

May 2023

Servant Leadership: A Powerful Paradigm for Effective Leadership in Africa

Franklin Ezeorah
ezeorahfrank@yahoo.com

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholar.stjohns.edu/jovsa>



Part of the [Arts and Humanities Commons](#), [Business Commons](#), [Curriculum and Instruction Commons](#), [Curriculum and Social Inquiry Commons](#), [Disability and Equity in Education Commons](#), [Educational Methods Commons](#), [Law Commons](#), [Life Sciences Commons](#), [Medicine and Health Sciences Commons](#), [Scholarship of Teaching and Learning Commons](#), and the [Urban Studies and Planning Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Ezeorah, Franklin (2023) "Servant Leadership: A Powerful Paradigm for Effective Leadership in Africa," *Journal of Vincentian Social Action*: Vol. 7: Iss. 1, Article 13.
Available at: <https://scholar.stjohns.edu/jovsa/vol7/iss1/13>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at St. John's Scholar. It has been accepted for inclusion in *Journal of Vincentian Social Action* by an authorized editor of St. John's Scholar. For more information, please contact JoVSA@stjohns.edu.

SERVANT LEADERSHIP: A POWERFUL PARADIGM FOR EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP IN AFRICA

Franklin Ezeorah

ABSTRACT

Lack of good leadership is the greatest undoing of African progress. Unfortunately, good leadership for Africans is not just mirroring the western leadership system but adapting to a style of leadership that is attractive to African people's way of life and effective for African people's development and well-being. Because leadership is a crucial determining factor for the success of all economic, political, and organizational structures, determining an essential leadership style for a nation-state largely depends on how suitable the style can fit into the complex challenges facing such a nation-state. Considering the viability and profitability of the servant leadership style in Africa due to its suitability to the African worldview, this paper examines why the leadership style is preferred in the African context. Toulmin Argumentation Model (TAM) is employed to explain how the servant leadership style is adjudged the best to generate credible leaders that will move Africa forward in terms of catching up with other great economically and politically viable powers.

INTRODUCTION

Africa has embattled many problems, but the lack of good leadership is the greatest undoing of African progress. A dominant figure in modern African literature and a renowned Nigerian poet, novelist, and political critic, Chinua Achebe, unequivocally asserts that "...the trouble with Nigeria (and arguably Africa) is simply and squarely a failure of leadership" (Achebe, 1984). Leadership is a crucial determining factor for the success of all economic, political, and organizational structures (Qi et al., 2013). Determining an essential leadership style for a corporate system or a nation-state largely depends on how suitable the style can fit into the complex challenges facing such an organization or nation-state. In the case of Africa, such challenges include linguistic, religious, cultural, and socio-economic complexities and diversities. This paper assesses the viability and profitability of the servant leadership style in Africa. An effort is made to lean into the predominant African worldview to examine to what extent African culture and context lend themselves to the servant leadership archetype.

CLARIFICATION OF THE KEY CONCEPT

The phrase "servant leadership" was coined by Robert K. Greenleaf in his 1970 essay entitled "The Servant Leadership" (Polansky, 2017). Most attempts at the definition of servant leadership from multiple scholars always boil down to the descriptions of what, why, and how servant leaders behave toward their followers. This emphasis on servant leaders' behavior has resulted in many authors weighing in on the topic of servant leadership, with each formulating their perspectives. Mackenzie (2003) highlights the danger of formulating a meaningful theoretical framework on a shaky philosophical framework. That notwithstanding, many critical scholars have tried to sharpen the understanding of the concept of servant leadership. Although there is no comprehensive definition of servant leadership, even from Greenleaf, the phrase has been used to depict leaders who are "servant first" and try to focus on the needs of the people they serve (O'Brien, 2010). This "servant first" attribute of the servant leader is a meaningful aspect of the conceptualization of servant leadership that has motivated scholars

