

Sustainable Leadership as a Management Approach for Addressing Global Environmental, Social, and Economic Challenges: Dewan Bandaraya Kota Kinabalu (DBKK), Sabah.

Christiana Jonut & Felsy Joseph Sandi

AMC University College, Kota Kinabalu, SABAH

Abstract

This research paper explores sustainable leadership as a critical management approach that offers solutions to pressing environmental, social, and economic challenges in today's world. Sustainable leadership emphasizes long-term thinking, ethical decision-making, and a commitment to the well-being of people and the planet. This study examines the key principles and practices of sustainable leadership, including the integration of corporate social responsibility (CSR), stakeholder engagement, and innovation in sustainable practices. Through an interview to a key informant of DBKK Sabah and comprehensive review of case studies from diverse industries, this research highlights how sustainable leadership fosters organizational resilience, enhances stakeholder trust, and drives sustainable growth. It is suggested that organizations led by sustainable leaders are better equipped to navigate the complexities of global challenges, achieve competitive advantages, and contribute positively to society. This paper concludes by identified framework for DBKK in implementing sustainable leadership in organizations, emphasizing its role in achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and promoting a more sustainable future for all.

Keywords: sustainable leadership, management approach, environmental challenges, social responsibility, economic sustainability, stakeholder engagement, sustainable development.

1. Introduction

In today's multifaceted and intricately connected issues of global environment, social and economic challenges, there is a pressing need for the role of leadership who can address and steer these issues to the right direction. With the escalating problems of climate change, depletion of resources and injustice to humanity, the need for a sustainable leadership as a management approach is inevitable. Therefore, finding solutions for these global

Corresponding author: Christiana Jonut

Received: 2/03/2025

Accepted: 14/03/2025

Revised: 13/04/2025

Published: 15/04/2025

DOI: 10.51200/jberd.v1i12.6323

implications requires collaborations from every nation. And so, the leadership approach to tackle this global sustainability problem need to be evolved from the conventional of just achieving organizational goal or maximizing shareholders' value to a broader responsibility that entails global environmental protection, social justice and sustainable development (Koh, Han, Wen & Kelvin, 2024). The same authors also mentioned that the concept of global leadership and sustainability are interconnected and requires a leader who can lead and find solution to the complexities of the shifting global issues while at the same time ensure a balance of ecological, social equity and global economic growth (2024). As such, this article highlights the approach of Sustainable leadership that include the integration of corporate social responsibility (CSR), stakeholder engagement, and innovation in sustainable practices by emphasizing on long-term thinking, ethical decision making and a commitment to the well-being of the people and planet. Overall, the study will propose a practical framework for integrating environmental, social responsibility and global economic improvement, contribute strategies in achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs), and promote a sustainable future for the community and all stakeholders involved.

The rising of environmental issues threatens the sustainability of the earth. The degradation of the environment due to climate change is one of the most pressing global challenges at present time (Kushakova, & Bayzokova, 2024). Rising global temperature leading to severe weather condition, rising sea levels causes habitat loss and reduced biodiversity. Polluted oceans due to plastic waste to toxic air in our cities is negatively detriment to wildlife and human health.

Human activities especially in developed country contributes to the environment degradation. Activities such as burning of coal and extracting oil and gas disrupt the natural ecosystem. They also produced more greenhouse gas emission as studied by the National Academy of Science (2008). Developing countries are the most affected where severe drought causing shortage of food and water (Tamang, 2024). Some of the social impact of global climate change are "... shortage of food and water, uninhabitable coastline, as surge of refugees, climate related migration, insecurity and injustice." (Podesta & Stern, 2020; Adow, 2020; Baker, George, Sultz & Halstead, 2020).

Sustainable leadership seeks to ensure financial stability while contributing to the broader economic ecosystem. Multiple stakeholders have increasingly realized the need for a sustainable development as a guiding principle to mitigate undesirable economic consequence (Chaturvedi, Thomas, Thomas, Tiwari, & Javeed, 2024). The concept of economic sustainable leadership as suggested is while pursuing environmental challenges and social equity, at the same time economic sustainability should be addressed too, therefore, ensuring the present and future generations' well-being are taken care of (Chaturvedi, et al. 2024).

