

Literature Review on Sustainable Leadership: Conceptual Foundations, Theoretical Perspectives, and Future Directions

DOI: 10.63740/a24x4q37

Dr. Kanwal Shahzadi¹ Rabia Raza²
Nyela Ashrafi³ Beenish Shabbir⁴

ABSTRACT

The increasing nature of the grand societal challenges such as climate change, social inequalities, economic variations and environmental pollution is making a change in leadership theory necessary. Sustainable leadership has come into being as a distinct leadership approach dealing with these multi-dimensional challenges. This paper presents a comprehensive literature review of the growing literature base on sustainable leadership. By following an integrative literature review approach with systematic search strategies (based on PRISMA guidelines), 74 peer reviewed sources were analysed for identifying the state of the art and gaps in concepts in sustainable leadership. The review highlights individual level mechanisms (ethical orientation, systems thinking, mindfulness, reflection and resilience) and organisational level mechanisms (sustainability standards, sustainability-focused corporate culture and stakeholders' involvement) that enable the functioning of sustainable leadership. The paper focuses on the contradictory tensions that exist in sustainable leadership and how leaders overcome the contradictory demands through integrative and paradoxical thinking. Based on the synthesis, a conceptual framework is proposed which explains the linkages among antecedents, mechanisms, contradictory tensions and outcomes of sustainable leadership. To advance the conceptualization of sustainable leadership, this paper suggests a synthesized definition, a theoretical typology and relevant research questions in accordance with theories. Furthermore, this review contextualises sustainable leadership within Islamic finance, underscoring its relevance for Shari'ah compliant ESG governance, green sukuk, and sustainable development, thereby offering a theoretical foundation for researchers and practitioners in Islamic financial institutions. Additionally, the findings offer practical implications for designing leadership development programmes and guiding organisational transformation toward sustainable practices.

Keywords: sustainable leadership, paradoxical tensions, systems thinking, stakeholder engagement, triple bottom line, Islamic finance, Integrative literature review.

JEL Classification: M14, Q56, G21

Paper Type: Literature Review (Integrative)

Submitted: 10th June 2026Revision: 25th June 2026Accepted: 28th June 2026

¹School of Business and Computing, OLC College Limited
Email: skanwal@olceurope.com

²DBA Student, Teesside University, London
Email: c2081410@live.tees.ac.uk

³Department of Business Administration, University of Poonch, Rawalakot, | Email: nyelaashrafi@upr.edu.pk

⁴Department of Business Administration, University of Poonch, Rawalakot | Email: beenish.shabbir5222@gmail.com

1. INTRODUCTION

Leadership has been recognized as a key determinant of organisational success for many decades, with numerous academic efforts made to uncover its intricacies, contingencies, and outcomes (Yukl, 2012; Avolio et al., 2009). Nonetheless, due to the emergence of a volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) world (Bennett & Lemoine, 2014), novel leadership practices have become necessary. The issues of climate change, poverty, social inequality, and resource depletion represent grand challenges for society; these problems are multifaceted and interconnected and thus require leaders to use different approaches to meet all the requirements (George et al., 2016; Schad & Smith, 2019). Sustainability has become a strategic priority for modern organisations (Sajjad et al., 2015), which has resulted in increased expectations for corporate leaders' direct involvement in global environmental and social issues. As Burns et al. (2015) argue, "sustainability has become an inextricable aspect of leadership" (p. 89). Although sustainability leadership is critical in solving global challenges, scientific literature on this issue still represents fragmented knowledge with a lack of theoretical consistency (Sajjad et al., 2024; Armani et al., 2020). Although the characteristics, skills, and behaviors associated with sustainability leadership have been identified, there is a lack of knowledge regarding the functional connections

Fragmentation in the sustainable leadership body of knowledge is manifested in various distinct ways. The fragmentation at the conceptual level is seen in the wide range of definitions and inconsistency in terminologies used where scholars have used different terminologies like "sustainable leadership," "sustainability leadership," and "leadership for sustainability" interchangeably. Fragmentation is also seen at the theoretical level where different theories are employed in analysing sustainable leadership without any articulation on how they work together. The fragmentation of measurement is characterised by the lack of a well-developed and accepted measurement approach of sustainable leadership which uses constructs that are borrowed from other leadership constructs. The fragmentation at the context and geographic levels is seen in the concentration of empirical research in the Western developed world with little exploration of sustainable leadership in the developing countries. The fragmentation at the methodological level is witnessed due to the dominance of conceptual and qualitative research.

This review responds to these gaps by undertaking an in-depth, critical assessment of extant research on sustainable leadership. More specifically, this review will attempt to: (1) synthesize the theoretical underpinnings and defining characteristics of sustainable leadership, thus tackling conceptual fragmentation by formulating an integrated definition; (2) critically analyse theoretical approaches to sustainable leadership and their interactions, thus tackling theoretical fragmentation through the creation of a typology of theories and their complementarities and controversies; (3) identify and synthesize the most relevant individual and organisational drivers of sustainable leadership, thus tackling fragmentation in the realms of measurement and theory by developing a framework for the creation of future instruments; (4) investigate the paradoxical tensions inherent to sustainable leadership; (5) formulate an integrated conceptual model depicting the connections between mechanisms, tensions, and outcomes of sustainable leadership and thus provide the groundwork for further methodological advances; and (6)

suggest an agenda for future research that tackles contextual and geographical fragmentation through the formulation of specific research questions.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research Approach

This research study uses an approach of an integrative literature review (Whittemore & Knafl, 2005), whereby it becomes possible to critically evaluate and integrate constructs that have emerged within different streams of literature (Torraco, 2005). This kind of research is appropriate for the investigation of emergent concepts in which there is fragmentation in terms of knowledge about the concept (Snyder, 2019). This is because an integrative review provides room for integration of diverse paradigms of research.

There were various factors that made integrative review an appropriate methodology for conducting a literature review. Unlike systematic reviews, which tend to be more concerned about addressing focused questions using quantitative synthesis, integrative reviews can be used for exploring constructs that are complex and multidimensional. Narrative reviews have been criticised for their lack of a well-defined methodology in reviewing literature, while integrative review employs a clear methodology for searching literature, screening literature, analysis, and synthesis. This feature of integrative review makes it ideal for sustainable leadership studies because of different epistemologies used in them.

2.2 Research Questions

The review was guided by the following research questions:

1. **RQ1:** What are the conceptual foundations and distinctive features that define sustainable leadership as a distinct construct?
2. **RQ2:** What theoretical perspectives inform sustainable leadership research, and how do these perspectives complement or conflict with one another?
3. **RQ3:** What individual-level and organisational-level mechanisms underpin sustainable leadership functioning, and how do these mechanisms interact?
4. **RQ4:** What paradoxical tensions characterise sustainable leadership, and how do leaders manage these tensions?
5. **RQ5:** What are the key outcomes associated with sustainable leadership, and what is the strength of evidence for these relationships?
6. **RQ6:** What gaps exist in the current literature, and what specific research directions should future studies pursue?

2.3 Search Strategy and Screening

According to the PRISMA approach (Moher et al., 2009; Page et al., 2021), a systematic search was carried out within the Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar databases. The search spanned from January 1990 to October 2023 and included the formation of sustainable leadership as an area of study starting from the publication of the Brundtland Report (1987).

Search Strings:

Scopus: TITLE-ABS-KEY (“sustainable leadership” OR “sustainability leadership” OR “leadership for sustainability”) AND (“organisation” OR “corporate” OR “business” OR “management”).

Web of Science: (“sustainable leadership” OR “sustainability leadership” OR “leadership for sustainability”) AND (“organisation” OR “corporate” OR “business” OR “management”).

Google Scholar: (“sustainable leadership” OR “sustainability leadership

Criteria for inclusion of sources:

1. Peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters and books
2. Written in English language
3. Addressing leadership within the sphere of sustainability
4. Dealing exclusively with the concept of sustainable leadership
5. Applying either quantitative, qualitative or mixed research methodology

Criteria for Exclusion:

1. Papers that only discuss sustainability and/or leadership indirectly
2. Literature studies that examine concepts of leadership but make no mention of sustainability
3. Non-English literature sources
4. Editorials, reviews of books, and opinions
5. Duplicates

Table 1: Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Criterion	Inclusion	Exclusion
Publication Type	Peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, scholarly books	Editorials, book reviews, conference abstracts, opinion pieces
Language	English	Non-English

Topic Focus	Directly addresses leadership in sustainability context	Mentions sustainability or leadership only peripherally
Leadership Focus	Specific focus on sustainable/sustainability leadership practice and analysis	Focus on leadership constructs without sustainability reference
Methodology	Quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods	No methodological detail specified

A total of 235 sources were retrieved from databases, while 12 more sources were retrieved from snowballing. Screening of sources was done by two authors (Shahzadi & Ashraf), and any disagreements in the process were resolved by discussion and consensus with the third author (Shabbir). There were three levels of screening: (1) removal of duplicates ($n = 58$); (2) title/abstract screening ($n = 189$); and (3) full-text screening ($n = 91$). A total of 74 sources fulfilled the inclusion criteria and thus were included in the final analysis.

Exclusion Phases: During title/abstract screening phase, 98 articles were excluded on the following grounds: (1) no relevance to sustainable leadership ($n = 47$); (2) relevance to general leadership without sustainability aspect ($n = 31$); (3) relevance to sustainability without leadership aspect ($n = 14$); (4) non-English articles ($n = 6$). During full text screening phase, 17 articles were excluded on the following grounds: (1) inadequate coverage of sustainable leadership mechanisms ($n = 8$); (2) editorial comments ($n = 5$); (3) duplicate articles not identified before ($n = 2$); (4) inadequate methodology ($n = 2$).

2.4 Quality Assessment

Quality appraisal was conducted using a multiple criteria assessment technique based on previous sustainability leadership literature review (Hallinger & Suriyankietkaew, 2018):

1. Assessment of journal impact: journal citation indexes (JCR/Scopus) and database inclusion
2. Assessment of citation impact: number of citations (Google Scholar)
3. Research quality: for empirical papers - assessment of design, sampling, measurements and analysis; for conceptual papers - assessment of theory and argumentation
4. Assessment of theoretical importance: contribution to the theoretical development of sustainable leadership

2.5 Analysis and Synthesis

Thematic analysis was employed following a three-stage process (Braun & Clarke, 2006):

Stage 1: Open Coding - Readings of the sources included for this study to determine and extract themes from ideas, concepts, and results associated with the research questions. Over 200 initial

codes were generated during this process. Two authors independently coded a random 20% of the included sources; the inter-coder reliability was 85%.

Stage 2: Axial Coding - Categorisation of codes into broader thematic categories based on conceptual relationships. Key categories included: conceptual definitions, theoretical perspectives, individual mechanisms, organisational mechanisms, paradoxical tensions, outcomes, and future directions. This stage involved iterative comparison and refinement to ensure conceptual clarity and consistency.

