

Leadership, Changing the Society and Sustainable Development Among Political Leaders in Nsit Ubum Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

By

Bassey S. UDOM
Sociology and Anthropology social Sciences
University of Uyo
Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

Abstract

The main purpose of this study was to examine the influence of leadership, changing the society and sustainable development among political leaders in Nsit Ubum Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. To achieve the aim of this study, two hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. Literature was reviewed accordingly. Ex-post facto research design was adopted for the study. A sample of two hundred and forty-four respondents was used for the study. The selection was done through the simple random sampling techniques. The questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. The instrument was subjected to face validation by experts in Research and Statistics. The reliability estimate of the instrument was established through Cronbach alpha reliability method. One-Way Analysis of Variance was adopted to test the study hypotheses. The hypothesis was tested at .05 level of significance. The result of the analysis revealed that leadership has a significant influence on changing the society and sustainable development among political leaders in Nsit Ubum Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Based on the results and findings of the study, it was recommended that for sustainable development to be a reality changing the society must include a change in individual mind set both physically and psychologically.

Keywords: Leadership, Sustainable Development, Political Leaders

Introduction

Leadership according to the church planting manual (2000), is a position of authority, power and influence. Leadership is responsibility. It can also be seen as a vehicle through which plans and actions are conceived, hatched and implemented. They went on to say that leadership is an effective means of getting things done or achieved through people. It is also the proper management of money and resources.

A good leadership in any organization, country or society according to Ihejamaizu (2002), must be able to give proper account direction and also point the way forward for his organization. A good leadership should be able to inspire confidence of the people. A society or country that fail to provide good leadership is in trouble. In different parts of the world, some countries have gone to war and got broken-up because of bad leadership. A good leadership will inspire the people and the society at large. Leadership is the role played by the players to lift the society to another level. Therefore, leaders have a lot to do to bring sustainable development to the society they are governing.

Basic principles for effective leadership

Leadership is anchored on some basic principles for effectiveness and efficiency. A good leadership should be based on these principles

1. Leadership must recognize and depends on the grace of God
2. Leadership must recognize the in/ability of God's word.
3. Leadership must recognize the place of wisdom

4. Leadership must recognize the value of service.

Society

Society is a civilized community. It is a system whereby people live together in organized community. A leader is an individual usually a person who wields much influence and commands the respect of other people because of the power and authority associated with his position in the society. Traditional chiefs like the Obong, Oba, Eze, and Emirs are examples of leaders who are held in high esteem and honour by virtue of their position in the society. They are revered and their pronouncement are regarded as laws which no one dares to disregard or disobey (Human Dev. Report, 2007).

A leader is known and distinguished from the crowd mainly through his responsibilities, duties and functions as a result of the position he or she occupies in the society. It is this functions of a leader that can make the society change either positively or negatively. A change in society depends on the type of leader that the society have or embraced. A responsible leader will always plan well for the growth of his domain. He always thinks of how to carry people along. He is not a cheat; he rather encourages project to be sited in his area for the benefit of his subjects. He is a socialist who is always ready to spend his money, time and labour for others. He takes other people problems as his own. He can even die for the welfare of his people. A good leader can be attested for by his people. Because of what he does, people loved and obey his voice. They can also die for their leader in the face of being molested.

Sustainable Development is dependent on a good leadership which can also change the society for good. A kind of leaders in the society will bring sustainable development to the society. Though leaders may not be equal in their performance but when the interest is there, the people will be happy. In our society, we hold some people in high esteem because of what they can offer and as leaders, their performance.

Statement of the problem

Problem of leadership is as old as man himself. If actually, leadership is a position, power and influence. If leadership is a responsibility, it means, they have lots to be accomplished for good leaders to emerge. Good leaders emerge through a process, experience and followership. People jump into leadership position as if to lead is a small thing. Leadership is all about humility and the ability to carry others along. A Church Planting Manuel (2000) saw a leader as a catalyst of development. For leadership to bring a sustainable development, he must be trained with experience. Developments fail because leadership has nothing to write home about. Leadership start right from home, then spread to other areas of endeavor. Once someone failed at home, such a person has nothing to offer as a leader. Sometimes, people do not know that the emerging leadership have already failed at home, so for him to come out to the society for leadership position make that society or organization a failure.