to research the topic. Eva et al. (2019) paint a comprehensive picture of "servant leadership" in their systematic review as "an other-oriented approach to leadership manifested through one-on-one prioritizing of follower individual needs and interests, and outward reorienting of their concern for self toward concern for others within the organization and the larger community." The notion of "servant first" is in contradistinction with "leader first," which designates leaders motivated by the need to assuage their power ambition or to facilitate their selfish greed. Unlike a "leader first" pattern of leadership, a servant leader functions as a team player in his/her leadership circle—listening and acknowledging the perspectives of his/her team and working to accomplish the collective goals/aspirations of the team members (O'Brien, 2010; Polansky, 2017). In other words, servant leadership highlights the importance of community, acknowledging team members as collaborators and/or stakeholders rather than seeing them as people subject to a chain of command. One massive advantage of servant leadership is its potential to increase innovation. People with a servant leadership mentality are more amenable to facilitating rather than leading, empowering, or delegating instead of lording over others and collaborating rather than denying others the opportunity to make contributions (O'Brien, 2010).

In hierarchical, autocratic cultures and societies that follow the traditional pyramid leadership style—a top-down approach to leadership—servant leaders may find it challenging to earn respect. In such hierarchical, autocratic cultures, people are already used to leaders that generally accumulate and exercise power from the "top of the pyramid" and may find it challenging to adapt to the style of servant leaders who engage people from the "bottom of the pyramid" (Gupta, 2013; Marshall, 2022).

"... servant leadership highlights the importance of community, acknowledging team members as collaborators and/or stakeholders rather than seeing them as people subject to a chain of command."

From the foregoing, the goal of servant leaders is to serve their communities, and this commitment to service is demonstrated in the areas of access, communication, and support. Servant leaders should reflect the needs of the communities/organizations they serve by making themselves accessible to those communities/organizations. Servant leadership carries a great attribute exemplified in the interactions between the leaders and the led, geared toward forging a better life and security for all. Providing leadership should not be restricted to dishing-out information through technology or social media; however, it should be concretized in human moments and interactions between leaders and followers (Li, 2010). At any rate, followers deserve access to their leaders who recognize their collective needs and help realize

their communal purpose (Minelgaite et al., 2018). Similarly, another attribute that makes servant leaders effective is recognizing the importance of communication. It has been suggested that communication has the potential to reinforce a sense of "cooperative helpfulness and mutual support" (Manning & Curtis, 2004). Again, followers need to be sufficiently supported by their leaders to perform their utmost

best. Servant leaders realize they have more chances of success by "fostering the achievement of their followers' goals, needs, and aspirations" and supporting them with concrete gestures. Servant leadership follows the biblical recommendation of Jesus to his apostles during the Last Supper when he washed their feet and asked them to serve others as their leaders (cf. Matthew 26:14-39).

SERVANT LEADERSHIP AS A PHILOSOPHY OF LIVING

The impression of the proponents of servant leadership is an emphasis on the servant leader's way of life as opposed to a traditional leadership philosophy. In other words, servant leadership is more of "a way of being, a philosophy of living and

influencing” and does not follow a set of techniques or activities (Wheeler, 2012). Because it is a non-traditional leadership philosophy, servant leadership finds expression in a group of behaviors and practices that primarily emphasize the well-being of those being served. Besides, servant leadership is described as a philosophy of life specifically because servant leaders are driven by the teleological impetus to assist or help others (Pressentin, 2022).

Against this backdrop, servant leadership is an integral part of traditional African leadership. Scholars increasingly believe that servant leadership conforms to the principles of African *ubuntu* philosophy—the belief in the universal bond of sharing and connectedness among humanity (Alan et al., 2020). It is important to note that the *ubuntu* way of life, practiced in some parts of Africa, like among the Zulu kingdom in South Africa, is not the only African culture that shares the principles that align with servant leadership. For example, the Igbo tribe of Nigeria shares a leadership structure called "oha ana eze," literally denoting the dynamic relationship between "the community, the people, and the king." The terminology oha na eze captures the essence of governance in Igboland since the leader (*eze*) is simply a delegated messenger, chosen by the people (*oha*) to do their bidding, employing the leader's talents and skills (Olayode, 2010). In Igbo traditional and political settings, the dynamics of *oha ana eze* is an interesting concept, which, just like *ubuntu*, encapsulates the significant characteristics of servant leadership. Within this framework, the actual power resides with the people, especially when they gather as a community. To this extent, *oha na eze* is suggestive of "leadership directed by the people" (Olayode, 2010).