Stage 3: Synthesis and Integration - Construction of an integrative model that reveals the linkages between different categories and their patterns, conflicts, and shortcomings. This process included critical appraisal of the evidence, pinpointing convergences and divergences, and formulating the unique contributions.

Principles of Critical Integration (Whittemore & Knafl, 2005) were followed during the synthesis: (1) making sure that the synthesis is relevant to the research questions; (2) remaining open and transparent in the interpretation; (3) recognising limits and uncertainties; and (4) achieving something new beyond the individual studies.

3. CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS OF SUSTAINABLE LEADERSHIP

3.1 The Emergence of Sustainable Leadership

The idea of sustainable leadership is born at the confluence of two different but related streams of ideas: leadership and sustainability theories. According to Hallinger & Suriyankietkaew (2018), it was the definition of sustainable development provided by Brundtland Commission in 1987 "Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" that initiated the process of linking sustainability into organisational leadership in the first place. Later, this idea was developed further by Elkington (1998) and his triple bottom line approach.

Sustainable leadership emerged in academic discussion through Hargreaves and Fink (2004; 2006) who define it as leadership that "is able to cope with the needs of today's society without compromising the capacity of future generations to succeed" (Hargreaves & Fink, 2006, p. 8). Through their work which focuses on educational settings, seven principles of sustainable leadership have been identified: depth, duration, scope, justice, diversity, ingenuity, and conservation.

Avery (2005) took the theory further into the area of business management through the comparison between the Rhineland model of capitalism, which features long-term perspective, stakeholder involvement, and social responsibility, with the Anglo-American model of capitalism, whose key feature is the pursuit of maximizing shareholders' value in the short term. Such a comparison gave grounds for developing the concept of sustainable leadership.

The definition of sustainability leadership by Ferdig (2007) takes the concept a step further in integrating sustainability leadership into a complex balancing act involving "the balancing of

competing needs and demands for sustainable economic, social, and environmental solutions" (p. 25). The complexity involved in sustainability leadership is reflected in the conflicting demands placed in various contexts, an issue that repeatedly comes up in the literature on sustainable leadership.

3.2 Defining Sustainable Leadership: A Critical Synthesis

Sustainable leadership is a complex term that has different meanings depending on various factors in the field. Table 2 below is a synthesis of different definitions of sustainable leadership, showing what makes each one distinct from the others.

Table 2: Definitions of Sustainable Leadership

Author(s)	Definition	Key Emphasis
Hargreaves & Fink (2006)	Leadership that "can meet the demands of today's society without affecting future generations' capability to succeed"	Intergenerational equity
Avery & Bergsteiner (2011a)	"Achieving futures in which humans live within their ecological and social means without exploiting others"	Ecological and social sustainability
Avery & Bergsteiner (2011b)	"The goal of sustainable leadership is keeping people, profits, and the planet in balance throughout the lifetime of the organisation"	Triple bottom line integration
Ferdig (2007)	Sustainability leadership as "balancing among and between simultaneous and sometimes contradictory demands for economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable solutions"	Paradox management
Rainey (2013)	"A vibrant mosaic of ideas, philosophies, perspectives, styles, mind-sets, experiences, approaches, and models"	Pluralism and diversity
Peterlin et al. (2015)	Leadership that "considers a large number of complex interrelationships existing among people, the business world, the global market, and the eco-system, with the prime objective of ensuring that the organisation creates welfare for itself by upholding social values"	Systems thinking and value-based decision-making

	through value-based strategic decision making and maintaining the natural environment"	
Sajjad et al. (2024)	"A dynamic and complex process, wherein sustainability-focused leaders go through complex psychocognitive and sociocognitive (relational) processes to create sustainable outcomes for organisations and societies in both the immediate and distant future"	Dynamic processes and multilevel analysis

Critical Analysis of Definitions:

Despite differences, these definitions have quite a few common aspects that can be identified. First, sustainable leadership implies considering the future and current generation through long-term orientation. Second, it means that one should integrate different aspects like economic, social, and environmental. Third, it implies dealing with complexity and interdependencies by understanding that organisations, society, and ecosystems are linked to each other. Fourth, it is value-based action based on ethics rather than profit maximization.

However, critical evaluation shows that there exist several contradictions and ambiguities. The first one concerns the connection between the concepts of "sustainable leadership" and "sustainability leadership," although both terms have been used by many researchers interchangeably (Hallinger & Suriyankietkaew, 2018; Liao, 2022).

However, in this review, both terms are regarded as concepts which are related but have different meanings: "sustainability leadership" is associated directly with leaders who concentrate on achieving sustainability results whereas "sustainable leadership" can be seen as an umbrella term which involves sustainable leaders in general. Following a consistent terminology in this review, it is decided to use "sustainable leadership" as the major term, considering the prevalence of its use in the literature.

In the second case, definitions differ in relation to the stress laid on the importance of outcomes or processes. Some definitions may be concerned with sustainable leadership outcomes or aims (such as harmony between people, profits and planet), while others pay attention to sustainable leadership processes (such as dynamic cognitive and relational processes).

The third type of diversity that exists among the definitions of sustainable leadership refers to the unit of analysis. There can be three different units of analysis: individual leaders' traits and actions, organisational-level activities, or systemic-level effects.

Synthesised Definition:

Based on this critical synthesis, this review proposes the following integrated definition:

Sustainable leadership is a dynamic, multilevel process wherein leaders, through the integration of ethical values, systems thinking, mindfulness, and reflective practice, engage with diverse stakeholders to navigate paradoxical tensions and create enduring value that balances economic prosperity, social equity, and environmental integrity for present and future generations.

This definition encapsulates all the important elements in earlier definitions such as (1) the dynamism and process aspect (Sajjad et al., 2024); (2) the multilevel perspective covering individual and organisational levels; (3) the processes that underlie ethics (ethical values, systems thinking, mindfulness, and reflection); (4) stakeholder engagement; (5) paradoxical tension management; and (6) the triple bottom line of impacts for today and tomorrow. This is the foundation for the rest of this review.

3.3 Distinguishing Sustainable Leadership from Related Approaches

Sustainable leadership shares conceptual terrain with several established leadership models, yet possesses distinctive features that warrant its recognition as a separate construct. Table 3 presents a systematic comparison.

Table 3: Distinguishing Sustainable Leadership from Related Leadership Constructs

Leadership Type	Core Focus	Overlap with Sustainable Leadership	Key Distinction
Ethical Leadership	Moral conduct and promoting ethical behaviour through personal example (Brown et al., 2005)	Shared emphasis on ethical values and integrity	Sustainable leadership extends beyond ethics to include environmental and social sustainability outcomes; ethical leadership focuses primarily on moral conduct without explicit sustainability orientation
Servant Leadership	Prioritising followers' interests and societal good before self-interest (Eva et al., 2019)	Shared focus on serving broader stakeholder interests	Servant leadership tends toward either/or thinking in conflict resolution; sustainable leadership explicitly embraces both/and thinking to balance competing sustainability goals (Schad & Smith, 2019)

Responsible Leadership	Building trust-based relationships with stakeholders and addressing CSR issues (Maak & Pless, 2006)	Shared emphasis on stakeholder relationships and social responsibility	Sustainable leadership places greater emphasis on balancing social, economic, and environmental dimensions and creating value for future generations (De Haan et al., 2015)
Green Transformational Leadership	Encouraging followers to achieve environmental goals beyond expectations (Chen & Chang, 2013)	Shared focus on environmental outcomes	Green transformational leadership is narrow in focus, concentrating primarily on environmental achievements; sustainable leadership adopts a comprehensive triple bottom line perspective (Liao, 2022)
Authentic Leadership	Self-awareness, relational transparency, and moral perspective (Avolio & Gardner, 2005)	Shared emphasis on authenticity and integrity	Sustainability leadership requires additional competencies including systems thinking, paradoxical thinking, and stakeholder engagement; it consciously addresses multiple paradoxes and pursues competing goals simultaneously (Sajjad et al., 2024)

The Distinctive Features of Sustainable Leadership:

Through this comparative analysis, several distinctive features of sustainable leadership emerge:

1. **Paradoxical Thinking:** Whereas other theories of leadership try to solve these paradoxical situations by giving precedence to one dimension over another (for example, putting profits before environmental considerations), sustainable leadership is aware of these paradoxes and takes them into account. As stated by Schad and Smith (2019): "The great challenges of our time call for a more sophisticated form of leadership that can deal with conflicting demands simultaneously" (p. 58).
2. **Multilevel Integration:** Sustainable leadership can occur at the individual, organisational, and societal levels all at once, acknowledging that these levels are

interdependent (Sajjad et al., 2024). This multilevel approach is less important in other theories of leadership, which tend to concentrate mainly on leader-subordinate relationships.

3. **Triple Bottom Line Approach:** Although other leadership theories may deal with ethical issues (ethical leadership) or stakeholders' issues (responsible leadership), sustainable leadership alone is concerned with the economic, social, and environmental aspects of performance (Elkington, 1998).
4. **Future Generation Perspective:** The concern for future generations' interests sets sustainable leadership apart from other leadership theories that focus only on current stakeholders.
5. **Systems Thinking:** Sustainable leadership calls for systems thinking, making it more cognitively oriented than any other leadership theory (Hind et al., 2009).

4. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON SUSTAINABLE LEADERSHIP

This section critically examines the key theoretical perspectives informing sustainable leadership research, analysing their contributions, complementarities, and tensions.

4.1 Systems Theory Perspective and Paradox

Sustainable Leadership Paradox Research Approach Through Systems Theory is a prominent theoretical framework used in sustainable leadership studies (Schad & Bansal, 2018; Schad & Smith, 2019). The framework combines concepts from both Paradox Theory and Complexity Theory to examine how leaders deal with contradictory but intertwined demands.

Paradox Theory: According to Paradox Theory, organisations function in conditions of "contradictory but interrelated elements which coexist and persist over time" (Smith & Lewis, 2011, p. 382). When it comes to sustainability, leaders must deal with paradoxical pressures related to economic success, social benefits, and ecological protection, three desired yet contradictory outcomes (Hahn et al., 2018). The ability to cope with the mentioned paradoxes is becoming an essential skill of a leader (Franken et al., 2020).

Complexity Theory views organisations as complex open dynamical systems which include several variables functioning under non-linear dynamics (Cilliers, 2002; Uhl-Bien et al., 2007). In other words, those systems work in non-equilibrium conditions involving the combination of positive and negative feedback causing contradictions (Van der Byl & Slawinski, 2015). Sustainability leaders must cope with such complexities on several levels and scales.

Integration of Systems and Paradox Perspectives:

The combination of systems and paradox theory provides an interesting theoretical background for sustainable leadership. As argued by Sajjad et al. (2024), sustainable leadership is about "the management of conflict without any attempt to resolve it" (p. 2858). When applying paradoxical thinking, leaders become cognitively complex, have broader views on problem situations, and are

prepared to accept ambiguity and different experiences (Waldman et al., 2019). In such a way, leaders can generate new opportunities and gain deeper knowledge about sustainable problems (Marion & Uhl-Bien, 2001).