For sustainable development to be a reality, good leaders should emerge to change the society positively. Some political leaders in Nsit Ubium Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State are behaving as those who never saw the fore-world of education. This is so because of their behavior in handling matter that concerns the people. Most of them lack manners. They take decisions without consultation. The Church Planting Manuel (2000) said a leader is known and distinguished from the crowd mainly through his responsibilities, duties and functions as a result of the position he occupies in the society. The leaders here are completely opposite of what the Church Planting Manuel (2000) talks about, the reasons are that, the leaders here takes themselves as “gods” where his decision cannot be questioned.

They go around the villages to appoint village heads, without minding who is affected in the cause of the appointment. They do not follow the norms of the society. They handle the society money as if it was their personal properties. They do not consult anybody in their decision making. During political campaigns, they connive with the politicians to appoint thugs to favour their candidates. Normally people are chosen or elected based on his ability to carry others along. The leadership here is a cabal, trying to enthrone those who belong to their groups. This really affect sustainable development in the area because where people are not in peace, pieces are always the case. For sustainable development to have a place in Nsit Ubium, leaders must allow equity, transparency, role of law and free consultation in the area. Our village chiefs must rise to condemn the imposition of candidate to our society. It is the leaders in the area that will help to develop the area and not visitors, who only appear and disappear. Leaders must be wise to call their subjects to a round table discussion. This will help to bring sustainable development to the area.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to examine how leadership can change society for sustainable development. Specifically, the study seeks;

1. To find out the influence of leadership on changing the society
2. To find out the influence of leadership on sustainable development

Research Questions

1. What are those things that can make leaders or help in changing the society?
2. What are the quality of leaders that can bring about sustainable development in the society?

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant influence of leadership on changing the society
2. There is no significant influence of leadership on sustainable development.

Literature Review

Leadership Quality and Changing the Society for Sustainable Development

A quality leader is a successful leader. One of the qualities of a good leader is that he/she must be visionary. The reality of our present time is the painful, realization that some individuals who have been entrusted into leadership, do not even know why they are in leadership position. These leaders do not have visible plans or ideas, which they have strategically mapped out or outlined for the people they are expected to be directing or leading. A leader must have a vision for the people he/she is leading. Vision is thus, having a purposeful and strategic initiation of ideas, plans and programmes, carefully drawn out by the leader with the main aim of implementing or executing such for the people. Even the Bible affirmed that where there is no vision, the people perish, (proverb, 29:18). Vision separates characters and deceitful leaders from real and trustworthy leaders. A good leader must have set standard for himself.

What makes a good leader great is his ability to find the balance between business foresight, performance and character. Great leaders have vision, courage, integrity, focus and humility (Miller, 2003). He went further to state that the ability to plan strategically and analyse how to co-operate amongst their team set him as a great leader who have the quality to manage and carry others along. Perret (2005), alleged that good leaders are also strong communicators. In fact, many people practice public speaking as a career in order for them to be perfect once they become leaders. Although talking in front of crowds is a top fear to

many people, conquering this fear is what makes a good leader. Offiong (2013), writes that, if one was ready to overcome fear in public speaking, that the person should start now in a learning process little by little, step-by-step, then the rest will become history. This is to say that, to be a leader one must undergo a learning process.

Allen (2010), writes that great leaders lead by example to truly earn the will of their followers. He said the ability to commit to this principle makes him a good and great leader. The most important contribution a leader can make to his company, is to be a leader that can accept responsibility for results. Kennedy (2011), in his own word says, “predominant quality” of great leaders is that they always think about the future. That they think about where they are going rather than where they have been. A good leader always maintain a positive attitude and think about the opportunities of tomorrow rather than focusing on the problems of the past.

