationship between ethical leadership and national development. This scholarly work offers a comprehensive examination of the pivotal role ethical leadership plays in the contextual framework of Nigeria's national development. Osagie begins by emphasizing the contemporary significance of ethical leadership in fostering national development. He argues that ethical leaders possess a strong moral compass and the dogged commitment to upholding ethical principles in their decision-making processes.

Nevertheless, these leaders prioritize the welfare of the nation and its citizens over personal gain, ensuring that their actions align with the greater good. By doing so, ethical leaders inspire trust, promote transparency, and create an environment conducive to sustainable development (Osagie, 2015, 8-9). One of the key points highlighted by Osagie is the impact of ethical leadership on combating corruption. He asserts that corruption is a major obstacle to national development, as it diverts resources away from public welfare and undermines the rule of law. Ethical leaders are instrumental in curbing corruption by implementing effective anti-corruption measures, promoting accountability, and fostering a culture of integrity within the government and society at large (Osagie, 2015, 11-12).

Osagie explores the relationship between ethical leadership and economic development. He argues that ethical leaders prioritize economic policies that promote inclusive growth, reduce income inequality, and create opportunities for all citizens. By ensuring fair and transparent economic practices, ethical leaders can attract foreign investments, stimulate domestic entrepreneurship, and ultimately contribute to the overall development of the nation's economy. Osagie also addresses the importance of ethical leadership in promoting social justice and human rights. He contends that ethical leaders are committed to upholding the

fundamental rights and dignity of all individuals, regardless of their social status or background. By championing social justice, ethical leaders can address issues such as poverty, discrimination, and inequality, thereby fostering a more equitable and inclusive society (Osagie, 2015, 8-9). Osagie provides numerous examples and case studies to support his arguments. He draws on both historical and contemporary instances to illustrate the positive impact of ethical leadership on national development. By examining the successes and failures of ethical leadership in Nigeria, Osagie offers a critical analysis that sheds light on the challenges and opportunities associated with ethical leadership in the context of a developing nation. Osagie's book underscores the crucial role ethical leadership plays in driving national development. Through his comprehensive analysis, Osagie highlights the impact of ethical leadership on combating corruption, promoting economic development, and fostering social justice.

Nevertheless, this scholarly work serves as a valuable resource for academics, policymakers, and practitioners interested in understanding the relationship between ethical leadership and the development of nations. Akindele and Adeyemi In their article entitled "*Ethical Leadership and Economic Development in Nigeria*," discuss the relationship between ethical leadership and national development in Nigeria. The authors argue that ethical leadership plays a crucial role in fostering economic growth and sustainable development in the country. They highlight the importance of ethical behaviour and values in leadership positions, emphasizing that leaders who prioritize ethics contribute to the overall well-being and progress of the nation. Moreover, one of the key points made by Akindele and Adeyemi is that:

> Ethical leadership promotes trust and accountability. Leaders act ethically, they inspire trust among their followers and stakeholders. This trust, in turn, leads to increased cooperation, collaboration, and commitment towards achieving national development goals. Ethical leaders are seen as role models, and their actions set the standards for ethical behaviour within organizations and society as a whole. The emphasis of the role of ethical leadership helps in combating corruption and promoting good governance. Ethical leaders are less likely to engage in corrupt practices and are more inclined to promote transparency, accountability, and the rule of law. By doing so, they create an environment that is conducive to

> economic growth and national development. Ethical leadership can help reduce corruption levels in Nigeria, which has been a significant obstacle to the country's progress (Akindele and Adeyemi, 2019, 8-9).

Furthermore, they discussed the impact of ethical leadership on social responsibility and sustainable development. They argue that ethical leaders prioritize the well-being of their followers and the broader society. They consider the social and environmental consequences of their decisions and actions, aiming to create a sustainable future for all. Ethical leaders are more likely to invest in social development programs, education, healthcare, and infrastructure, which are essential for national development (Akindele and Adeyemi, 2019, 9-10). Akindele and Adeyemi highlight the significance of ethical leadership in promoting national development in Nigeria.

