

Call for Book Chapters

Accountable Governance and Ethical Practices in Africa's Public Sector

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1. Brief Description

Ethics is the quest for a life worth living, putting every activity and goal in its place, and knowing what is worth doing and what is not worth doing. It is also, within business itself, keeping in mind what is ultimately important and essential, what is legitimately part of business, and what is forbidden, even (Onyebuchi, 2011; Fisher, 2004; Solomon, 1994). Hence, organizations have often incorporated ethical norms into their mission statement and corporate codes and espoused a commitment to corporate responsibility (Fisher, 2004).

Over the last few decades, the business ethics domain has increasingly drawn significant research attention (Albaum & Peterson, 2006; Purwanto, Mukharrom, Zhilyakov, Pamuji, & Shankar, 2019; Sroka & Lőrinczy, 2015; Trevino & Nelson, 2016). In addition to academic scholars, business or corporate practitioners' interests in ethical leadership (Heyler et al., 2016) also appear to be central in driving a global focus on the need for a higher moral standard and consistently ethical behaviour on the part of many corporate managers and business organisations (Bazerman & Sezer, 2016; Karassavidou & Glaveli, 2006). The widely publicised ethical misconducts involving WorldCom, Arthur Andersen, Tyco and Enron among others highlighted the importance of the issue for the private sector (Bazerman & Sezer, 2016) and emphasised that gaps in ethical conduct occur across both developed and developing economies (Albaum & Peterson, 2006).

At the same time, the public sector has also been plagued by ethical challenges for many decades and, in this book, we are particularly concerned about the African continent. Hope (1999) argued that governance gaps in Africa reflect a climate of unethical leadership found throughout most of the continent. Two years later (2001), the UNDP also published a two-volume report titled 'Public Service Ethics in Africa'¹ in which they found, amongst other things, that:

- African countries have values, standards and laws against corruption, unethical acts, and incidents of maladministration. However, the laws are sometimes outdated and may not sufficiently cover technical developments or social trends.
- there are difficulties in applying existing specific anti-corruption laws due to the complexity of the text and the onerous burden of proof in a crime that is not often visible
- the management and control of the conduct of public servants continue to be problematic

¹ <https://publicadministration.un.org/publications/content/PDFs/E-Library%20Archives/2001%20Public%20Service%20Ethics%20in%20Africa,%20Vol.%201.pdf>

- whilst many anti-corruption institutions have been effective in fighting corruption and unethical behaviour, the lack of sufficient resources to fulfil their mandate remains a major problem
- the prevention of outright corruption or even of inadvertent violation of standards has not been given proper attention through ethics advice or counselling
- governments need to enhance their transparency by sharing information about their activities.

The findings above point to grave challenges to public service ethics in Africa and the situation two decades later does not seem very different. Africa currently faces enormous challenges in its efforts to achieve sustainable human development. The public service, as an institution, has a critical role to play in the development of a nation. When the public service is weak and underperforming, the private sector might also not experience the resilience it deserves. These phenomena are not unique to Africa. A poor ethical culture is a menace to the achievement of public sector efficiency and thus to sustainable development anywhere in the world. This new book on accountable governance and ethical conduct in Africa seeks to explore the challenges faced in the continent in the public sector ethics, uncover the underlying reasons and offer possible solutions leveraging healthier political systems, greater inclusivity and more extensive digitalization.

If you are interested in contributing a chapter to this book, please EITHER select an option from the ones below and send in an expanded abstract of 500 words OR send in a 500-word abstract suggesting what you would like to write about, in line with the book's concept, to kogunyemi@lbs.edu.ng by the 25th of March, 2021. This abstract should be accompanied by a 300-word bio introducing you. Authors of accepted abstracts will be notified by the 28th of March and invited to submit full chapters by the 29th of June 2021.

2. **Tentative Table of Contents** (*flexible; please also propose abstracts for other chapters that you think may fit into the book*)

Chapter 1: Introduction: Higher standards of ethical conduct and accountability in governance are needed to resolve ethical problems in Africa if the continent is to achieve her developmental agenda. Hope (1999) describes corruption in Africa as a crisis in ethical leadership. Unethical leaders are likely to allow unethical and inappropriate behavior that tend to systemically hinder optimum economic and social performance. The introductory aspect of the book will introduce foundational concepts for fostering ethics and accountability in governance in Africa. It will also explain the three-part structure of the book: Part A will focus on Public Administration and Ethics in Africa; Part B will focus on Accountability, Governance and Public Administration in Africa while Part C will focus on Anti-Corruption and Public Administration in Africa. The expected content of each part is discussed below.

Part A: Public Administration and Ethics in Africa

The four chapters in this section will focus on ethics and public administration in Africa:

Chapter 2: Understanding Ethics and Public Administration in Africa

Chapter 2 will examine the concept of ethics in public administration in Africa and will present the key ethical issues in public administration in Africa, the challenges in changing the status quo and the ways in which ethical practices can be ensured in public administration. The author(s) can use either empirical or theoretical approaches.

Chapter 3: Public Service Structures in Africa

Chapter 3, in Part A, will focus on the Public Service Structure (PSS) in Africa. The chapter will identify the usual structures adopted in public services in Africa, describe their modus operandi and discuss the extent to which this is likely to enhance or hinder ethical practices.