To think like a leader, you must practice what is known as “idealization” in each area of your life (Umoh, 2013). He said, to be able to use idealization, you must also begin by imagining that you have no limitation in your way at all on what you want to do or have. This is to say, you must be positive anywhere anytime. That you must uphold the ‘I can do’ spirit always.

Changing the Society for Sustainable Development

A book titled only yesterday: An informal history by Allen, Frederick Lewis. The book explained what is involved for a society to change. He identified among others, revolution in manner, characters and morals. He said it is good ways of thinking and behaving that brought the 1920s revolutions in industries, politics and other forms of enlightenment. Bacchetta and Jauson (2011), writes that the changes we saw then were influenced by factors such as world war, falling birth rate as well as new work pattern. Others includes cultural diversity, general prosperity arising from industrial revolution and the impact of the enlightenment.

James (2010), said that the change in the society involves different roles for women that involves themselves in the workplace and also attended colleges in greater number. Before now, women were derogated to the house wives position and other menial activities at home and in the farms. The change in the society really involved women standing from enlightenment period. When women started to be employed their take-home carrying was not equal to that of men. The rising up of women activities made the error to be corrected. Open awareness women recognize the use of birth control measures to control the number of children they want to born. In many developed countries, families are small and can be more focus on emotional attachment and the nurturing of children. Arkin (2006), said young people who are pressured to enter adulthood before are now free. That, they can now spend more times in schools to study and change the narrative of their parents. Evolutional years saw development lively. Youth culture which change the society and made it much better and youth oriented than before.

In Nigeria for instance, Akwa Ibom state was created on 23rd September, 1987. Nsit Ubium was there after created. It was here that our local government leaders emerged. The people of Nsit Ubium use to attend every government activities in Etinan local government area. The creation of Nsit Ubium brought about sustainable development. This is because our society is fast changing because of development. Government presents are felt everywhere. Schools enrolments are high. People who have relocated are now returning. Infact, the Local Government population is high compared to many years ago. Early marriages are things of the past. Both males and females see reasons to go to school in order for government, both at the federal and state levels to recognize them for one appointment or the other. Our emerging

leaders who were illiterate are now giving-up to the scholars and intellectuals of the local government. Infact, changing in society is a development that is tilled toward sustainability.

A changing the society is a society that is not compared to what it used to be in the past. A fully changed society is the one that is comprehensive in change. This includes the physical, psychological and emotional change. The society can change physically, but the inhabitants behave like carnivorous animals. What is happening in the North-East, Nigeria is a clear case of the society that is changed but not developed due to the activities of Boko Haram. Here, the effort of government to develop the area seems to be waste of time and money. A changing the society must be total to sustainable development.

Research Methodology

The research design adopted for this study is ex-post facto design. The population of this consisted of all political leaders in Nsit Ubum Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State. The stratified random sampling technique was adopted for the study. The sample is made up of two hundred and forty-four (244) respondents randomly selected for the study from the population. The instrument used for data collection was the questionnaire. The research instrument was given for scrutiny to experts in measurement and evaluation. *Cronbach Alpha reliability co-efficient method* was used to determine the reliability estimate of the instrument. *After the administration, coefficient of internal consistency was obtained and the index was found to 0.79* this value was high enough to be considered, goal for a research instrument.

Presentation of results

Hypothesis one

Leadership has no significant influence on changing the society.