The servant leadership character of the Igbo political system is located majorly at the administrative level of government, where the decision-making authority resides in the general assembly with everyone participating—a system that is characterized as *ohacracy* (*oha ana eze*), suggesting a democratic brand of government, known as "government by the people" (Achebe, 1994). President Abraham Lincoln's definition of democracy as "government

of the people, for the people, and by the people" has largely shaped the societal understanding of democracy, which in many ways conforms to its original derivation from the Greek words *demos* meaning "people" and *kratia* meaning "rule or government" (Malloy & Boulter, 2019). That notwithstanding, the same principles that guide the *oha na eze* are technically the principles guiding *ubuntu* philosophy, including "the principles of freedom, equality, justice, free enterprise, and struggle to preserve the Igbo corporate existence" (Aliye, 2020; Olayode, 2010). However, while *oha na eze* retains the permanent features of *ubuntu*, it does not go by the designation *ubuntu*.

Accounting for the historical development of Igbo society, famous historians and anthropologists, including Meek (1937), Green (1947), Uchendu (1965), and Isichei (1976), have described Igbo society as "acephalous," "stateless," or "segmentary" (Ibenekwu, 2010). These characterizations are predicated on the egalitarian lifestyle of the pre-colonial Igbo society. Suffice it to say that the pre-colonial political administration in Igboland had a different picture than what is seen in the area today. Although there are residues of the structural setup all over Igboland, they no longer carry the weight or command the kind of respect they wielded before the coming of the colonial masters. Consequently, it could be argued that pre-colonial flourishing African societies were built on a traditional African leadership pattern resembling the servant leadership style. Unfortunately, this traditional African leadership style has been significantly degraded, if not eliminated, in favor of the western style of government as suggested by the Igbo concept of leadership traditionally underscored above as *oha na eze*.

Experts on implicit leadership theories suggest that human knowledge is contextually driven, and cultures have expectations of the kind of behaviors they want in their leaders to judge them as influential leaders (Altman et al., 2005; Cheng, 2005). The people's beliefs in the expected behaviors of leaders are consistent with "super-ordinate leadership prototypes, which are highly influenced by societal-level culture" (Roccas et al., 2017).

These beliefs appear to conform with the cognitive categorization theory that people's inundation of information and experience leads to the slow development of cognitive structures that help people process data efficiently (Fitzpatrick, 2019). These mental structures (or schema) are significantly impacted by culture such that the general notions of good and evil in governmental contexts may be persuasively different across cultures (Fitzpatrick, 2019; Thomas & Peterson, 2016). By extension, cultural perceptions of appropriate leaders' behaviors are probably determined by their effective leadership in that culture.

Considering that servant leadership is primarily democratic, the centrality of leadership in some societies offers unprecedented popularity to the concept of democracy. However, answering the name "democracy" does not qualify a government as democratic; instead, what gives democracy its proper status is how the values and norms govern the society it lives by. While not professing ignorance that democracy may not be an ideal system of government, it seems better than its alternatives in some cultural contexts. This view may have motivated a political scientist, Ibenekwu (2010), to argue that the societal structure inherently carries unique challenges that require unique solutions. The problem with modern liberal democracy is its tendency to adopt a "one size fits all" approach in seeking solutions to problems facing every society, forgetting that some nationalities or states are uniquely positioned in structure for different methods. To this extent, before the colonial era, what is now called Nigeria was made up of fragmented ethnic nationalities, each with its own peculiar systems of government or institutions of governance to suit the peculiarities of the ethnic groups involved (Ibenekwu, 2010). However, the western system of governance adopted by the post-colonial Nigerian state could not totally and uniquely address the challenges faced by some aspects of the region, given their geographical and cultural positions as well as their conflict with Igbo traditional leadership and socio-economic realities (Ibenekwu, 2010).