At present time, the global community faces the adverse effect of climate change, social inequality, and resource depletion. To achieve sustainable development, these myriads of issues necessitate multifaceted approaches (Ruhana, Suwartiningsih, Mulyandari, Handoyo, & Afrilia, 2024) and immediate attention. Hasanuddin et al suggested that examining how sustainable practices are integrated into management strategies is essential for addressing the global escalating challenges while promoting ethical organizational conduct (2023). And so, this study points out the approach of Sustainable leadership that include the integration of corporate social responsibility (CSR), stakeholder engagement, and innovation in sustainable practices by highlighting on long-term thinking, ethical decision-making, integration of CSR, stakeholder engagement and innovation in sustainable practices. The study also will suggest a practical framework for integrating environmental, social responsibility and global economic sustainability, contribute innovative insights in achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs), and promote a sustainable future for the global community.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Definition of sustainable leadership

In today's modern era, sustainable development has emerged as the foremost concern of the world as people strive with the dire needs to balance environmental conservation, social justice and economic growth (Chaturvedi, et al. 2024). Therefore, the definition of Sustainable leadership involved making decisions that balance the ever-increasing global issues without giving negative impact to the world of the future generations. This definition was entrenched in the concept of sustainable development, popularized by the Brundtland Commission in 1987 as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs," has since become a guiding principle for policymakers, businesses, and communities worldwide.

2.2 Transformational Leadership Theory

The definition of sustainable leadership in this study is align with the theory of Transformational Leadership. This theory was introduced by James MacGregor Burns and later enhanced by Bernard Bass. Bass accentuates the capability of a leader to encourage and motivate followers to accomplish extraordinary result by aligning their goals with the organization's vision. Transformational leader leads the followers by promoting an environment of trust and morally, intellectually and emotionally, encourage creativity and personal growth to be parallel with the organization's goal. (Udin, 2024 and Bass, 1985). Transformational leadership Theory in particular is relevant to this study because it suggested that sustainable leadership should inherent the quality of inspirational motivator with a clear vision and purpose, innovative in problem-solving, embody ethical values, committed and a role model, thereby enhancing overall performance. (Logan, 2024 and Avolio, 2009). See figure 1.1 the theoretical framework of Transformational Leadership



Figure1.1: Theoretical framework of Transformational Leadership

Figure 1.1 above described the model of Transformational Leadership. This theory suggests that a Transformational Leader inspire and lead followers and has the eminence of being intellectual, Ideal person who is committed, has high ethical value, energetic with multi skills and a strong motivator and a visionary thinker.

2.3 Research gap

There have been many researches produced pertaining to sustainability. For examples, bridging the gap between theoretical understanding and practical application in the pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs)

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Received: 2/03/2025

Accepted: 14/03/2025

Revised: 13/04/2025

Published: 15/04/2025

DOI: 10.51200/jberd.v1i1i2.6323

(Ruhana, et al. 2024); Ethical issues in sustainability (Kilinc, et al, 2024), Global leadership and sustainability (Koh, et al. 2024); Sustainable business practices (Hasanuddin, et al, 2023); economics of sustainable development (Chaturvedi, et al. 2024) and etc. However, there is no study made on the sustainable leadership with case study of Dewan Bandaraya Kota Kinabalu (DBKK), Sabah, the local Government body, in terms of how they tackle the increasing global challenges, what standard of practice do they apply to promote sustainable leadership, do they work with international leaders to mitigate the world environmental degradation, social inequity and economic sustainability and etc. Therefore, the novelty of this study lies in its focus on the approach of Sustainable leadership that include the integration of corporate social responsibility (CSR), stakeholder engagement, and innovation in sustainable practices by emphasizing on long-term thinking, ethical decision making and a commitment to the well-being of the people and planet with case study of DBKK in Sabah. Overall, the study will propose a practical framework for integrating environmental, social responsibility and global economic improvement, contribute strategies in achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs), and promote a sustainable future for the community and all stakeholders involved. There are key principles and practices of sustainable leadership identified as follows;

2.4 Long-term thinking

Koh, Han, Wen, Kelvin (2024) described long-term thinking as the ability to envision impending trends, foresee complications and devise long-term solution to overcome problems that might arises. Sustainable leader focus on the bigger picture and future outcomes that benefit future generations rather than short-term gains. They set goals that align with long-term environmental, social and economic sustainability, ensuring their decision create enduring value. These leaders recognize their responsibility to pass on the world in better shape for future generations. They realized that the policies and practices that they device today, in a long-term, needs to balance with the current needs with those of the future.