The independent variable in this hypothesis is Leadership (liaze fairre, democratic and autocratic); while the dependent variable is changing the society. To test this hypothesis, changing the society from Leadership liaze fairre, democratic and autocratic were compared using One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The result of the analysis is presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Summary data and one-way ANOVA of the influence of Leadership on changing the society (N=244)

Leadership	N	\bar{X}	SD		
Liaze fairre – 1	32	22.00	.00		
Democratic – 2	131	25.12	1.16		
Autocratic– 3	81	27.20	.74		
Total	244	25.40	1.89		
Source of variance	SS	Df	Ms	F	Sig of F
Between group	1287.669	2	643.834	348.207*	.000
Within group	445.610	241	1.849		
Total	1733.279	243			

* Significant at .05 level, critical F=3.00, df= 2, 485.

The result on Table 1 revealed that the calculated F-value of 348.207 is higher than the critical F-value of 3.00 at .05 level of significance with 2 and 485 degree of freedom. With this result the null hypothesis was rejected. This result therefore implied that, Leadership has a significant influence on changing the society. Since leadership had a significant influence on changing the society, a post hoc analysis was employed using

Fishers' Least Significant Difference (LSD) multiple comparison analysis. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 2.

Table 2
Fishers' Least Significant Difference (LSD) multiple comparison analysis of the influence of Leadership on changing the society

(I) Leadership	(J) Leadership	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Liaze fairer	Democratic	-3.11832(*)	.13365	.000
	Autocratic	-5.20370(*)	.14152	.000
Democratic	Liaze fairre	3.11832(*)	.13365	.000
	Autocratic	-2.08538(*)	.09580	.000
Autocratic	Liaze fairre	5.20370(*)	.14152	.000
	Democratic	2.08538(*)	.09580	.000

* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

The result of the analysis in Table 2 showed that respondents whose leadership was liaze fairre were significantly different in their changing the society from those whose leadership was either democratic or autocratic. Also respondents whose leadership was democratic were significantly different from those who were autocratic in changing the society.

Hypothesis two

Leadership has no significant influence on sustainable development.

The independent variable in this hypothesis is Leadership (liaze fairre, democratic and autocratic); while the dependent variable is sustainable development. To test this hypothesis, sustainable development from Leadership liaze fairre, democratic and autocratic were compared using One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The result of the analysis is presented in Table 3.

Table 3
Summary data and one-way ANOVA of the influence of Leadership on sustainable development (N=244)

Leadership	N	\bar{X}	SD
Liaze fairre – 1	82	26.00	1.27
Democratic – 2	130	24.50	1.86
Autocratic – 3	32	27.51	.50
Total	488	25.40	1.89

Source of variance	SS	Df	Ms	F	Sig of F
Between group	558.033	2	279.016	57.211*	.000
Within group	1175.246	241	4.877		
Total	1733.279	243			

* Significant at .05 level, critical F=3.00, df= 2, 485.

The result on Table 3 revealed that the calculated F-value of 57.211 is higher than the critical F-value of 3.00 at .05 level of significance with 2 and 485 degree of freedom. With this result the null hypothesis was rejected. This result therefore implied that, Leadership significantly influenced sustainable development. Since Leadership had a significant influence on sustainable development, a post hoc analysis was employed using Fishers' Least Significant Difference (LSD) multiple comparison analysis. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 4.

Table 4
Fishers' Least Significant Difference (LSD) multiple comparison analysis of the influence of Leadership on sustainable development
LSD

(I) Leadership	(J) Leadership	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Liaze fairer	Democratic	1.50000(*)	.15552	.000
	Autocratic	-1.50769(*)	.22835	.000
Democratic	Liaze fairer	-1.50000(*)	.15552	.000
	Autocratic	-3.00769(*)	.21587	.000
Autocratic	Liaze fairer	1.50769(*)	.22835	.000
	Democratic	3.00769(*)	.21587	.000

* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

The result of the analysis in Table 4 showed that respondents whose leadership was liaze fairre were significantly different in their sustainable development from those whose leadership was either democratic or autocratic. Also respondents whose leadership was democratic were significantly different from those who were autocratic in sustainable development.

Discussion of Findings

This section is primary concerned with the discussion of findings that emerged from the results of the analysis. The discussion is presented according to the variables of the study.