Critical Evaluation:

Although the systems-paradox approach is theoretically interesting, there are difficulties associated with empirical testing of this approach. One difficulty is that the theoretical constructs of interest are complex and, therefore, hard to measure. In addition, there is the normative aspect of the question concerning whether leaders ought to embrace paradoxes instead of trying to solve them. Future research should explore this area empirically.

4.2 Stakeholder Theory

Stakeholder theory is yet another theoretical approach that can be used in sustainable leadership. According to the theory, value creation is important for all stakeholders, not just shareholders (Freeman et al., 2020). In the context of sustainable leadership, the stakeholder group includes future generations and nature.

In this regard, Hörisch et al. (2014) highlight the relation between stakeholder theory and sustainable management by indicating that value creation for stakeholders plays a major role in both concepts.

Relational Engagement:

Stakeholder engagement in sustainable leadership not only focuses on stakeholder management but involves the practice of democratic and relational approaches to stakeholder engagement (Castelli, 2016). Sustainable leadership calls for dialogue, sharing of knowledge and decision-making processes which acknowledge the interdependencies between organizations, communities and ecosystems (Schad & Smith, 2019). The relational approach is what sets sustainable leadership apart from instrumental approaches to stakeholder engagement.

Complementarities and Tensions:

The stakeholder theory complements the systems theory by specifying the relationship obligations between organizations and larger systems. Conflict occurs where there are conflicting needs on behalf of different stakeholders (e.g., profits for the benefit of investors in contrast to environmental conservation for local community groups).

4.3 Triple Bottom Line Framework

Triple bottom line (TBL), offered by Elkington (1998), offers a structured way of implementing sustainable leadership. The TBL takes social equity and environmental sustainability into account along with economic performance of an organisation (Hallinger & Suriyankietkaew, 2018).

Sustainable leadership is about maintaining this equilibrium between the three during the whole lifespan of the organisation. As pointed out by Avery & Bergsteiner (2011a), "the single most

important thing about sustainable leadership is ensuring that there is a balance between people, profits, and the environment throughout the life of the organisation" (p. 6). This means making decisions with consideration of all three perspectives.

TBL requires creating new metrics of performance. Besides defining sustainability goals, sustainable leaders should be able to measure and communicate them along three dimensions of economics, society, and environment (Epstein, 2008).

Critical Evaluation:

Another weakness of the TBL approach is its possibility to make sustainability problems too easy by simplifying them into figures. According to its opponents, TBL can cause an approach to sustainability which consists in fulfilling some boxes without making any changes at all. The TBL approach does not indicate what should be done to reconcile the three pillars, while this problem is solved by paradox theory.

4.4 Rhineland Model of Capitalism

One of the theoretical frameworks for understanding sustainable leadership is the theory of Rhineland capitalism proposed by Albert (1992). In contrast to Anglo-American capitalism that concentrates on maximising shareholder value, Rhineland capitalism values long-term focus, stakeholder involvement, corporate social responsibility, and sustainable environment (Avery & Bergsteiner, 2011a).

Twenty-three sustainable leadership practices were defined by Avery and Bergsteiner (2011a, 2011b) organised into three tiers: the foundation practices (long-term orientation, stakeholder orientation, corporate social responsibility), advanced practices (innovation, quality, employee development), and critical success factors (sustainability culture, leadership development). They represent the opposite of the "locust" strategy.

Complementarities and Contrasts:

The Rhineland approach can be said to be supportive of other theoretical approaches since it offers a complete set of practices. Nevertheless, this approach has faced criticism based on the claim that it is too culturally biased. Furthermore, the division between the Rhineland approach and the Anglo-American approach is also controversial since most organizations use both aspects.

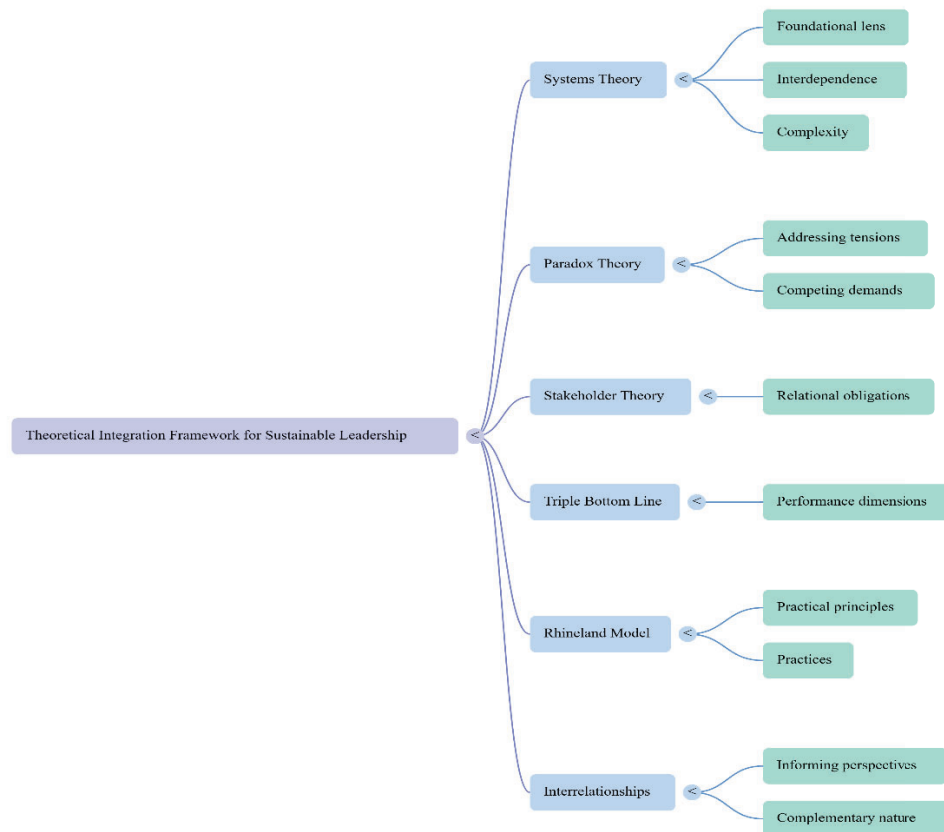
4.5 Theoretical Integration

The following is a potential comprehensive theoretical base to sustainable leadership that could incorporate the above paradigms:

- Systems theory explains the nature of interconnectedness and complexity of sustainability issues
- Paradox theory deals with conflicting pressures within sustainability

- Stakeholder theory recognizes the aspect of relational obligations and engagement
- Triple Bottom Line offers a performance base
- Rhineland capitalism presents several principles and practices

Figure 1: Theoretical Integration Framework for Sustainable Leadership



5. KEY MECHANISMS OF SUSTAINABLE LEADERSHIP

Building on the integrative framework proposed by Sajjad et al. (2024), this section critically examines individual-level and organisational-level mechanisms that underpin sustainable leadership functioning.

5.1 Individual-Level Mechanisms

5.1.1 Ethical Values

Ethical values form the basis of sustainable leadership (Hallinger & Suriyankietkaew, 2018). Sustainable leadership "is a way of being and doing" which requires embedding ethical values and sustainability. The ethical values include environment responsibility, social justice, intergenerational justice, integrity, honesty, and cultural diversity (Iqbal & Ahmad, 2021; Sharma, 2019).

Ethical values assist sustainable leaders in handling the paradoxes between maximising the value of shareholders and creating value for different stakeholders. According to Visser and Courtice (2011), sustainable leaders need to be aware of the complexities within the systems and use their value systems to cope with difficult situations.

In particular, the function of ethical values in facilitating paradoxical thinking is significant. By means of being mindful about ethical values and internalizing them, sustainable leaders can deal with ethical and business paradoxes at once (Sajjad et al., 2024). It is an intersection of ethics and paradoxes management that sets apart sustainable leadership from other approaches in terms of ethics and performance.

Critical Assessment:

Although the significance of ethical values is recognized, there is little information from the literature on the process of development and implementation of these values. Studies have revealed that ethical values could be situation-specific, thereby posing concerns regarding the manifestation of such values in other cultures. There is also a need for exploring the conflict between ethics and context.

5.1.2 Systems Thinking

Systems thinking is defined as "the discipline of seeing wholes and a framework for seeing interrelationships rather than pieces, and for seeing patterns of change rather than snapshots" (Senge, 1990, p. 68). Such cognitive approach is crucial for sustainability leaders because of the capacity to perceive interconnections in organisations (Hind et al., 2009).

Systems thinking offers sustainability leaders skills for assessing and predicting future developments related to their firms and the society, building new mindsets, and helping their organisations achieve sustainable value creation (Tideman et al., 2013). The approach highlights the importance of interconnections between various systems and creating mutual benefits between them (De Haan et al., 2015).

Moreover, systems thinking acknowledges the complex nature of the sustainability issue and the importance of being intellectually flexible and strategically agile (Henriksson & Grunewald, 2020). In addition, it forces decision-makers to understand the complexity of sustainable development problems, give up reductionist thinking, and use holistic thinking (Grewatsch et al., 2021).

Critical Assessment: Systemic thinking is a compelling notion, but an empirical one. Though much has been written about its significance, there are few studies on the development and assessment of systemic thinking in leaders. Moreover, there could be conflicting situations where systemic thinking goes against the demands of reductionist thinking driven by organizational pressures. The future studies should focus on how the leaders keep their systemic thinking under such pressures.

5.1.3 Mindfulness

Mindfulness can be defined as "the awareness that arises through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally to the unfolding of experience moment by moment" (Kabat-Zinn, 2003, p. 145). In sustainable leadership, mindfulness helps leaders to refrain from mechanical actions and assists in self-reflection and critical reflection that are necessary for handling sustainability issues (Kurucz et al., 2017; Parkin, 2010).

The practice of mindfulness makes leaders aware of the consequences of organisational activities on the environment and society and also considers social justice issues (Rashkova et al., 2023). According to Corner and Pavlovich (2016), mindfulness is a metacognitive capability development process that helps overcome conflicts that result from the pursuit of contradictory objectives.

According to Burns et al. (2015), sustainability leaders are committed to change agents who participate in the work that is based on "a new way of being that is grounded in interconnectedness, relationship, and mindfulness" (p. 90). This kind of leader operates with transformed consciousness and high commitment to certain principles.

Critical Assessment: Mindfulness research in sustainability leadership has been increasing significantly; however, some gaps exist. Firstly, the connection between personal mindfulness and organisational sustainability outcomes should be empirically studied. Secondly, the mindfulness cultural background from the Buddhism religion requires consideration when implementing mindfulness in diverse organisations. Thirdly, there is insufficient literature regarding the integration of mindfulness into leadership development programs.