Chapter 4 : The Role of Boards and Ethical Compliance in Public Sector Institutions in Africa

Board and ethical compliance committees are regulatory bodies for the delivery of public service. This chapter closely examines their roles in public sector institutions in Africa and assesses the challenges they face in ensuring an ethical public service system is put in place.

Chapter 5: The Role of Non-Governmental/Civil Society Actors in Public Sector Ethical Compliance

Chapter 5 looks into the role of civil society actors in public sector ethical compliance. Civil societies often have the goal of checkmating government excesses through their demand for functional government institutions. For instance, the actions of the Nigerian Labour Congress have countered various anti-people policies by the government and its intuitions and forced the government to rescind different decisions with regard to fuel price hikes, excessive power tariffs and the minimum wage in past years.

Part B: Accountability, Governance and Public Administration in Africa

Increased accountability among leaders in public offices in Africa is one clear solution that would address the root causes of corruption and other unethical practices. This part of the book will explore issues of accountability and governance in public administration in Africa. The following four chapters will be part of this section:

Chapter 6: Accountable Governance in Public Administration

Accountability is an important attribute in leadership which if espoused will serve as deterrent to unethical practices. This chapter examines the concept of accountability in public administration, the current issues surrounding accountability in public administration in Africa and how these challenges can be addressed.

Chapter 7: Government Interference and Public Sector Independence

Public sector independence is important for an enhanced accountability. This chapter explores to what extent government involvement in the activities of public enterprises influences the accountability of and ethical behaviour in the enterprise positively or negatively – when it becomes interference. The public sector is supposed to be largely independent in their dealings, for the purpose of effectiveness and efficiency.

Chapter 8: Public Service Performance Management and Appraisal

Performance management is crucial in examining the progress or otherwise of the organisation. When the right performance management practice is put in place, the organisation can always appraise how much of their goals have been achieved, what need to be done to stabilise their progress or what needs to be introduced to achieve positive change, fairness and equity. A fair performance management and an unbiased appraisal process also keep public service organisations in due check. This chapter is therefore anchored on how performance management and appraisal is done in the public service.

Chapter 9: Conflicts of Interest in Public Sector Organizations

Conflict of interest is an inevitable social occurrence which therefore occur in public service organizations as well. A public official may find his private interest in conflict with a duty to carry out official responsibility and this can prove precarious for ethical and effective public service administration if not properly handled. This chapter will examine the core issues in conflict of interest and how it affects public service delivery in Africa. Appropriate solutions towards having structures that minimize and manage the occurrence of conflict of interest will be offered.

Part C: Anti-Corruption and Public Administration in Africa

Part C of the book will explore anti-corruption and public administration in Africa. Our major focus here will be to highlight and discuss possible ways to prevent and or stifle corrupt practices in the public sector. The following three chapters and the concluding chapter of the book are included in this section:

Chapter 10: Anti-Corruption Initiatives in Africa's Public Sector

Chapter 10 will take a holistic view of the fight against corruption in Africa. It will explore the cause of corruption and its effect on the performance of public organisations. Also, the nature of corrupt practices in the public sector will be discussed. Furthermore, anti-corruption initiatives in Africa and the extent to which they have been able to curb corruption will also be reviewed.

Chapter 11 : Challenges to Building Public Service Ethics in Africa

The challenges in building an ethically conscious public service in Africa will be reviewed in this chapter. Identifying the challenges that has rendered the sector less effective than it could be will help provide strategies to remove these challenges and put in place appropriate structures for the performance of the sector in Africa.

Chapter 12: Digital Innovation towards Sustainable Public Administration

One key solution required by the public sector is digital innovation. Theorists such as Max Webber have spoken about the rigidity in a public sector which makes it reject changes, even those that will aid its performance. This chapter will examine how public sector institutions in Africa have interfaced with digital innovation thus far and how they can harness the opportunities of digitization. The structures and systems to be put in place before adopting digital innovation will also be explored.

Chapter 13: Conclusion: Public Sector Ethics in Africa: Where are we and where do we go from here?

The book concludes by synthesizing the findings, evaluating the current realities of African nations regarding public sector ethical practices and summarizing the recommended solutions that the authors suggest will anchor the desired changes that will lead the continent to greater sustainable development.

3. Additional Information

- (a) Expected chapter length: 5,000 to 6,000 words.
- (b) Unifying structure: introduction and context-setting; main body (*themes, and sub-themes*), including any charts, tables, and boxes; evidence from the five sub-regions of Africa; a mini-case; recommendations; conclusion; references; 200-word summary; five keywords
- (c) Timelines:
 - March 25: Chapter abstracts due
 - March 28: Notification of accepted abstracts
 - June 29: Full chapters due
 - July 5: Notification of chapters accepted for review
 - July 15: Peer review process starts (*each contributing author to review two co-authored chapters*)
 - August 15: Reviews due
 - September 8: Reviews and comments sent to authors
 - October 11: Final chapters due
 - November 1 to 2: Notification of accepted final chapters
 - November 28: Manuscript sent to publishers

4. Final Note to Prospective Author(s)

Please take a look at the timeline above and join us in carrying out this important project by sending in your 500-word abstract by the 25th of March 2021. Send to kogunyemi@lbs.edu.ng. Please note the timing for the peer review process and keep it on your radar as we will need everyone's collaboration to complete the project.

References

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