Worthy of note is that they argued that ethical leaders foster trust, accountability, and good governance, which are crucial for economic growth and sustainable development. By combating corruption and prioritizing social responsibility, ethical leaders contribute to the overall well-being and progress of the nation (Akindele and Adeyemi, 2019, 9-10).

1.4 Conceptualizing the Interface between Ethical Leadership and National Development in Nigeria

The concept of leadership has elicited a series of debates. Leadership remains one of the springboards for national development. According to Okaneme, leadership is a huge and herculean responsibility (Okaneme, 2018, 7). However, good leadership brings about more development in a nation, and bad leadership does the opposite. This is where ethical leadership plays a critical role in a country. The morality, values, and ethical decisions made by our leaders play a vital part in determining the rate at which one's nation can be developed. These ethical and unethical decisions affect the citizens of a country politically, economically, and socially. These ethical decisions making by the leaders can also been seen as the moral judgement of the leaders that can and cannot bring about development to one's nation.

Nonetheless, the concepts of ethical leadership refers to the practice of leading in a way that is morally just and fair, while national development refers to the process of improving the quality of life for the citizens of a nation. In the context of Nigeria, there has been a lot of debate about the effectiveness of ethical leadership and its role in national development. Some argue that ethical leadership is essential for national development, while others believe that it is not enough on its own. However, the importance of ethical leadership in national development is crucial. Ethical leaders are fundamentally inspired by mutual trust, promote social justice and fairness; and invariably uphold integrity, which can foster sustainable economic growth and social reforms and progress. In Nigeria, ethical leadership plays a vital role in addressing corruption, promoting good governance, and driving positive change for the development of the nation.

It is worthy of note that Nigeria, as a nation, has experienced significant socio-political and economic challenges in achieving sustainable development. However, corruption, political instability, and weak governance have hindered progress and impeded the realization of the country's full potentials. Ethical leadership is characterized by integrity, accountability, transparency, and a dogged commitment to the rule of law and the common good; and the common good, is widely recognized as a potential solution to these contextually bound issues. According to Asouzu, the idea of the common good refers to a common source of collective legitimasation beyond the dictates of the ego (Asouzu, 2004, 380). Accordingly, Asouzu asserts that the common good brings about fundamental genuine fellow feeling, which reinvigorates and sustains the life of the system (Asouzu, 2003, 69). However, understanding the interface between ethical leadership and national development is crucial for ensuring what Peter Drucker calls radical social changes (Drucker, 1999, 73-74) and formulating effective strategies to address Nigeria's developmental challenges.

Nevertheless, ethical leadership plays a vital role in national development. It involves leaders who prioritize honesty of purpose, purity of intention, integrity, honesty, and fair decision-making process. In Nigeria, ethical leadership is crucial for promoting transparency, accountability, and sustainable development. It helps build mutual trust amongst citizens and the government, as well as among different sectors of society. Through ethical leadership, Nigeria can address issues

like corruption, inequality, and social challenges, ultimately leading to a brighter future of Nigerian society.

Moreover, ethical leadership is crucial for national development in Nigeria. It helps establish a robust, trustworthy, fair, and accountable government, businesses, and society as a whole. It sets the normative foundation for sustainable growth and ensures that resources are managed responsibly. While progress has been made, there's always room for economic and human improvement. It's important for leaders to prioritize integrity, transparency, and inclusivity to drive positive change.

Nonetheless, one of the arguments for the critical importance of ethical leadership for national development in Nigeria is that it can help to improve the governance process of the country due to the fact that the leadership recruitment process in Nigeria has been built on a faulty foundation. For Okaneme, leadership recruitment process in the country is very faulty and can therefore never produce credible political leaders (Okaneme, 2018, 89). However, it has been argued that when leaders act ethically, they set a good example for others to follow, which can help to reduce the evils of corruption and promote human dignity and democratic transparency and sustainability. However, ethical leadership can foster mutual trust and confidence in the government, which can lead to better decision-making process of a country and more effective implementation of economic policies.