2.5 Ethical Decision-making

Ethical aspects involve adhering to correct values, self-accountability, having high integrity, ethical behaviour, more open in discussion, committed and usually a strong example of followers (Sharma, Agrawal and Khandelwal, 2019 cited in Kılınc, Yücel, & Yücel, 2024). The presence of ethical leadership can enhance the impact of corporate social responsibility (CSR) on the organization reputation and performance (Tuan & Ngan, 2021). High ethical standards create trusts and positive relationship with stakeholders and communities (Aleksandrova & Styrgul, 2022). Kilinc et al suggested that Ethical leadership is where decision is made ethically, encourage followers to follow through the correct values and demonstrate appropriate attitude and behaviour (2024). A strong Ethical leadership maintain high level of transparency (Koh, et al., 2024). A sustainable leader can influence the community and diverse stakeholders to be responsible for the global issues such as environmental impact, sustainable development, humanity, social and economic concerns (Payne and Dimanche, 1996) and contribute to the common good.

2.6 Integration of CSR

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is a voluntary action by an organization to help the local communities by organizing CSR programs to contribute to societal well-being (Koh, et al., 2024). CSR is an important concept prompting businesses to go beyond profit-making and seriously consider the social, environmental and economic adverse effect of their operations (Aleksandrova & Strygul, 2022; Khan, 2014). Incorporating sustainable practices and addressing to the society's needs means taking responsibility to a bigger spectrum of stakeholders, that include the communities, employees, investors, customers and the environment.

2.7 Stakeholder Engagement

The role of stakeholders, including “...employees, customers, suppliers, investors and communities” in shaping sustainable practices are pivotal (Koh, et al., 2024). Studies found that engaging diverse stakeholders in decision-making in sustainability shows higher level of accountability and receptiveness (Hasanuddin, Sanjaya, Lutfi, Syamsuddin, & Judijanto, 2024). as all relevant parties’ support and work together towards a common goal. The common goals include application of sustainable practices, policy-making and offering insights into how the escalating global issues can be effectively addressed through innovative approaches (Ruhana, et al., 2024; Koh al. et, 2024)

2.9 Innovation in Sustainable Practices

Sustainability propels innovation by stirring organizations to incorporate creative solutions, such as sourcing less degradable raw material, efficient services and processes to reduce environmental, social and economic impact. Examples are H&M group, a global fashion retailer, foster innovation in sustainability in its organization. The company aimed to use raw materials to produce clothing are sourced responsibly and sustainably. In the year 2020, 64.5% of the material used to make clothing comes from recycled and sustainable sources. H&M Group aimed to be 100% sustainable by 2030. The company urged their suppliers to support them and comply with their sustainability standards. Another example is Cisco, a technology company, has sets its sustainability goals to achieve zero greenhouse gas emissions in all its branches by 2040 and committed to affect one billion people by 2025 through initiating various programmes including volunteerism and donations. Sustainable leadership integrates long-term vision, accountability for sustainable ecological impact, humanitarian and social concern (Kilinc, Yucell & Yucel, 2024; Koh, et al, 2024). Organizations that care and positively affect the communities and the environment build trust and strengthen relationships with stakeholders and create lasting value (Koh et al, 2024). In this article, there are examples of case study of a corporate and a government or non-profit organization in terms of sustainable leadership practices and the analysis of comparison and examination of the lessons discovered from the following cases;

2.9.1 A Corporate

Unilever’s sustainable living plan is to strive for improving health, well-being and reduce environmental harm. The company has carried out many sustainable practices under its sustainable living plan and has impacted the wide society positively. By its numerous CSR programs, Unilever has enhanced its global brand, obtained loyal customers, improved its reputation, expand its client base and established positive social and environmental impact. Global leaders who incorporate strategic sustainable growth and practices in their businesses are tend to succeed and create a justice and sustainable world (Kumar and Sinha, 2024; Koh al et, 2024)