5.1.4 Reflective Practice and Reflexivity

Reflective practice and reflexivity are crucial for the understanding of ambiguous or atypical situations (Castelli 2016) and for making sense of socio-economic, ethical, ecological, cultural and political issues (Bolton 2010; Kurucz et al. 2017). Reflective practice, as defined by Craig (2020, p. 1769) is "reflecting on the meaning and significance of recent experiences in one's own life and in the lives of others in one's immediate environment, on a regular basis. Reflexivity is the ability to consider a problem, recognising the influence that one's own assumptions have on perceptions.

Reflection allows sustainability leaders to have purposeful and intentional processes of both self-reflection and critical reflection (Castelli, 2016). Self-reflection is a process that allows people to gain insight into their values, emotions, motivations, assumptions and goals (Burns et al., 2015; Kurucz et al., 2017). Critical reflection requires questioning, analysis, and interpretation of assumptions on a whole global perspective (Burns et al., 2015; Care et al., 2021).

Reflective practice is important for dealing with change and uncertainty and can support the development of an organisational culture where prevailing practices and values can be questioned without risk (Egleton et al., 2017; Raelin, 2002). Reflective practice offers a chance for sustainability leaders to consider ways they can address sustainability paradoxes (Van Neerijnen et al., 2021).

Critical Assessment: The literature on reflective practice in sustainable leadership is conceptually rich but lacks empirical grounding. Research is needed on the specific reflective practices that are most effective for sustainability leaders, the organisational conditions that support or inhibit reflection, and the outcomes of reflective practice for sustainability performance.

5.1.5 Resilience

Resilience, defined as the ability to "bounce back" or thrive amidst adversity (Luthans et al., 2010), is key to the sustainability leaders that operate in the context of VUCA, environments characterised by uncertainty, volatility, complexity and ambiguity (Duchek, 2020).

Resilience in sustainable leadership is seen not only as personal resilience but as collective resilience too (Giustiniano et al., 2020; Hallinger & Suriyankietkaew, 2018), which helps organisations to act resiliently during crises and rebuild from them (Hillmann & Guenther, 2021). Resilient sustainability leaders can operate at a longer time horizon and to transition from reactive to recovery, renewal, reorganisation and development modes (Folke 2006).

Sustainability leadership via resilience solutions involves balancing tensions between opposing elements, such as focus on the present versus the future; preparation versus adaptation; profit versus ethical purpose; and preparedness versus spontaneity (Zheng et al., 2018; Giustiniano et al., 2020).

Critical Assessment: The mechanisms between resilience and sustainability outcomes have yet to be explored, but resilience is becoming a key factor in sustainability leadership. There is limited understanding of the linkage of individual resilience to organisational resilience and organisational sustainability performance. Moreover, there can be conflicts between the two concepts of resilience (bouncing back) and transformation (fundamental change) which are both applicable to sustainability.

5.2 Organisational-Level Mechanisms

5.2.1 Sustainability Standards

Sustainability standards, being voluntary governance mechanisms, foster ethical and socially responsible actions in the face of conflicting sustainability issues (Christensen et al., 2017; Haack & Rasche, 2021; Nava & Tampe, 2022). These standards offer guidance in developing sustainable strategy and help to ensure consistency and transparency in disclosure of sustainability (Epstein, 2008).

Sustainable leadership is a key factor in setting standards for sustainability and to promote the diffusion at inter-organisational and intra-organisational levels (Epstein, 2008). Sustainable leaders create an ethical culture, hold stakeholders accountable and transparent with sustainability reporting and engagement in sustainability index ratings like the Dow Jones Sustainability Index (Robinson et al., 2011).

According to Rainey (2013), leadership for sustainability must include three components: ethics, governance and transparency. If these elements are not considered, sustainable development activities would not produce sufficient results.

Critical Assessment: The linkage between sustainability standards and sustainability impacts is a matter of dispute. Some studies indicate that standards might be symbolic and not actually substantive and are implemented for the purpose of gaining legitimacy and not for change. The goal of sustainable leaders is to manage these conflicts and ensure that standards are not "put on a pedestal" but are put into practice within organisations.

5.2.2 Sustainability-Oriented Corporate Culture

Creating a culture for sustainability within organisations is essential to achieve sustainable outcomes (Galpin et al., 2015). Sustainable leadership is correlated with the creation of communities that share values and norms (Evans, 2018; Skerlavaj, 2022); innovation, creativity and sustainability among the members of the organisation (Baumgartner, 2009; Bernal et al., 2018; Gerard et al., 2017).

It takes a paradigm shift in values and beliefs, openness, and knowledge management to build a culture of sustainability (Armani et al., 2020; Iqbal et al., 2020). This paradigm shift is a shift from a purely economic value base to a value system that includes the three values of people, planet and profit (Burnes, 2017). Fernandez et al (2020) state that sustainable leadership establishes a culture that is inclusive, enabling leadership to be cultivated throughout the organisation by fostering the exchange of views and cognitive diversity.

Organisational sustainability culture influences employee behaviour in a way that encourages them to focus their activities on achieving economic effectiveness, environmental sustainability and social justice (Paraschiv et al., 2012). This change is required to integrate sustainability into organisational core processes and make it the basis for organisational actions.

Critical Assessment: Sustainability culture is often presented in an idealised way and few have mentioned the challenges and obstacles that need to be faced. A lack of interest in cultural change, path dependency and prevalence of dominant paradigms can be barriers to the development of sustainability culture. Future studies should explore the ways leaders surmount these challenges and the prevailing methods for cultural change.

5.2.3 Stakeholder Engagement

Sustainability is driven by the pressure of stakeholders (Herremans et al., 2016; Hörisch et al., 2014), and for sustainable leaders it is necessary to interact with stakeholders. Stakeholder engagement is not about inter-stakeholder conflict, but about common objectives and value co-creation in the interactions among stakeholders (Hörisch et al., 2014; Freeman et al., 2020).

Sustainable leadership is characterized by more interactive and democratic processes of value creation and sustainability issues (Castelli, 2016; Denis et al., 2012; Kurucz et al., 2017; McGhee & Grant, 2017). Consequently, sustainable leaders should not only be interested in cross-

organisational collaboration (Schad & Smith, 2019), but also in ideas of shared value and inclusiveness (Henriksson & Grunewald, 2020; Skerlavaj, 2022).

Since sustainability problems are too complex to be solved by only one organisation, industry or country alone, the issues require knowledge, skills and resources from each sector (Gray & Stites, 2013). Sustainable leadership ought to communicate with stakeholders and create knowledge bases in multi-stakeholder network.

Critical Assessment: Although stakeholder engagement is commonplace, there is a lack of literature that guides in the management of conflicting stakeholder demands, especially one that is deeply rooted in values. There is a need to explore what future research could reveal about sustainable leaders as they struggle to accommodate and work in environments where stakeholder interests are truly or essentially irreconcilable; and how they develop trust and collaboration among conflicting stakeholder groups.

5.3 Integrating Individual and Organisational Mechanisms

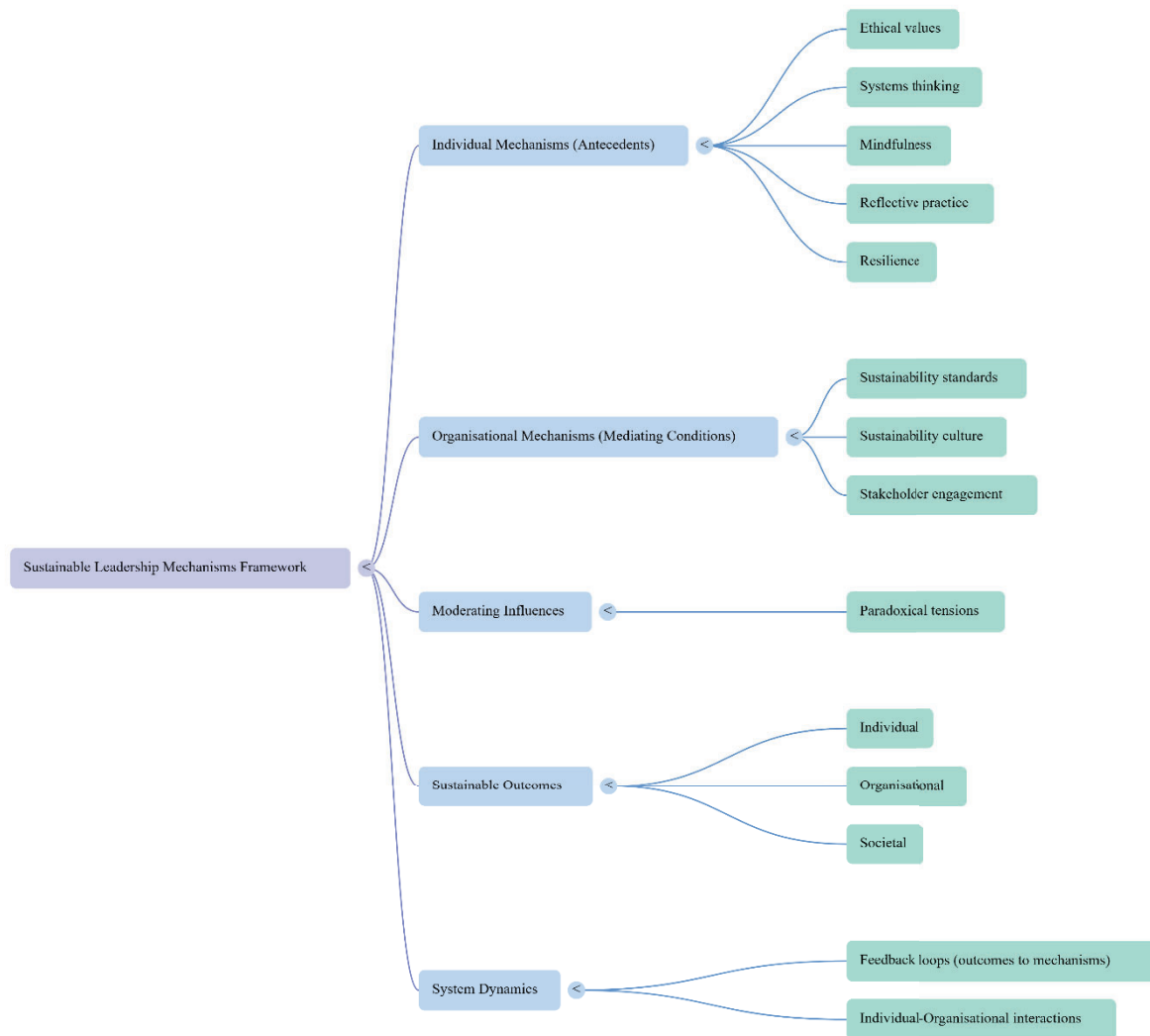
Individual and institutional aspects of sustainable leadership are interdependent and reinforcing. This integration takes place in a number of ways:

Ethical values influence the quality and nature of stakeholder engagement, firstly. Leaders who are strong on ethics are more likely to engage in authentic relationships with a broad range of stakeholders, and systems thinking will help them to account for the relationships between the interests of different stakeholders and the system-level consequences of the decisions they make about engagement.