Moreover, ethical leadership can help to build a sense of national identity and unity. In Nigeria, the country is made up of diverse ethnic groups, and it has been argued that ethical leadership can help to bridge the gaps between these different groups and foster a sense of shared purpose and common destiny. In addition, ethical leadership can also promote a culture of democratic sustainability, accountability and moral responsibility, which can help to improve the country's overall governance structure and the standard of living of a people.

Broadly speaking, we can argue that ethical leadership affects national development by examining the principles and values it upholds. Ethical leadership promotes fairness, transparency, and accountability in the decision-making process. Ethical leadership requires a sense of good will. According to

Asouzu, only the man of goodwill can submit to a higher form of legitimization (Asouzu, 2003, 159). However, when leaders act ethically, they prioritize the common good over personal gains; and fostering an environment of mutual trust and social cooperation.

Moreover, this can lead to increased social cohesion, high per capita income, economic stability, environmental sustainability, and effective governance structure; all of which are essential for national development. By embracing ethical leadership, a country can create a strong legitimizing foundation for human progress and sustainable growth or development.

Furthermore, ethical leadership plays a crucial role in shaping the trajectory of a nation. It involves leaders who prioritize integrity, honesty, and transparency in their deliberate choices and actions. In Nigeria, ethical leadership is essential for promoting good governance, combating corruption, and fostering sustainable development. When leaders uphold ethical values and principles, it sets a positive standard for the entire nation, encouraging citizens to act with integrity and contribute to the overall development of the country. Ethical leadership also helps to build trust and confidence among the people, as they see their leaders acting in the best interest of the nation as a whole rather than personal gain. This trust is vital for effective governance, as it enhances cooperation, promotes social cohesion, and encourages citizens' participation in national development initiatives.

In addition, ethical leadership is closely linked to economic growth and social progress. By prioritizing ethical practices and policies, leaders can create an enabling environment that attracts investments, promotes entrepreneurship, and ensures equitable distribution of resources. This, in turn, leads to job creation, poverty reduction, and improved living standards for the people.

Nonetheless, it's important to note that the current state of ethical leadership and national development in Nigeria is a complex issue and it requires scholarly attention. While Nigeria has made significant progress in recent years, there are still fundamental challenges to overcome, such as corruption, political instability, national insecurity, sicknesses and diseases, environmental degradation,

kidnapping, armed robbery, ritual killings, infrastructural deficits and socio-economic inequalities. There is the problem of lack of good governance in Nigeria. For Aghamelu, the principles of good governance are accountability, participation, predictability, and transparency. However, efforts are being made by various stakeholders, including government institutions, civil society organizations, and citizens, to address these fundamental challenges and foster ethical leadership for sustainable national development (Aghamelu, 2006, 98-99). Be that as it may, ethical leadership is crucial for Nigeria's progress and economic prosperity. It sets the legitimizing foundation for good governance, promotes trust and confidence among the people, and drives socio-economic development. By embracing ethical leadership, Nigeria can pave the way for a brighter future for its citizens and contribute to the overall well-being of the citizens.

Moreover, there is a greater cognizance of the need to have ethical leadership in governance, alongside accountability and transparency in public service life. The apparent realization of such awareness is supported by the development of a common consensus that good governance and sound public administration are springboards for sustainable development. The effect of unethical and unlawful practices in the public sector is considered unsupportable in the development of a nation, as it could result in a loss of confidence in the public institutions and the erosion of the rule of law itself. Although the current concern with ethics and corruption is found around the globe, some regions are particularly interested in mitigating the damaging effects of unethical and corrupt practices on the development of countries. For Okoli, regrettably, corruption in Nigeria is all pervading, endemic and systemic (Okoli, 2010, 60-61). However, corruption counterproductive and it could serves as a hindrance to national development.