Religiously speaking, most African countries can be partitioned into three significant religious practices: traditional/indigenous, Christian, and Islamic. The Christian and Islamic religions were the results of foreign influences. However, it is safe to assume that most African countries embraced both religions because of their servant leadership features. Even after the intrusion of foreign influence with the superimposition of western civilizations on Africa, the continent still retained the substructure suited for servant leadership. It is essential to note that superimposing foreign cultures and religions on Africa resulted in a less-functional mismatch in terms of development and progress.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study employed Toulmin Argumentation Model (TAM), developed by philosopher Stephen E. Toulmin, as an argumentative style that breaks argument down into six parts: claim, grounds, warrant, qualifier, rebuttal, and backing (Aziz & Ahmad, 2017). In line with the Toulmin model, the servant leadership style is adjudged the best to generate credible leaders that will move Africa forward in terms of catching up with other great economically viable powers. Many exploratory and experimental studies have ascertained how suitable servant leadership would be in Africa. Amah (2018) insists that the justification for the servant leadership paradigm is because of the glaring inefficiency of command-and-control styles—prevalent in most African nations as the legacy of foreign influence—and the remarkable national progress registered when servant leaders were in governance. For instance, within the culture that gave birth to ubuntu philosophy emerged an influential leader, Nelson Mandela, who became globally hailed as a quintessential servant leader due to his transformational leadership after the apartheid (Alan et al., 2020). According to Özerdem et al. (2021), Mandela's exemplary leadership brought about stability and healing of the wounds of apartheid. His leadership style was largely successful due to his adoption of a coalition government that upheld political participation and inclusion—a hallmark of servant leadership—to achieve national

unity. Similarly, President Kagame adopted a servant leadership style in the rebuilding process of post-genocidal Rwanda, insisting on a servant-first that uplifted his people from the hopelessness of the devastation of war to a vibrant futuristic economy in Rwanda (Biedermann, 2016).

Considering the successes registered in the few African countries that have tried the servant leadership style, it is safe to conclude that servant leadership is a blueprint for African nations and constitutes hope for progress. Biedermann (2016), while commenting on the progress made in Rwanda, remarked that the country possessed many attributes that made “transformative leadership with a developmental vision” the ideal leadership structure for improvement. When leadership aligns with a people’s cultural practices, it makes it conducive to mobilizing people to become part of the leadership, thereby forging their progress.

In other words, transformational leadership appears to be more effective than transactional leadership in Africa. Without fully understanding the ramifications of servant leadership's success in Africa, additional research needs to be conducted to study why Mandela and Kagame succeeded in their respective African countries, considering that many leaders before them—applying command-and-control leadership style—could not make any positive mark in leadership. Some may argue that more than just a few cases of success is needed to guarantee the overall success of servant leadership in Africa in the long run. Moreover, some scholars fear that all team members might not fully accept the servant leader's commitment to building community among them (Mutia & Muthamia, 2016). This refusal to accept a servant leader may arise because of some team members' different perceptions of leadership and specific expectations from the leader(s) at the helm of affairs (Mutia & Muthamia, 2016). However, because servant leadership is specifically for serving the people, the African continent has nothing to lose for trying it out.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATION

The foregoing discussion on servant leadership implies that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to

leadership, especially considering the diversity in culture and worldview. Most Western civilizations tend to present their leadership as a paradigm for other nations. In the Middle East, the attempt to present one culture as the standard for all other cultures is a phenomenon characterized by some scholars as “westoxification”—the impression that western culture pollutes essential ideas of the Middle East/their religion (Beck, 2018; Deylami, 2011). Alternatively, some have characterized the same phenomenon as globalization—the idea that the world's cultures, economies, and populations are interdependent but are pushed primarily by western nations and project western cultures as the ideal (Beck, 2018; Deylami, 2011). However, the fact remains that no evidence supports traditional leadership styles as suited for all cultures. What is, in fact, evident from experiences from various cultures is the failure of the traditional leadership model in most non-Western cultures. The most decisive proof of its failure could be seen in African countries, which were getting by in the largely peaceful communal and family-oriented form of leadership before Western colonialism, as underscored above.