Secondly, there is a role for mindfulness and reflexivity in the management of paradox at the individual and at the organisational level. Reflective practice can help to challenge assumptions that might continue unsustainable practices, and mindful leaders are more aware of tensions and contradictions. This individual capability can promote organisations' learning and capability of paradoxical thinking throughout the organisation.

Thirdly, sustainability culture reinforces the impact of one's leadership skills. If sustainability values are entrenched in organisational culture, individual leaders who are trying to apply sustainability will be supported, reinforced and amplified by the culture. However, with a low or non-existent culture of sustainability, individual leaders' sustainability efforts can find resistance and be hard to maintain.

Fourth, stakeholder engagement helps shape and inform individual mechanisms with its feedback. Working with external stakeholders may be a catalyst for challenging assumptions, broadening the system thinking and strengthening the ethical values of the leader. Internal stakeholder engagement can achieve a shared sense of commitment to sustainability and enable the development of sustainability culture.

Figure 2: Integrated Framework of Sustainable Leadership Mechanisms

6. THE INTELLECTUAL STRUCTURE OF SUSTAINABLE LEADERSHIP RESEARCH

This section synthesises their key findings, supplemented by more recent contributions.

6.1 Volume, Growth, and Geographic Distribution

Sustainable leadership knowledge base is small but developing rapidly. Although the first literature related to the topic was published at the beginning of the 1990s, quite an impressive volume of literature has become available recently due to the critical mass of the field. The research on sustainable leadership is carried out mostly in the Western world among highly developed countries such as the USA, Canada, the UK, and Australia, which constitutes more than half (54%) of the total number of literature (Hallinger & Suriyankietkaew, 2018). Nevertheless,

the topic is attracting lots of researchers from other parts of the world including Europe, Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

According to Vladić et al. (2024), even though it is discussed academically for about two decades, sustainable leadership seems to be a young research field in terms of both number of papers and authors.

6.2 Schools of Thought

Six communities have been revealed based on the methodology of author co-citation analysis:

1. **Managerial Leadership:** The Core School is composed of authors belonging to two perspectives: organisational learning and change (Kotter, Drucker, Handy, Schein) and management of complex organisations (Weick, Pfeffer, Mintzberg). This school serves as a theoretical background for the concept of sustainable leadership.
2. **Sustainable Leadership:** The second community pertains to the Rhineland tradition and includes the value-based perspective which involves three components – social, economic and environmental – as represented by Avery, Kantabutra, and Bergsteiner.
3. **Leadership for Sustainable Change:** This community includes authors Hargreaves, Fink, Fullan, Argyris, and Schon who investigate sustainable development and change issues.
4. **Leadership for Corporate Sustainability:** The research conducted by Griffiths, Benn, Freeman, and Dunphy is oriented at the exploration of the role of leaders in stakeholder participation in the process of value generation and social responsibility.
5. **Responsible Leadership:** This school includes authors Maak, Pless, Waldman, Matten, and Stahl who attempt to promote responsible business conduct.
6. **Ethical and Transformational Leadership for Sustainability:** This community of authors, including Bass and Avolio, investigates authentic and transformational leadership styles.

6.3 Research Front

The co-word analysis reveals that sustainable leadership, information management, corporate sustainability, transformational leadership, decision-making, risk management, higher education, culture, and professional development are some of the research frontiers (Hallinger & Suriyankietkaew, 2018). This research indicates that the research is concentrated on understanding the capacity building of leaders to achieve sustainable development goals through changes.

7. PARADOXICAL TENSIONS IN SUSTAINABLE LEADERSHIP

Paradoxes are inherent features of the sustainable leadership literature, specifically with respect to paradoxes that may result from the contradictions within the sustainability agenda itself. As stated by Schad et al., "paradox is persistent contradiction between interdependent elements" (2016, p. 6).

7.1 Nature of Paradoxical Tensions

The paradoxes of societal grand challenges arise due to the features of plurality, dynamics, and scarcity of grand challenges. The contradictions between the relations become a great obstacle to solving the conflicting demands of sustainability leaders (Schad et al., 2016; Schad & Smith, 2019).

According to Ferdig (2007), contradiction, conflict, and conflicts are inherent components of any sustainable system. Failure to understand the complex and contradictory nature of a dynamic system becomes an obstacle to solving grand challenges (Schad & Bansal, 2018; Van der Byl et al., 2020).

Types of Paradoxical Tensions:

The various kinds of paradoxes found among sustainability scholars are:

1. Performing Paradox: Paradoxes associated with short-term performance and long-term sustainability (Smith & Lewis, 2011).
2. Belonging Paradox: Paradoxes associated with self and group issues (Smith & Lewis, 2011).
3. Learning Paradox: Paradoxes associated with exploitation and exploration of sustainability (Smith & Lewis, 2011).
4. Organising Paradox: Paradoxes associated with control and flexibility in terms of sustainability (Smith & Lewis, 2011).
5. Economic, Social, Environmental Paradoxes: Paradoxes associated with all the three elements of sustainability (Hahn et al., 2018).

7.2 Managing Paradoxical Tensions

It means that a sustainable leader is capable of addressing contradictions by recognizing, remaining within, resolving, accepting, and navigating paradoxes without getting any immediate organisational benefit from it (Hahn et al., 2018; Luscher & Lewis, 2008; Van Neerijnen et al., 2021). A sustainable leader does not mean overlooking the financial side of sustainability; it means constant searching for solutions to resolve contradictions through iterations of many different options (Smith & Lewis, 2011, p. 392).

The leaders who apply paradoxical reasoning have a high level of cognitive complexity, have a broad scope of solving difficult issues, and are receptive to ambiguity and diverse experiences (Waldman et al., 2019). An application of paradox approach allows sustainable leaders to come up with innovative alternatives as a result of constantly resolving paradoxes (Skerlavaj, 2022; Waldman et al., 2019) and gaining knowledge on complex sustainability issues (Marion & Uhl-Bien, 2001).

Strategies for Managing Paradoxes:

A few methods to handle paradox tensions include:

1. Acceptance: Accepting the tensions as they arise rather than resolving them immediately

2. Differentiation: Being able to differentiate between paradoxes and problems that need solving
3. Integration: Finding synergy between conflicting items
4. Temporal Splitting: Dealing with different elements at different times
5. Spatial Splitting: Handling different elements in different areas of an organization
6. Transcendence: Escaping from lower to higher levels where tensions become complementary

Critical Assessment: The paradoxical method offers many options for conceptualization, but it carries some practical implications connected with the ways in which the leaders apply these methods in reality. This should be considered while studying when each of the approaches is most effective, what skills a leader acquires to deal with paradoxes, and what context promotes such thinking.

8. OUTCOMES OF SUSTAINABLE LEADERSHIP

Empirical research has associated sustainable leadership with positive outcomes at individual, organisational, and societal levels. This section critically evaluates the evidence base for these associations.

8.1 Individual-Level Outcomes

Individually, sustainable leadership correlates positively with the following:

- Job satisfaction: Suriyankietkaew and Avery (2014) discovered that 20 out of 23 sustainable leadership practices increased job satisfaction among workers. Cayak and Cetin (2018) also established positive correlations with employee satisfaction.
- Organizational commitment: Sustainable leadership practices increase employees' emotional connection to the organization (Cayak & Cetin, 2018).
- Organizational trust: Dalati et al. (2017) discovered that there were positive correlations between sustainable leadership and organizational trust.
- innovative behavior: Javed et al. (2021) and Skerlavaj (2022) revealed that sustainable leadership increases innovation among employees.
- Less turnover intention: According to Moreira et al. (2022), sustainable leadership lowers turnover intention because it makes employees feel that the organization invests in their well-being and development.

Work-family balance and other sustainable leadership practices were identified as predictors of employee satisfaction by Lee (2017).

Critical Assessment: The findings related to individual outcomes are encouraging yet limited in many ways. First, most of the research is based on cross-sectional data, making causal inferences difficult. Second, the samples used in the majority of the research come from Western countries, thus limiting the extent of generalization. Lastly, the process through which sustainable leadership impacts the said outcomes needs further exploration.

8.2 Organisational-Level Outcomes

As far as the organisational level is concerned, sustainable leadership is linked to:

- Firm's financial performance: Suriyankietkaew and Avery (2016) established the existence of significant correlations between sustainable leadership and firm's financial performance.
- Learning capacity: Sustainable leadership improves the learning ability of organisations (Iqbal & Ahmad, 2021).
- Stakeholder satisfaction: Suriyankietkaew and Avery (2014) established significant correlations between sustainable leadership and stakeholder satisfaction.
- Customer satisfaction: Suriyankietkaew (2016) found out that sustainable leadership is positively related to customer satisfaction.
- Reputation of organisations: Sustainable leadership improves the reputation of organisations (Iqbal & Ahmad, 2021).
- Sustainability performance: Empirical studies conducted recently have established significant correlations between sustainable leadership and sustainability performance (Burawat, 2019; Iqbal et al., 2020).
- Environmental performance: Javed et al. (2020) and Iqbal et al. (2021) have found out the positive relationships between sustainable leadership and environmental performance.

Table 4: Evidence for Outcomes of Sustainable Leadership

Theme	Key Studies	Method	Context	Main Finding	Limitation
Job Satisfaction	Suriyankietkaew & Avery (2014)	Quantitative survey	Thailand	20 of 23 practices improved satisfaction	Cross-sectional; self-report
Job Satisfaction	Cayak & Cetin (2018)	Quantitative survey	Turkey	Positive association with satisfaction	Cross-sectional; limited generalisability
Organisational Commitment	Cayak & Cetin (2018)	Quantitative survey	Turkey	Positive association with commitment	Cross-sectional

Organisational Trust	Dalati et al. (2017)	Quantitative survey	Syria	Positive relationship with trust	Conflict context may limit generalisability
Innovative Behaviour	Javed et al. (2021)	Quantitative survey	Pakistan	Positive association mediated by creative self-efficacy	Cross-sectional
Turnover Intention	Moreira et al. (2022)	Quantitative survey	Portugal	Reduced turnover intention mediated by engagement	Cross-sectional
Financial Performance	Suriyankietkiew & Avery (2016)	Quantitative survey	Thailand	Positive relationship with financial performance	Cross-sectional; self-report
Sustainable Performance	Burawat (2019)	Quantitative survey	Thailand	Positive relationship in SMEs	Cross-sectional; SME context
Environmental Performance	Iqbal et al. (2021)	Quantitative survey	Asia	Positive relationship moderated by managerial discretion	Cross-sectional
Sustainability Performance	Iqbal et al. (2020)	Quantitative survey	Pakistan	Positive relationship mediated by psychological empowerment	Cross-sectional

Critical Assessment: Even though organisational-level effects have been profusely cited, there is a lack of empirical support for them. There are many cases where the links have not been empirically proven but are only conceptual. Further research is needed to investigate the links between sustainable leadership and organisational performance in terms of factors like organisational culture, innovativeness, and stakeholder relationships.

9. FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Despite significant progress, several gaps remain in sustainable leadership scholarship. This section articulates specific research questions organised by theme, building on prior reviews and adding original contributions.

9.1 Deepening Conceptualisation and Measurement

Although sustainable leadership has been established as multidimensional, it bears similarities to other leadership theories in terms of dimensionality and its measures (Liao, 2022).

Research Questions:

1. What are the unique dimensions of sustainable leadership?
2. How can sustainable leadership be measured accurately and effectively?
3. What is the factor structure of sustainable leadership and how consistent is it across cultures and organizations?
4. How does sustainable leadership hang together and what dimensions are critical to sustainability outcomes?

9.2 Empirical Validation of Frameworks

Considering that sustainable leadership research is still in its early stages, researchers have opportunities to empirically test multilevel sustainable leadership models and their underlying theories (Sajjad et al., 2024).

Research Questions:

1. How do individual and organisational mechanisms interact to produce sustainable outcomes?
2. What are the boundary conditions for sustainable leadership effectiveness?
3. Which sustainable leadership practices are most effective in which contexts?
4. How do sustainable leadership practices combine to create synergistic effects?

9.3 Cross-Cultural and Developing Economy Contexts

Beyond Thailand, there is limited research on sustainable leadership in developing countries (Hallinger & Suriyankietkaew, 2018). Given the importance of Sustainable Development Goals in developing contexts, this gap is significant.

Research Questions:

1. How do sustainable leadership practices vary across emerging economies?
2. What cultural values and institutional factors support or constrain sustainable leadership?
3. How do sustainable leadership practices differ between developed and developing economies?
4. What contextual adaptations are necessary for sustainable leadership to be effective in developing countries?
5. How do sustainable leadership practices address specific sustainability challenges in developing economies (e.g., poverty, inequality, environmental degradation)?

9.4 Paradoxical Tensions and Leadership

Paradoxes and tensions have become integral to leadership dynamics (Pearce et al., 2019; Schad & Smith, 2019), but limited work has explored paradoxical tensions in sustainability leadership (Sajjad et al., 2024).

Research Questions:

1. How do sustainability leaders recognise and respond to paradoxical tensions?
2. What capabilities enable leaders to manage paradoxes effectively?
3. How do leaders navigate trade-offs between competing sustainability goals?
4. What organisational conditions support paradoxical thinking in sustainability leadership?
5. How do leaders build organisational capacity for paradoxical thinking?
6. How do leaders manage trade-offs between short-term financial pressures and long-term environmental goals?

9.5 Dynamic and Longitudinal Studies

Future research should study dynamic antecedent variables, as sustainable leadership behaviour may differ over time (Liao, 2022). Dynamics in sustainable leadership include transformation and growth of leadership behaviour (McClean et al., 2019).

Research Questions:

1. How does sustainable leadership develop and evolve over time?
2. What life experiences and developmental processes shape sustainable leadership?
3. How do leaders learn to manage sustainability paradoxes through experience?
4. What are the trajectories of sustainable leadership development?
5. How do critical incidents (e.g., crises, scandals, regulatory changes) shape sustainable leadership development?
6. How does sustainable leadership evolve over time during crises?

9.6 Mediating and Moderating Mechanisms

Further studies should focus on finding mediators between sustainable leadership and its effects through appropriate theories including AMO theory, similarity-attraction theory, and social learning theory (Liao, 2022). Further, researchers could study the influence of normative and institutional forces on sustainable leadership emergence.

Research Questions:

1. What mechanisms mediate the relationship between sustainable leadership and performance outcomes?
2. How do organisational culture, climate, and systems moderate sustainable leadership effectiveness?
3. What contextual factors enhance or constrain sustainable leadership emergence?
4. How do stakeholder pressures shape sustainable leadership practices?
5. What individual attributes moderate the impact of sustainable leadership on followers?
6. Which mechanisms mediate the relationship between sustainable leadership and employee innovation?

9.7 Methodological Advancements**Research Questions:**

1. What are the challenges in operationalising sustainable leadership, and how can they be addressed?
2. How can mixed-methods approaches enhance understanding of sustainable leadership dynamics?

3. What longitudinal designs are appropriate for studying sustainable leadership development?
4. How can qualitative methods (case studies, ethnography, grounded theory) deepen understanding of sustainable leadership processes?

10. PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

The review of sustainable leadership literature offers several implications for practice.

10.1 Leadership Development

The leadership development programme must target the cultivation of sustainable leadership qualities such as ethics, systems thinking, mindfulness, reflective practice, and resilience (Sajjad et al., 2024). The development programme must also take into consideration the relationship between these qualities and sustainable strategy implementation.

The development of leadership must target the creation of leaders who can appreciate system dynamics and the value system in handling the external environment (Visser & Courtice, 2011). Some elements to be incorporated in the programme are:

- Ethical reasoning development using case studies and ethical discussion
- Skills in systems thinking using simulation and systems mapping techniques
- Mindfulness techniques using meditation and reflective practice
- Reflective practice using journal writing, peer coaching, and critical incident analysis
- Resilience using stress management and adaptive capacity building
- Skills in paradoxical thinking using exercises in integration of conflicting issues

10.2 Organisational Transformation

The development of sustainable leadership requires a detailed knowledge of the context within which the organisation operates and the realisation of the need for the development of sustainability culture, standards, and stakeholder engagement (Sajjad et al., 2024).

The creation of sustainability culture involves a huge change in attitude and values, as well as a readiness to share information (Iqbal et al., 2020). It implies a change in perspective from the pure pursuit of profitability to a combination of people, planet, and profit (Burnes, 2017).

Practical Recommendations:

1. Embed sustainability in organisational purpose: State an organisational purpose which encompasses economic, social, and environmental aspirations.
2. Grow sustainability leadership capabilities: Engage in leadership development programmes which build sustainable leadership capabilities.
3. Create enabling structures: Design structures such as governance processes, sustainability task forces, and reporting frameworks.

4. Become open to stakeholder engagement: Provide avenues for engaging various stakeholders.
5. Capitalize on sustainability metrics: Implement performance measurement using the three bottom line framework.
6. Build organisational resilience: Build organisational capacity to adapt and transform in the face of sustainability challenges.
7. Emergency reflexivity: Provide room for re-thinking.

10.3 Policy Implications

A clear understanding of the significance and the time-sensitive nature of sustainability leadership and its implementation for tackling grand societal challenges can be helpful for practitioners and policymakers (Sajjad et al., 2024). Policymakers should facilitate the implementation of sustainable leadership through regulatory frameworks that deliver value to stakeholders and help in the protection of the environment. Governments can organize training programs for leaders on sustainability leadership skills.

Policy Recommendations:

1. Regulatory frameworks: Formulate regulatory frameworks that motivate organizations to implement sustainable leadership practices like sustainability reporting, green procurement, and sustainable incentives.
2. Education programs: Help in developing leadership education programs that focus on sustainability competencies in business schools and executive education.
3. Cross-sectoral cooperation: Develop platforms for cooperation among different sectors on sustainability challenges.
4. Research funding: Finance the empirical research on sustainability leadership and related contextual issues.
5. Sustainability standards: Promote voluntary sustainability standards.

RELEVANCE TO ISLAMIC FINANCE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The theories of sustainable leadership that have been discussed in this review carry great significance for Islamic finance organizations because these organizations are increasingly being asked to reconcile ESG criteria along with Shari'ah criteria in their operations (Hassan & Aliyu, 2018; Sairally, 2022). Islamic finance is an inherently values-based financial system that places great importance on values like social justice and welfare and non-harm (Kamla & Haque, 2021; Laldin & Furqani, 2021).

Ethical values, stakeholder participation, and paradoxical thinking inherent in the notion of sustainable leadership are congruent with several Islamic principles like khalifah (stewardship), 'adl (justice), amānah (trust), and maqāṣid al Shari'ah (higher objectives of Islamic law) that emphasize the safeguarding of faith, life, intellect, progeny, and wealth for both current and future

generations (Ahmed, 2023; Saad & Haniffa, 2019). By incorporating sustainable leadership models, Islamic financial institutions may improve their ESG governance as well as develop sustainable products like green sukuk while making their meaningful contribution towards the SDGs of the United Nations (Ali & Quayes, 2022; Laldin & Furqani, 2021).

Additionally, the findings from the review about managing paradoxical tensions provide practical guidance for Islamic finance executives who must deal with paradoxical tensions between profit making, Shari'ah compliance, and sustainability performance, a task which is becoming increasingly difficult as Islamic banks struggle to balance their stakeholders' interests and the long-term environmental and social obligations (Sairally, 2022). Individual-level mechanisms mentioned in this review such as ethical orientation, systems thinking, mindfulness, reflection and resilience are capabilities that can be developed in the Islamic financial institutions through appropriate leadership development programmes based on sustainability science and Islamic ethics (Ahmed, 2023; Sairally, 2022).

11. CONCLUSION: CONTRIBUTIONS AND SYNTHESIS

The above review has presented a detailed analysis of the literature on sustainable leadership with regard to definition, theories, mechanisms, structure, and outcomes. Sustainable leadership has been defined as a unique style of leadership that includes factors such as economics, society, and environment within the organizational process. The uniqueness of sustainable leadership is evident from the fact that paradoxes are identified and managed and many theories are integrated.

Theoretical Contributions:

The review makes several contributions to sustainable leadership research:

1. Definition Synthesis: We contribute an integrated definition of sustainable leadership, reflecting its dynamism, multilevel and processual nature, involving ethical values, systems thinking, mindfulness, reflection, and stakeholder engagement.
2. Theory Typology: We provide a typology of theoretical perspectives – systems-paradox theory, stakeholder theory, triple bottom line, and Rhineland capitalism – analyzing their complementarities and tensions, laying a ground for theory synthesis.
3. Mechanism Synthesis: We synthesize individual and organizational mechanisms and formulate an integrated framework explaining how they interrelate, overcoming the problem of fragmentation of literature.
4. Evidence Base Critique: We critically assess the evidence base supporting sustainable leadership results, separating the well-established facts from those which need further research.
5. Structured Research Agenda: We provide structured research questions related to themes of concept definition, measurement, validity, context, paradox, dynamics, and methodology.

Key Findings:

The review outlines key mechanisms responsible for ensuring sustainable leadership in both individual and organizational context. Individual mechanisms such as ethical values, systems thinking, mindfulness, reflection, and resilience are combined with organizational mechanisms such as sustainability standards, sustainability culture, and stakeholders' engagement to ensure sustainable results. Such mechanisms work under conditions of paradoxes, which are handled through paradox-tolerant thinking.

Limitations:

It is also important to note the restrictions that the current review is subject to. Firstly, the review only includes sources that have been written in English and therefore does not consider any relevant literature that has been written in other languages. Secondly, the search was carried out using such sources as Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar and hence did not include any literature found in other sources. Thirdly, the bibliometric analysis only considered relevant bibliometric indicators without assessing methodology.