It is worthy of note that Africa currently faces enormous challenges in its efforts to achieve sustainable human development. Establishing ethical leadership in public services is an existential imperative because government institutions are considered the custodians of public funds. As a result, government institutions are required to have ethical leaders to handle government funds and provide effective public services. This theoretical discourse explored the magnitude of ethical leadership practices in Nigerian public functions, given the comparatively high level of corruption in many government institutions, such as the public service and

the consequences of extremely inhibiting the development of national economies. However, corruption serves as a hindrance to good governance and service delivery. This theoretical discourse established the potential benefits of having ethical leadership in the public sector, such as the department of education by critically analyzing the ethical leadership characteristics present in the public sector. Despite the presence of many leaders in Nigeria, it is regrettable that Nigeria has seen very little or no development in the last few decades. This damaging consequence surely has a cause.

1.5 Evaluation

This theoretical discourse focuses on evaluating the interface between ethical leadership and national development in Nigeria. The problem that propels this theoretical work is the fundamental question that if ethical leadership can be a determining factor for the national development in a country? Can national development be achieved if leaders in Nigeria are morally considerate and just? Is it possible for Nigeria to achieve national development if the leaders of the country are morally inconsiderate and unjust? These and other necessary fundamental questions formed the theoretical basis of this paper. In a country like Nigeria fundamental issues such as corruption and leadership challenge require fundamental answers. As rightly observed by Odimegwu, fundamental problems require fundamental solutions (Odimegwu, 2008, 6-7). However, all philosophical inquiries require what Hintikka calls conclusive answerhood (Hintikka, 2007, 457).

Moreover, the contemporary significance of ethical leadership and national development is that both concepts are interrelated. It is worthy of note that ethical conducts plays a critical role in ensuring ethical leadership in Nigeria. This paper is aimed at guaranteeing an evaluative appraisal of the interrelatedness between ethical leadership and national development in Nigeria. However, this discourse investigates the critical importance of ethical leadership to national development. National development presupposes inclusivity and human improvement or social progress. The concept of leadership revolves around ethical principles. Leadership is the action of leading a group of people or an organization. Leaders mobilize people towards a new vision.

Furthermore, leadership can be defined as the ability to influence and guide others toward a common objective or goal. For Venter, leadership requires enforceable actions and not just wasted verbiage (Venter, 2004, 253). According to Venter, leaders are typically individuals who have a vision for what they want to achieve, and they are able to motivate and inspire others to work toward that goal. Leaders must have the charisma to provide their people with a national vision and purpose and the cognitive ability to galvanise their efforts towards, and to sustain their enthusiasm in, the pursuit of those objectives. Leadership is essential in all human activity: social, economic and political (Venter, 2004, 258). Wangari in consonance with Venter asserts that:

> Leadership is correlative with good governance and many aid and development scholars and practitioners have pointed out to Africa's leadership deficit and wondered why it has been so hard to overcome. Some have suggested that the issue of poor governance has been overemphasized as a factor in development failures, in this view, poor countries generally produced poor governance, not vice versa. Not every person in leadership position is truly a leader and the exercise of good leadership would end government violation of human rights and restrictions on freedoms such as the rights to move, assemble, access information, and organize (Wangari, 2009, 111-112).

1.6 Conclusion

Having critically examined the interface between ethical leadership and national development in Nigeria, this paper therefore, concludes that the problem of Africa's leadership could only be overcome by dogged commitment of selfless leadership. Leadership is rooted in human-centeredness and it is interfaced with national development. And not everyone in a position of leadership is really a leader and the exercise of ethical leadership would bring about human flourishing through the promotion of human rights and freedoms. Ethical leadership is a springboard for national development. Leaders also have strong communication and decision-making skills. However, leadership can also be seen as a set of moral behaviours or traits that are associated with effective leaders.

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