IKEA has made itself as one of the leading organizations that practice Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) by engaging in sustainable practices, community welfare, and being responsible in business matters. The company’s initiatives are parallel with its “people and Planet Positive” vision. IKEA’s sustainability efforts are 1) sustainable initiatives where the company aim to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in all its value chain by the year 2030, 2) circular economy where IKEA plan to promote furniture recycling to reduce waste. 3) social responsibility where one of the company’s aims is to support refugees by providing shelter solution, jobs and opportunity and giving education to refugee camps, 4) ethical sourcing. Sourcing material responsibly by ensuring they meet strict environmental and ethical standards; 5) Reducing waste by eliminating single-use plastic and redistribute unsold food to the needy, and 6) Employee Well-Being. Inclusion of diversity in the workplace. IKEA initiatives has attracted many loyal customers who trust in the company and with this, IKEA experienced success in its business (Kumar & Sinha, 2024)

Corresponding author: Christiana Jonut

Received: 2/03/2025

Accepted: 14/03/2025

Revised: 13/04/2025

Published: 15/04/2025

DOI: 10.51200/jberd.v1i12.6323

2.9.2 A Government or Non-profit

The commitment and corporation from various sectors are imperative in sustainable leadership. Absence of collaboration leads to unattainable goal. New Zealand's climate policies under Jacinda Arden, a government led or non-profit organizations, introduced ambitious initiatives for sustainability which affected many stakeholders including non-profit organization. Her policy on Flagship Zero Carbon Act to tackle climate change received resistance from the industry (particularly from the agriculture sector), public sentiment and coalitions dynamics has impeded advancement. Furthermore, the Government is not fully committed to its mission particularly in controlling the agriculture sector from reducing agricultural emission. As a result, the climate change mitigation in New Zealand did not achieve its goal (Crawley & Chapman, 2025). A comparison analysis of both the corporate and non-government bodies on sustainable leadership discovered as follow;

- 1) Engagement with all stakeholders is important. Corporate sectors and Government or Non-profit organisations must work together with industries; local communities, employees and investors with high level of commitment to find solutions for climate change and sustainability.
- 2) Set long-term thinking with achievable and measurable goal to reduce environmental impact.
- 3) Transparency and ethical decision-making in promoting sustainable leadership to gain trust and taking responsibility.
- 4) Focus on education and advocacy campaign that inspire grassroots action and policy changes.
- 5) Global partnerships with international network to find solution to environmental impact and engage global expertise to local challenges.
- 6) Organizing numerous CSR or Community-based projects and funding initiatives to restore the ecosystems and reducing plastic waste.

3. Methodology

3.1 KK Green City Policy 2019 and SDG Goals

Sustainable leadership is all about adopting a responsible approach to the way that an organization leads and thinking about the wider impact of it action on society and the environment. The authors chose Kota Kinabalu City Hall, a non-government organization and interviewed a key informant. DBKK aims to position Kota Kinabalu as a model city for sustainable development in Malaysia so it can attract more investment, foster eco-tourism, and promote the city as a sustainable destination. In aligning with the objective, Kota Kinabalu Green City (KK GC) was introduced in the year 2019, a strategic framework focusing on sustainable urban development by Kota Kinabalu City Hall (DBKK). The KK GC identifies transport, energy, solid waste, water, sewerage and stormwater drainage, buildings, and land use and development as key focus sectors for the city. There were nine (9) priority projects for implementation in the period between 2019 and 2023. These projects were identified in contribution to building a climate-resilient, green city. The cumulative investment required for implementing the nine priority projects is estimated to be \$331.30 million. The Kota Kinabalu Green City Action Plan (KK GCAP) was introduced toward attaining Kota Kinabalu's vision of becoming a "nature resort city—clean, green, and livable by 2020" using integrated and comprehensive development approaches. The development in Kota Kinabalu has always proceeded with people at the forefront, giving equal consideration to the city's rich cultural and natural heritage. These projects were selected based on the stakeholders and the city, based on the established priority, and based on developmental priorities of the city.