Unlike the traditional leadership model that is inherently power-conscious and patriarchal (mostly favoring men and the powerful and subjugating women and the poor), servant leadership is more service-oriented and deemphasized authority. The authority of the servant leader derives precisely from the leader's exemplary life and the ability to persuade the followers to tag along with set goals and objectives. The failure of traditional leadership in an egalitarian culture like Africa is the tendency of leaders to make unilateral decisions without consideration of the superior knowledge of some of their subordinates. This attempt to make decisions devoid of contributions from followers makes traditional leaders amenable to insensitivity to others' plight as well as unavailability for dialogue and consultations and leaves them with a feeling of entitlement to unique treatments. The servant leadership model finds its efficacy in considering the people's culture as the base of leadership. This consideration helps servant leaders be more accountable team players, empower others, and

adopt an open-minded approach to leadership.

From the preceding, it could be argued that African culture, like the Igbo culture of Nigeria, is best suited for servant leadership to yield effective results in development and progress. Africans need to rediscover servant leadership and rebrand it as an authentically African style of government. That way, they will leave a lasting impression on the community they serve and become more impactful on the global stage. Because most African countries share certain structural foundations that lend themselves to servant leadership—including traditional religion, cultures, ethics, and morality—a leadership style neglectful of or culturally insensitive to or ethically/morally inadequate for its sociocultural and religious values may not yield the best results in Africa. According to Mligo (2013), most traditional African religions have similar attributes that characterize God as a supreme being but go by different names like Nguluvi, Kazoba, and Mulungu, arising from experiences of God's providence in various tribes. For instance, while the Ashanti people of Ghana believe that God created all things in an orderly fashion, the Zulu people of South Africa believe in the ongoing creation of God (Mligo, 2013).

Similarly, Agbiji & Agbiji (2020) believe that despite myriads of cultures, sub-Saharan Africa constitutes a specific cultural context, pointing to such commonalities as morality and other cultural signifiers as the common denominators defining African shared identity. This belief also finds expression in John Mbiti's perception of religion as permeating every aspect of life, including African political and socio-economic life, to the extent that it cannot be glossed over in any meaningful conversation about leadership (Udok, 2020). Apart from sharing these good sides of culture, African countries share a "high level of poverty, unaccountable leadership, and corruption in the private and public life of persons and in public institutions" (Agbiji & Agbiji, 2020). Building concrete leadership in an African context depends on how the leadership style aligns with African cosmology or worldview in a way that answers their

current concerns. Interestingly, servant leadership appears to be the right fit for such a religious worldview, given its ethical emphasis on essential virtues that Africans hold dear.

Finally, servant leadership has a powerful implication for communication because effective communication develops when leaders understand the people they are in conversation with. Servant leaders do this well by understanding their team members based on their motivations, cultures, ideologies, and interests. As a result, servant leaders work with people to get them to function and be creative based on their cultural dispositions, which is why servant leadership is an outstanding leadership style for the African culture. The effectiveness of servant leadership in Africa derives from the ability of servant leaders to create personal connections with team members and followers, facilitating empathy, which is a hallmark of trust building. It is the trust that exists between servant leaders and their followers that enables effective communication.