The result of the first hypothesis revealed that Leadership has a significant influence on changing the society. The findings of this hypothesis is in line with the views of Bacchetta and Jauson (2011) who observed that the changes we saw then were influenced by factors such as world war, falling birth rate as well as new work pattern. Others includes cultural diversity, general prosperity arising from industrial revolution and the impact of the enlightenment. James (2010) also said that the change in the society involves different roles for women. That women involves themselves in the workplace and also attended colleges in greater number. Before now, women were derogated to the house wives position and other menial activities at home and in the farms. The change in the society really involved women standing from enlightenment period. When women started to be employed their take-home carrying was not equal to that of men. The rising up of women activities made the error to be corrected. Open awareness women recognize the use of birth control measures to control the number of children they want to born. In many developed countries, families are small and can be more focus on emotional attachment and the nurturing of children.

The result of the second hypothesis revealed that leadership significantly influenced sustainable development. The findings of this hypothesis is in line with the views of Miller, (2003) who observed that what makes a good leader great is his ability to find the balance between business foresight, performance and character. Great leaders have vision, courage, integrity, focus and humility. He went further to state that the ability to plan strategically and analyse how to co-operate amongst their team set him as a great leader who have the quality to manage and carry others along. Perret (2005) also alleged that good leaders are also strong communicators. In fact, many people practice public speaking as a career in order for them to be perfect once they become leaders. Although talking in front of crowds is a top fear to many people, conquering this fear is what makes a good leader. If one was ready to overcome fear in public speaking, that the person should start now in a learning process little by little,

step-by-step, then the rest will become history. This is to say that, to be a leader one must undergo a learning process.

Allen (2010) also noted that great leaders lead by example to truly earn the will of their followers. He said the ability to commit to this principle makes him a good and great leader. The most important contribution a leader can make to his company, is to be a leader that can accept responsibility for results.

Conclusion/Recommendations

Based on findings of the study it was concluded that leadership has a significant influence on changing the society and sustainable development. Based on the results it was recommended that;

1. Only those who are responsible, matured in character and have pass through some kind of experience are recommended for leadership.
2. For sustainable development to be a reality changing the society must include a change in individual mind set both physically and psychologically.
3. All gender must be carried along and given equal opportunities to lead especially once qualified to do so.

REFERENCES

- Allen, F. L. (2010). *An Internal History of the 1920*. Perennial. New York.
- Arkin, A. (2006). Parental involvement, interest and schooling and school environment as predictors of academic self-efficacy among fresh secondary school students in Oyo state, Nigeria. *Electronic journal of Research in Educational psychology*, 5(3); 163-175.
- Bacchetta, M. and Jansen, M. (ed) (2011). *Making Globalization socially sustainable* WTO and ILO Geneva and Switzerland.
- Church Planting Partriers International manual (2000). Abuja: Citec villas.
- Human development report (HDR) (2007). United Nations Development programme. November.
- Ihejiamazu, E. C. (2002). *Sociology of Nigerian Rural society*. African scholars publishing Company. Owerri.
- James, C. (2010). In <http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/3203>. Retrieved 6th June, 2019.
- Kennedy, D. (2011). *Leadership control in America: The career of managerial Sanger*. New haven: Yale University press.
- Miller, N. (2003). *New world coming: The 1920s and the making of modern America*. New York: Scribner.
- Offiong, D. A. (2013). *Globalization and Africa Reverse Robin Hoodism*. Lagos: Apex Books Ltd.
- Ottong, J. G. (2006). *Inaugural lecture series*. Calabar: Andonai Publishing House.
- Pearce, F. and Warford, O. (2005). *The radical Durkheim in George Ritz* (ed) encyclopedia social theory thousand oaks. California.
- Perret, G. (2005). *America in the twenties*. New York: Touchstone.
- Umoh, J. O. (2013). *Elements of Sociology of Religion*. Ikot Ekpene: Iwoh and Sons Ent.