The Kota Kinabalu Green City Action Plan (KK GCAP) aligns with sustainable development principles by promoting stakeholder inclusivity and serving as a role model for sustainability. In line with the United Nations

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the KK GCAP focuses on key areas that contribute to building a resilient and green city. Notably, it supports Clean Water and Sanitation (SDG 6) through improved water management, Affordable and Clean Energy (SDG 7) by advancing sustainable energy solutions, and Decent Work and Economic Growth (SDG 8) by fostering green jobs and economic opportunities. Additionally, the plan emphasizes Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure (SDG 9) to enhance urban development, Sustainable Cities and Communities (SDG 11) to ensure eco-friendly urbanization, and Climate Action (SDG 13) to strengthen resilience against climate change. Through these strategic priorities, DBKK reinforces its commitment to sustainable urban development and environmental stewardship.

3.2 DBKK resilience in addressing global environment, social and economic

Dewan Bandaraya Kota Kinabalu (DBKK) demonstrates resilience in tackling global environmental, social, and economic challenges through sustainable urban governance and strategic planning. Environmentally, DBKK integrates climate adaptation and mitigation efforts, emphasizing green infrastructure, renewable energy, and sustainable waste management. Socially, the agency promotes inclusive urban development, ensuring stakeholder participation and improving community well-being through accessible public services and resilient infrastructure. Economically, DBKK fosters sustainable growth by encouraging green investments, supporting eco-friendly industries, and creating employment opportunities aligned with sustainability principles. Through these holistic approaches, DBKK strengthens its ability to navigate global challenges while advancing Kota Kinabalu's vision as a sustainable and climate-resilient city.

As the frontline implementing agency, Dewan Bandaraya Kota Kinabalu (DBKK) must develop strategic measures to effectively address current challenges and fulfil its responsibilities in driving sustainable urban development. This requires a proactive approach in policy planning, resource management, and stakeholder collaboration to ensure the successful execution of the Kota Kinabalu Green City Action Plan (KK GCAP). By integrating innovative solutions, enhancing institutional capacity, and fostering public-private partnerships, DBKK can strengthen its role in building a resilient, climate-adaptive, and environmentally sustainable city.

3.3 Community engagement

As a role sustainable leadership model to stakeholders in Kota Kinabalu city, DBKK as a government entity plays a responsibility to ensure global sustainability is being complied by all the business and household entities within the city. An interview session was conducted recently with a higher executive staff of DBKK to find out the sustainability commitment and effort by the Kota Kinabalu City Council. According to Pn Fauziahton Awang Samad, the Chairwoman of the Kota Kinabalu City Department of Tourism Development, Dewan Bandaraya Kota Kinabalu (DBKK). She emphasizes that DBKK has been very committed in the implementation of Green City status and DBKK offers various recognition programs to award those stakeholders that complied with the DBKK standard. For examples, it hosts award ceremonies or issue certifications for example "Green Business Awards" and awards that give recognition to organizations and individuals for their contributions to sustainability. Besides that, DBKK also offers free training and workshops on capacity-building programs to help stakeholders understand and implement sustainable practices. DBKK also very active in promoting public engagement and awareness campaigns on sustainability. There are various community events such as tree-planting drives, recycling campaigns, and clean-up programs that invite public participation.

One of the notable examples of DBKK's resilience is its campaign for community engagement. It always been its effort to empower communities to participate in decision-making through workshops, town halls, and digital platforms to ensure inclusivity and ownership of development projects. For example, the DBKK department of tourism development conducted a training to local community by collaboration with University Malaysia Sabah (UMS). DBKK organized a course on 'Kursus Pembangunan Pakej Pelancongan dan e-Pemasaran Kepada Komuniti Kampung Darau' in October 2021. During officiating the event, Pn Fauziahton said the course was part

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Received: 2/03/2025

Accepted: 14/03/2025

Revised: 13/04/2025

Published: 15/04/2025

DOI: 10.51200/jberd.v1i12.6323

of DBKK's initiative towards community capacity development in preparing them to start tourism activities (Sabah media, 2021)

3.4 Infrastructure Investment

Enhance transport, digital connectivity, and logistics infrastructure to attract investors and businesses. The Sabah Smart Parking system was introduced by DBKK's commitment to innovation, aligning with the broader Sabah Smart City Blueprint that emphasizes technology-driven urban management. Its eco-friendly approach, which eliminates paper-based parking coupons, supports DBKK's environmental sustainability goals. Kota Kinabalu City Hall (DBKK) achieved a remarkable milestone by winning The Brand Laureate DigiTech Best Brands Award 2024, which recognised its excellence in digital transformation through the implementation of the Sabah Smart Parking (SSP) system.