CONCLUSION

Servant leadership is a powerful paradigm for effective leadership in Africa. In light of evidence from scanty literature on servant leadership in Africa, it is essential to project servant leadership as an experimental panacea for the African sociopolitical quagmire and its financial and developmental paralysis. With the backwardness of most African societies today, effective leadership becomes a prerequisite for any meaningful headway politically, economically, socially, and developmentally. According to Kyei-Poakwa (2021), the African continent primarily suffers from leadership that ranges from simply unproductive to completely dishonest and damaging to African development. Given the African cultural and religious climate, any leadership style that does not respect people's freedom nor care for people's interests and well-being is less likely to succeed in Africa. Having seen the tremendous successes recorded by a few African leaders who adopted the servant leadership style, it is essential to suggest that Africa must assess the entire leadership culture. This paper is not about the gradation of leadership styles

but about which is best suited for African cultural and geographic contexts. From the African cultures examined in this piece, it is evident that African culture does not support transactional leadership

but leadership by example. Servant leadership, therefore, becomes a model of leadership that should be adopted across the African continent for the hope of progress and collective well-being.

REFERENCES

- Achebe, C. (1984). *The trouble with Nigeria*. Heinemann.
- Achebe, C. (1994). Things fall apart. 1958. *Anchor*.
- Agbiji, O., & Agbiji, E. O. (2020). The role of religious practitioners in sustaining social morality. In *The Palgrave Handbook of African social ethics* (pp. 501–523). Springer.
- Alan, Y., Arrais, J., Çelik, G., Chan, K. W., Crippen, C., Hean, L. L., Horsethief, C., Koshal, J. O., Leider, R., & Lim, P. (2020). *Global servant-leadership: Wisdom, love, and legitimate power in the age of chaos*. Lexington Books.
- Aliye, A. A. (2020). African indigenous leadership philosophy and democratic governance system: Gada's intersectionality with Ubuntu. *Journal of Black Studies*, 51(7), 727–759. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0021934720938053>
- Altman, Y., Simpson, R., Baruch, Y., & Burke, R. J. (2005). Reframing the 'glass ceiling' debate. In *Supporting Women's Career Advancement: Challenges and Opportunities* (pp. 58–81). <https://www.elgaronline.com/display/9781843766339.00010.xml>
- Amah, O. E. (2018). *Globalisation and leadership in Africa: Developments and challenges for the future*. Springer.
- Aziz, F. I. A., & Ahmad, U. K. (2017). Persuasive writing: How students argue. *Sains Humanika*, 9(4–2). <https://doi.org/10.11113/sh.v9n4-2.1356>
- Beck, U. (2018). *What is globalization?* John Wiley & Sons.
- Biedermann, Z. (2016). The case of Rwanda as a developmental state. In *Entrepreneurship and SME management across Africa* (pp. 139–157). Springer.
- Cheng, Y. C. (2005). *New paradigm for re-engineering education: Globalization, localization and individualization* (Vol. 6). Springer. <https://doi.org/10.1007/1-4020-3620-5>
- Deylami, S. S. (2011). In the face of the machine: Westoxification, cultural globalization, and the making of an alternative global modernity. *Polity*, 43(2), 242–263. DOI:10.1057/pol.2010.27
- Eva, N., Robin, M., Sendjaya, S., Van Dierendonck, D., & Liden, R. C. (2019). Servant leadership: A systematic review and call for future research. *The leadership quarterly*, 30(1), 111–132. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2018.07.004>
- Fitzpatrick, F. (2019). *Understanding intercultural interaction: An analysis of key concepts*. Emerald Group Publishing.
- Green, M. M. (1947). *Ibo village affairs: Chiefly with reference to the village of Umueke Agbaja*. Sidgwick & Jackson Ltd.
- Gupta, S. (2013). Serving the "Bottom of Pyramid"—A servant leadership perspective. *Journal of Leadership, Accountability and Ethics*, 10(3), 98–106.