Future Outlook:

Studying sustainable leadership is relatively new in the academic field and characterised by the lack of theory development, empirical research and geographically concentrated in western developed nations. For future research, more efforts need to be put into developing a robust framework, testing it empirically, studying paradoxes and trajectories.

Since many of the problems facing society have become highly complex and interconnected, the role of sustainable leadership is going to be increasingly important. Organizations, leaders, policy makers and those in the field of leadership development need to appreciate the significance of sustainable leadership and develop the competencies required to deal with sustainability issues. Sustainable leadership provides a means through which organizations can cope with the conflict between profit, social justice and environmentalism and create sustainable value.

REFERENCES

- Albert, M. (1992). The Rhine model of capitalism: An investigation. *European Business Journal*, *4*(3), 8-22.
- Ahmed, H. (2023). *Maqāṣid al-Sharī'ah and sustainable development: A governance research agenda*. *Journal of Islamic Banking, Economics and Policy*. <https://journal.jibep.org>
- Ali, M., & Quayes, S. (2022). *Islamic finance and sustainability: Balancing spirituality, values and profit*. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003269120>
- Armani, A. B., Petrini, M., & Santos, A. C. (2020). What are the attributes of sustainable leadership? *Revista Brasileira de Gestão de Negócios*, *22*, 820-835. <https://doi.org/10.7819/rbgn.v22i4.4086>

- Avery, G. (2005). *Leadership for sustainable futures: Achieving success in a competitive world*. Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Avery, G. C., & Bergsteiner, H. (2011a). *Sustainable leadership: Honeybee and locust approaches*. Routledge.
- Avery, G. C., & Bergsteiner, H. (2011b). Sustainable leadership practices for enhancing business resilience and performance. *Strategy & Leadership*, *39*(3), 5-15. <https://doi.org/10.1108/10878571111128766>
- Avolio, B. J., & Gardner, W. L. (2005). Authentic leadership development: Getting to the root of positive forms of leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *16*(3), 315-338. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2005.03.001>
- Avolio, B. J., Walumbwa, F. O., & Weber, T. J. (2009). Leadership: Current theories, research, and future directions. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *60*, 421-449. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.60.110707.163621>
- Baumgartner, R. J. (2009). Organisational culture and leadership: Preconditions for the development of a sustainable corporation. *Sustainable Development*, *17*(2), 102-113. <https://doi.org/10.1002/sd.405>
- Bennett, N., & Lemoine, G. J. (2014). What a difference a word makes: Understanding threats to performance in a VUCA world. *Business Horizons*, *57*(3), 311-317. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bushor.2014.01.001>
- Bernal, E., Edgar, D., & Burnes, B. (2018). Building sustainability on deep values through mindfulness nurturing. *Ecological Economics*, *146*, 645-657. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolecon.2017.09.023>
- Bolton, G. (2010). *Reflective practice: Writing and professional development* (3rd ed.). Sage.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *3*(2), 77-101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Brown, M. E., Treviño, L. K., & Harrison, D. A. (2005). Ethical leadership: A social learning perspective for construct development and testing. *Organisational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *97*(2), 117-134. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2005.03.002>
- Brundtland Commission. (1987). *Our common future*. Oxford University Press.
- Burawat, P. (2019). The relationships among transformational leadership, sustainable leadership, lean manufacturing and sustainability performance in Thai SMEs manufacturing industry. *International Journal of Quality & Reliability Management*, *36*(6), 1014-1036. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJQRM-09-2017-0178>
- Burnes, B. (2017). After Paris: Changing corporate behaviour to achieve sustainability. *Social Business*, *7*(3), 333-357. <https://doi.org/10.1362/204440817X15108507784474>
- Burns, H., Vaught, H. D., & Bauman, C. (2015). Leadership for sustainability: Theoretical foundations and pedagogical practices that foster change. *International Journal of Leadership Studies*, *9*(1), 131-143.

- Care, O., Bernstein, M. J., Chapman, M., Diaz Reviriego, I., Dressler, G., Felipe-Lucia, M. R., ... & Zaehring, J. G. (2021). Creating leadership collectives for sustainability transformations. *Sustainability Science*, *16*(2), 703-708. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11625-021-00909-6>
- Castelli, P. A. (2016). Reflective leadership review: A framework for improving organisational performance. *Journal of Management Development*, *35*(2), 217-236. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JMD-09-2014-0103>
- Cayak, S., & Cetin, M. (2018). Sustainable leadership scale: Validity and reliability study. *Electronic Turkish Studies*, *13*, 1561-1582.
- Chen, Y. S., & Chang, C. H. (2013). The determinants of green product development performance: Green dynamic capabilities, green transformational leadership, and green creativity. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *116*(1), 107-119. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-012-1452-x>
- Christensen, L. T., Morsing, M., & Thyssen, O. (2017). License to critique: A communication perspective on sustainability standards. *Business Ethics Quarterly*, *27*(2), 239-262. <https://doi.org/10.1017/beq.2016.84>
- Cilliers, P. (2002). *Complexity and postmodernism: Understanding complex systems*. Routledge.
- Corner, P. D., & Pavlovich, K. (2016). Shared value through inner knowledge creation. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *135*, 543-555. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-014-2468-1>
- Craig, R. K. (2020). Resilience theory and wicked problems. *Vanderbilt Law Review*, *73*, 1733-1775.
- Dalati, S., Raudeliūnienė, J., & Davidavičienė, V. (2017). Sustainable leadership, organisational trust on job satisfaction: Empirical evidence from higher education institutions in Syria. *Business Management and Education*, *15*(1), 14-27.
- De Haan, T., Jansen, P., & Ligthart, P. (2015). *Sustainable leadership: Talent requirements for sustainable enterprises*. Russell Reynolds Associates.
- Denis, J. L., Langley, A., & Sergi, V. (2012). Leadership in the plural. *Academy of Management Annals*, *6*(1), 211-283. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19416520.2012.667612>
- Duchek, S. (2020). Organisational resilience: A capability-based conceptualization. *Business Research*, *13*(1), 215-246. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40685-019-0085-7>
- Egleton, D., Castelli, P. A., & Marx, T. G. (2017). Developing, validating, and testing a model of reflective leadership. *Leadership & Organisation Development Journal*, *38*(7), 886-896. <https://doi.org/10.1108/LODJ-01-2016-0012>
- Elkington, J. (1998). Partnerships from cannibals with forks: The triple bottom line of 21st-century business. *Environmental Quality Management*, *8*(1), 37-51. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tqem.3310080106>
- Epstein, M. J. (2008). *Making sustainability work: Best practices in managing and measuring corporate social, environmental and economic impacts*. Greenleaf Publishing.

- 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>
- Evans, T. L. (2018). Sustainable leadership: Toward restoring the human and natural worlds. In B. Redekop, D. R. Gallagher, & R. Satterwhite (Eds.), *Innovation in environmental leadership* (pp. 61-79). Routledge.
- Ferdig, M. A. (2007). Sustainability leadership: Co-creating a sustainable future. *Journal of Change Management*, *7*(1), 25-35. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14697010701233809>
- Fernandez, A., Kullu, F. D., & Shankar, R. (2020). A grounded research approach to sustainable leadership practices and competencies. In *Sustainable human resource management* (pp. 71-86). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-52066-3_5
- Folke, C. (2006). Resilience: The emergence of a perspective for social-ecological systems analyses. *Global Environmental Change*, *16*(3), 253-267. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2006.04.002>
- Franken, E., Plimmer, G., & Malinen, S. (2020). Paradoxical leadership in public sector organisations: Its role in fostering employee resilience. *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, *79*(1), 93-110. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-8500.12395>
- Freeman, R. E., Phillips, R., & Sisodia, R. (2020). Tensions in stakeholder theory. *Business and Society*, *59*(2), 213-231. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0007650318773455>
- Galpin, T., Whittington, J. L., & Bell, G. (2015). Is your sustainability strategy sustainable? Creating a culture of sustainability. *Corporate Governance*, *15*(1), 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.1108/CG-01-2013-0004>
- George, G., Howard-Grenville, J., Joshi, A., & Tihanyi, L. (2016). Understanding and tackling societal grand challenges through management research. *Academy of Management Journal*, *59*(6), 1880-1895. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2016.4007>
- Gerard, L., McMillan, J., & D'Annunzio-Green, N. (2017). Conceptualising sustainable leadership. *Industrial and Commercial Training*, *49*(3), 116-126. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ICT-12-2016-0076>
- Giustiniano, L., e Cunha, M. P., Simpson, A. V., Rego, A., & Clegg, S. (2020). Resilient leadership as paradox work: Notes from COVID-19. *Management and Organisation Review*, *16*(5), 971-975. <https://doi.org/10.1017/mor.2020.57>
- Gray, B., & Stites, J. P. (2013). *Sustainability through partnerships: Capitalizing on collaboration*. Network for Business Sustainability.
- Grewatsch, S., Kennedy, S., & Bansal, P. (2021). Tackling wicked problems in strategic management with systems thinking. *Strategic Organisation*, *21*, 721-732. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14761270211057590>
- Haack, P., & Rasche, A. (2021). The legitimacy of sustainability standards: A paradox perspective. *Organisation Theory*, *2*(4). <https://doi.org/10.1177/26317877211049493>

- Hahn, T., Figge, F., Pinkse, J., & Preuss, L. (2018). A paradox perspective on corporate sustainability: Descriptive, instrumental, and normative aspects. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *148*(2), 235-248. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-017-3582-7>
- Hallinger, P., & Suriyankietkaew, S. (2018). Science mapping of the knowledge base on sustainable leadership, 1990-2018. *Sustainability*, *10*(12), Article 4846. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su10124846>
- Hargreaves, A., & Fink, D. (2004). The seven principles of sustainable leadership. *Educational Leadership*, *61*(7), 8-13.
- Hargreaves, A., & Fink, D. (2006). *Sustainable leadership*. Jossey-Bass.
- Hassan, M. K., & Aliyu, S. (2018). A contemporary survey of Islamic banking literature. *Journal of Financial Stability*, *34*, 12-26. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jfs.2017.11.003>
- Henriksson, H., & Grunewald, E. W. (2020). *Sustainability leadership: A Swedish approach*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Herremans, I. M., Nazari, J. A., & Mahmoudian, F. (2016). Stakeholder relationships, engagement, and sustainability reporting. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *138*(3), 417-435. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-015-2635-1>
- Hillmann, J., & Guenther, E. (2021). Organisational resilience: A valuable construct for management research? *International Journal of Management Reviews*, *23*(1), 7-44. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ijmr.12239>
- Hind, P., Wilson, A., & Lenssen, G. (2009). Developing leaders for sustainable business. *Corporate Governance*, *9*(1), 7-20. <https://doi.org/10.1108/14720700910936038>
- Hörisch, J., Freeman, R. E., & Schaltegger, S. (2014). Applying stakeholder theory in sustainability management: Links, similarities, dissimilarities, and a conceptual framework. *Organisation & Environment*, *27*(4), 328-346. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1086026614535786>
- Iqbal, Q., & Ahmad, N. H. (2021). Sustainable development: The colors of sustainable leadership in learning organisation. *Sustainable Development*, *29*(1), 108-119. <https://doi.org/10.1002/sd.2135>
- Iqbal, Q., Ahmad, N. H., & Li, Y. (2021). Sustainable leadership in frontier Asia region: Managerial discretion and environmental innovation. *Sustainability*, *13*(9), 5002. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13095002>
- Iqbal, Q., Ahmad, N. H., Nasim, A., & Khan, S. A. R. (2020). A moderated-mediation analysis of psychological empowerment: Sustainable leadership and sustainable performance. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, *262*, 121429. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2020.121429>
- Javed, A., Iqbal, J., Iqbal, S. M. J., & Imran, M. (2021). Sustainable leadership and employee innovative behavior: Discussing the mediating role of creative self-efficacy. *Journal of Public Affairs*, *21*(3), e2356. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pa.2356>