3.5 DBKK competitive advantage in implementing Green City for Sustainability

Dewan Bandaraya Kota Kinabalu (DBKK) holds a competitive advantage in addressing global environmental, social, and economic challenges through its strategic governance, stakeholder inclusivity, and commitment to sustainable development. Environmentally, DBKK leverages its Green City Action Plan (GCAP) to drive climate resilience, promote renewable energy, and implement sustainable waste and water management systems. Socially, its emphasis on community engagement and public-private partnerships enhances urban livability and inclusivity. Economically, DBKK capitalizes on green investment opportunities, fostering sustainable industries and eco-tourism to drive economic growth. By integrating these strengths, DBKK positions Kota Kinabalu as a leading model for sustainable urban development in the region.

3.5.1 Fostering social cohesion

The campaign on community engagement in tourism development has led to a diverse cultural identity among the community members. Kota Kinabalu's multicultural heritage creates a unique identity, enhancing its appeal as a tourist destination and fostering social cohesion.

3.5.2 Foreign investment attraction

International collaborations and favourable business policies can attract foreign investors interested in sustainability-driven projects. The organisation's strategic partnerships with private sector leaders and technology developers further underscore its dedication to smart city development.

3.6 Challenges and Barriers for sustainability implementation

DBKK faces several challenges and barriers in addressing global environmental, social, and economic issues while striving for sustainable urban development. Environmental challenges include rapid urbanization, which leads to deforestation, pollution, and increased carbon emissions. Waste management remains a significant issue, with high plastic consumption and inadequate recycling infrastructure contributing to environmental degradation. Additionally, climate change-related risks, such as rising sea levels and extreme weather events, pose threats to Kota Kinabalu's coastal and urban resilience, requiring long-term adaptation strategies.

On the social front, ensuring inclusivity and equitable development is a persistent challenge, as disparities in housing, education, and employment opportunities affect marginalized communities. Engaging diverse stakeholders, including local businesses, indigenous groups, and NGOs, can be difficult due to varying interests and levels of participation. Moreover, public awareness and behavioural change toward sustainability remain slow, necessitating continuous education and advocacy efforts.

Economically, funding constraints and dependency on tourism create vulnerabilities, especially during global economic downturns or crises like the COVID-19 pandemic. Diversifying the economy toward sustainable industries such as green technology, eco-tourism, and digital entrepreneurship is essential but requires strong investment and policy support. Additionally, balancing economic growth with sustainability regulations poses a challenge, as businesses may resist policies perceived as costly or restrictive. To overcome these barriers, DBKK must foster stronger collaborations, leverage innovative financing mechanisms, and integrate sustainability into all aspects of urban governance.

4. Result

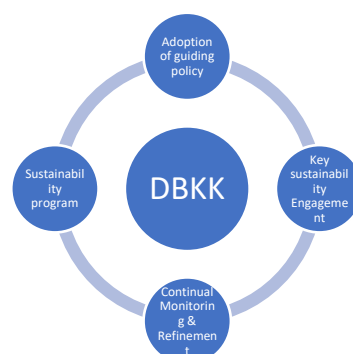
DBKK's effort for sustainable development help the authors to arrive with a sustainable leadership framework. Its strong adoption to it KK Green City Action Plan as a guiding policy ensuring that all departments align their objectives and activities with the sustainability goals outlined in the framework. This adoption provides a clear and cohesive direction for urban governance and development.

Next, DBKK launches many programs focused on key sustainability areas such as waste management, renewable energy, or green urban planning. These initiatives serve as a ground to refine strategies, measure outcomes, and identify best practices before scaling up citywide. DBKK has been proactively engaging stakeholders as its critical step to sustainability implementation and continuations effort. DBKK facilitates forums, workshops, and collaboration platforms to include voices from the public, private sectors, and civil society, fostering a sense of shared responsibility.