- Ibenekwu, I. E. (2010).
Igbo traditional political system and the crisis of governance in Nigeria. *Ikoru: Journal of the Institute of African Studies*, 9(1-2).
- Isichei, E. (1976).
A history of the Igbo people.
Macmillan Press Ltd.
- Kyei-Poakwa, D. (2021).
Restoring the traditional quality of African leadership: Perspectives from the diaspora (Doctoral dissertation, Antioch University).
<https://aura.antioch.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1725&context=etds>
- Li, C. (2010). *Open leadership: How social technology can transform the way you lead*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Mackenzie, S. B. (2003).
The danger of poor construct conceptualization. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 31, 323–326.
- Malloy, T. H., & Boulter, C. (2019).
Minority Issues in Europe: New Ideas and Approaches: Volume 2 (Vol. 2). Frank & Timme GmbH.
- Manning, G., & Curtis, K. (2004).
The art of leadership. *The TQM Magazine*, 16(3), 225–226.
- Marshall, R. C. (2022).
Leadership models, processes, and practices. In *Clinical Informatics Study Guide: Text and Review* (pp. 263–283). Springer.
- Meek, C. K. (1937).
Law and authority in a Nigerian tribe: A study of indirect rule. Oxford University Press.
- Minelgaite, I., Guðmundsdóttir, S., Guðmundsdóttir, Á. E., & Stangej, O. (2018). *Demystifying leadership in Iceland: An inquiry into cultural, societal, and entrepreneurial uniqueness*. Springer. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-96044-9>
- Mligo, E. S. (2013).
Elements of African traditional religion: A textbook for students of comparative religion. Wipf and Stock Publishers.
- Mutia, P. M., & Muthamia, S. (2016).
The dichotomy of servant leadership and its practicality on the African continent. *International Journal for Innovation, Education and Research*, 4(5), 130-145.
<https://doi.org/10.31686/ijer.vol4.iss5.545>
- O'Brien, M. E. (2010).
Servant leadership in nursing: Spirituality and practice in contemporary health care. Jones & Bartlett Publishers.
- Olayode, K. (2010).
Self-determination, ethno-nationalism and conflicts in Nigeria. *Department of International Relations, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife*. https://www.academia.edu/24024212/Kehinde_OLAYODE_Self-Determination_Ethno_Nationalism_and_Conflicts_in_Nigeria
- Özerdem, A., Açıkmeşe, S. A., & Liebenberg, I. (2021). *Routledge handbook of conflict response and leadership in Africa*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429318603>
- Polansky, B. (2017).
The complete dentist: Positive leadership and communication skills for success. John Wiley & Sons. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781119250838>
- Pressentin, M. (2022).
Genuine Servant Leadership (GSL) impacting employee motivation and work intentions: A special focus on Asian high power distance and vertical collectivist organizations. In *Key factors and use cases of servant leadership driving organizational performance* (pp. 54–88). IGI Global.

- Qi, E., Shen, J., & Dou, R. (2013). *The 19th international conference on industrial engineering and engineering management*. Springer. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-38433-2>
- Roccas, S., Sagiv, L., & Navon, M. (2017). Values and behavior. In *Taking a Cross-Cultural Perspective*. Springer.
- Thomas, D. C., & Peterson, M. F. (2016). *Cross-cultural management: Essential concepts*. Sage Publications.
- Uchendu, V.C. (1965). *The Igbo of southeast Nigeria*. Holt, Rinehart, and Winston.
- Udok, M. B. (2020). Culture: evaluation of concepts and definitions in relation to conflict and peacebuilding. In *Handbook of research on the impact of culture in conflict prevention and peacebuilding* (pp. 45–63). IGI Global.

- Wheeler, D. W. (2012). *Servant leadership for higher education: Principles and practices*. John Wiley & Sons.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Franklin Ezeorah is a doctoral student of Multi-Sector Communications at St. John's University. He has a considerable background in philosophy, religion, clinical psychology, and communication and studied in Africa, the United Kingdom, and the United States. As an activist and a psychologist who advocates for better governance, freedom, mental health, and well-being in Africa and around the world, Franklin has contributed numerous articles in this regard. He lives in Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn, New York, and enjoys reading and writing.