- Kabat-Zinn, J. (2003). Mindfulness-based interventions in context: Past, present, and future. *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice*, *10*(2), 144-156. <https://doi.org/10.1093/clipsy.bpg016>
- Kamla, R., & Haque, F. (2021). Islamic finance and the Sustainable Development Goals: A systematic literature review. *Journal of Islamic Accounting and Business Research*, *12*(5), 697-722. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JIABR-07-2020-0192>
- Kantabutra, S., & Avery, G. (2013). Sustainable leadership: Honeybee practices at a leading Asian industrial conglomerate. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Business Administration*, *5*(1), 36-56. <https://doi.org/10.1108/17574321311304521>
- Koskela, V., & Schuyler, K. G. (2016). Experiences of presence as a key factor toward sustainability leadership. *Journal of Leadership Studies*, *9*(4), 54-59. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jls.21407>
- Kurucz, E. C., Colbert, B. A., Luedeke-Freund, F., Upward, A., & Willard, B. (2017). Relational leadership for strategic sustainability: Practices and capabilities to advance the design and assessment of sustainable business models. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, *140*, 189-204. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2016.03.087>
- Laldin, M. A., & Furqani, H. (2021). The role of Islamic finance in achieving sustainable development goals. *ISRA International Journal of Islamic Finance*, *13*(2), 174-189. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJIF-12-2020-0241>
- Lee, H. (2017). A study on the effect of sustainable leadership on organisational effectiveness. *Journal of Business and Retail Management Research*, *11*(4), 1-10.
- Liao, Y. (2022). Sustainable leadership: A literature review and prospects for future research. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *13*, Article 1045570. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.1045570>
- Luscher, L. S., & Lewis, M. W. (2008). Organisational change and managerial sensemaking: Working through paradox. *Academy of Management Journal*, *51*(2), 221-240. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2008.31767217>
- Luthans, F., Avey, J. B., Avolio, B. J., & Peterson, S. J. (2010). The development and resulting performance impact of positive psychological capital. *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, *21*(1), 41-67. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hrdq.20034>
- Maak, T., & Pless, N. M. (2006). Responsible leadership in a stakeholder society: A relational perspective. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *66*(1), 99-115. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-006-9047-z>
- Marion, R., & Uhl-Bien, M. (2001). Leadership in complex organisations. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *12*(4), 389-418. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1048-9843\(01\)00092-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1048-9843(01)00092-4)
- McClean, S. T., Barnes, C. M., Courtright, S. H., & Johnson, R. E. (2019). Resetting the clock on dynamic leader behaviors: A conceptual integration and agenda for future research. *Academy of Management Annals*, *13*(2), 479-508. <https://doi.org/10.5465/annals.2017.0046>
- McGhee, P., & Grant, P. (2017). It's not about heroes. In G. Eweje & R. J. Bathurst (Eds.), *Sustainability leadership: CSR, sustainability, and leadership* (pp. 11-30). Routledge.

- Moher, D., Liberati, A., Tetzlaff, J., & Altman, D. G. (2009). Preferred reporting items for systematic reviews and meta-analyses: The PRISMA statement. *Annals of Internal Medicine*, *151*(4), 264-269. <https://doi.org/10.7326/0003-4819-151-4-200908180-00135>
- Moreira, A., Cesário, F., & Sabino, A. (2022). Sustainable leadership and turnover intentions: The mediating role of employee engagement. *Sustainability*, *14*(15), 9380. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su14159380>
- Nava, L., & Tampe, M. (2022). The challenge of implementing voluntary sustainability standards. *Business Ethics Quarterly*, *33*(1), 1-31. <https://doi.org/10.1017/beq.2022.12>
- Page, M. J., McKenzie, J. E., Bossuyt, P. M., Boutron, I., Hoffmann, T. C., Mulrow, C. D., ... & Moher, D. (2021). The PRISMA 2020 statement: An updated guideline for reporting systematic reviews. *BMJ*, *372*, n71. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.n71>
- Paraschiv, D. M., Nemoianu, E. L., Langă, C. A., & Szabó, T. (2012). Eco-innovation, responsible leadership and organisational change for corporate sustainability. *Amfiteatru Economic Journal*, *14*(32), 404-417.
- Parkin, S. (2010). *The positive deviant: Sustainability leadership in a perverse world*. Routledge.
- Pearce, C. L., Wassenaar, C. L., Manz, C. C., & Sims Jr., H. P. (2019). The future of leadership: The evolving role of leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *30*(1), 1-5. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2018.12.001>
- Peterlin, J., Dimovski, V., & Penger, S. (2015). The role of sustainability leadership. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *130*(2), 273-286.
- Raelin, J. A. (2002). "I don't have time to think!" versus the art of reflective practice. *Reflections*, *4*(1), 66-79.
- Rainey, D. L. (2013). *Sustainable leadership: A comprehensive approach to leading organisations*. Wiley.
- Rashkova, M., Sajjad, A., & Eweje, G. (2023). Mindfulness and social sustainability. *Social Indicators Research*, *150*(1), 73-94. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11205-020-02345-0>
- Robinson, M., Kleffner, A., & Bertels, S. (2011). Signaling sustainability leadership. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *101*(3), 493-505. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-011-0732-1>
- Saad, R. A. J., & Haniffa, R. (2019). Islamic finance and the SDGs: A critical review. *Journal of Islamic Accounting and Business Research*, *10*(4), 578-594. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JIABR-03-2019-0056>
- Sairally, S. (2022). Integrating ESG and Islamic finance: A Shariah-compliant approach to sustainable investment. *Journal of Islamic Banking, Economics and Policy*, *1*(1), 1-22. <https://journal.jibep.org>
- Sajjad, A., Eweje, G., & Raziq, M. M. (2024). Sustainability leadership: An integrative review and conceptual synthesis. *Business Strategy and the Environment*, *33*(4), 2851-2872. <https://doi.org/10.1002/bse.3631>

- Sajjad, A., Eweje, G., & Tappin, D. (2015). Sustainable supply chain management. *Business Strategy and the Environment*, *24*(7), 643-655. <https://doi.org/10.1002/bse.1857>
- Schad, J., & Bansal, P. (2018). Seeing the forest and the trees: How a systems perspective informs paradox research. *Journal of Management Studies*, *55*(8), 1490-1506. <https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.12381>
- Schad, J., Lewis, M. W., Raisch, S., & Smith, W. K. (2016). Paradox research in management science. *Academy of Management Annals*, *10*(1), 5-64. <https://doi.org/10.5465/19416520.2016.1123967>
- Schad, J., & Smith, W. K. (2019). Addressing grand challenges' paradoxes. *Journal of Leadership Studies*, *12*(4), 55-59. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jls.21654>
- Senge, P. (1990). *The fifth discipline: The art and practice of the learning organisation*. Doubleday/Currency.
- Sharma, R. R. (2019). Evolving a model of sustainable leadership. *Vision*, *23*(2), 152-169. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0972262919833572>
- Skerlavaj, M. (2022). *Post-heroic leadership*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Smith, W. K., & Lewis, M. W. (2011). Toward a theory of paradox. *Academy of Management Review*, *36*(2), 381-403. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2009.0220>
- Snyder, H. (2019). Literature review as a research methodology. *Journal of Business Research*, *104*, 333-339. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.07.039>
- Suriyankietkaew, S. (2016). Effects of sustainable leadership on customer satisfaction. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Business Administration*, *8*(3), 245-259. <https://doi.org/10.1108/APJBA-04-2015-0035>
- Suriyankietkaew, S., & Avery, G. C. (2014). Leadership practices influencing stakeholder satisfaction. *Asia-Pacific Journal of Business Administration*, *6*(3), 247-261. <https://doi.org/10.1108/APJBA-04-2014-0048>
- Suriyankietkaew, S., & Avery, G. (2016). Sustainable leadership practices driving financial performance. *Sustainability*, *8*(4), 327. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su8040327>
- Tideman, S. G., Arts, M. C., & Zandee, D. P. (2013). Sustainable leadership: Towards a workable definition. *Journal of Corporate Citizenship*, *49*, 17-33.
- Torraco, R. J. (2005). Writing integrative literature reviews. *Human Resource Development Review*, *4*(3), 356-367. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1534484305278283>
- Uhl-Bien, M., Marion, R., & McKelvey, B. (2007). Complexity leadership theory. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *18*(4), 298-318. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2007.04.002>
- Van der Byl, C., Slawinski, N., & Hahn, T. (2020). Responsible management of sustainability tensions. In *Research handbook of responsible management*. Edward Elgar.

- Van der Byl, C. A., & Slawinski, N. (2015). Embracing tensions in corporate sustainability. *Organisation & Environment*, *28*(1), 54-79. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1086026615575777>
- Van Neerijnen, P., Tempelaar, M. P., & Van de Vrande, V. (2021). Embracing paradox: The role of cognitive complexity in sustainability leadership. *Organisation Studies*, *43*(10), 1793-1814. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01708406211039942>
- Visser, W., & Courtice, P. (2011). Sustainability leadership: Linking theory and practice. SSRN. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1947221>
- Vladić, N., Maletič, D., & Maletič, M. (2024). Leadership for sustainable development. In *Green and digital transition*. University of Maribor Press.
- Waldman, D. A., Putnam, L. L., Miron-Spektor, E., & Siegel, D. (2019). The role of paradox theory. *Organisational Behaviour and Human Decision Processes*, *155*, 1-6. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.obhdp.2019.04.006>
- Whittemore, R., & Knafl, K. (2005). The integrative review: Updated methodology. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, *52*(5), 546-553. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2648.2005.03621.x>
- Yukl, G. (2012). Effective leadership behavior. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, *26*(4), 66-85. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amp.2012.0088>
- Zheng, W., Kark, R., & Meister, A. L. (2018). Paradox versus dilemma mindset. *The Leadership Quarterly*, *29*(5), 584-596. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2018.04.001>