Finally, DBKK must continuously monitor progress and refine its strategies through data-driven insights and stakeholder feedback. Regular evaluation and adaptability will ensure that initiatives remain effective in addressing emerging environmental, social, and economic challenges. This phased approach will solidify DBKK's position as a leader in sustainable urban governance.

DBKK has been promoting sustainability development within the Kota Kinabalu city with involvement of the stakeholders such as the household owners and business owners. There are two suggestions for it effort toward strengthening it sustainable leadership. The first one is accountability and adaptability in implementing sustainability initiatives are important for DBKK to establish a Sustainability Monitoring System that tracks progress using real-time data. This system will enable the city to measure key sustainability indicators, identify trends, and address challenges proactively. Additionally, annual impact assessments should be conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of sustainability programs, ensuring that objectives are met and resources are optimally utilized.

The second one is enhancing policy responsiveness. DBKK must regularly update its sustainability strategies based on performance reviews and stakeholder feedback. Engaging with businesses, community leaders, and experts will help refine policies and align them with evolving urban challenges. Furthermore, benchmarking against global best practices in sustainable city management will allow DBKK to adopt innovative solutions, improve governance frameworks, and position Kota Kinabalu as a leader in urban sustainability. Figure 1.2 described the sustainable leadership framework of DBKK in its effort to ensure that sustainable development is achieved.



Corresponding author: Christiana Jonut
 Received: 2/03/2025
 Accepted: 14/03/2025
 Revised: 13/04/2025
 Published: 15/04/2025
 DOI: 10.51200/jberd.v1i12.6323

Figure 1.2: Sustainable leadership framework

5. Conclusions

Sustainable leadership is a crucial management approach for Dewan Bandaraya Kota Kinabalu (DBKK) in addressing global environmental, social, and economic challenges. By integrating sustainability into its governance framework, DBKK can create a resilient, inclusive, and economically vibrant city that thrives in the face of global uncertainties. Through strategic planning, stakeholder engagement, and innovative policies, DBKK can mitigate environmental risks such as climate change and pollution while promoting responsible urban development. Additionally, fostering social equity through inclusive policies and active community participation ensures that all citizens benefit from sustainable growth.

Economically, DBKK must balance development with long-term sustainability by diversifying industries, promoting green investments, and leveraging technology for efficient urban management. Continuous monitoring, policy adaptation, and benchmarking against global best practices will enable DBKK to remain agile in a rapidly changing world. By embracing sustainable leadership, DBKK positions Kota Kinabalu as a forward-thinking, competitive, and livable city that serves as a model for urban sustainability in Malaysia and beyond.

Acknowledgments

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all those who contributed to the completion of this research on sustainable leadership. First and foremost, my sincere appreciation goes to AMC University College for providing the academic environment and facilities necessary for conducting this research. I wish to acknowledge the participants of this research second author, Dr Felsy Joseph Sandi and Pn Fauziahton Awang Samad, the Chairwoman of the Kota Kinabalu City Department of Tourism Development, Dewan Bandaraya Kota Kinabalu (DBKK) who generously shared their time and experiences, contributing invaluable data and perspectives. Their input has been crucial in developing a comprehensive understanding of sustainable leadership. This research would not have been possible without the contributions of all those mentioned above, and I sincerely appreciate their role in its completion.

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Corresponding author: Christiana Jonut

Received: 2/03/2025

Accepted: 14/03/2025

Revised: 13/04/2025

Published: 15/04/2025

DOI: 10.51200/jberd.v1i12.6323

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Authors' Biographies



Dr Christiana Jonut is a proud educator possessed the skills and knowledge in Psychology, Management and Tourism. She is dedicated to her job in teaching imparting knowledge into the young minds. Gearing up in building her academic profile. Her Ph.D focusing her interest on CHANGE, especially empowering the local community through CBT.



Dr. Felsy J. Sandi holds a Phd. in Hospitality Management in the field of Tourism from the Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS). She took her BS majoring in Business Economics from Hawaii Pacific University, Honolulu, USA, and MM from Open University Sabah (OUM). She is currently venturing into property field taking a break from academic activities. Her interests lie on environmental conservation, women empowerment, business matters and humanitarian rights. She enjoys travelling, reading, and listening to Music. She is also passionate about home design and decoration and has undergone intensive interior design correspondence courses