

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS (SDGs): CONTENT, IMPORTANCE, IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES AND THE ROLES OF THE MANAGEMENT SCIENTIST

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Abstract

This paper examines the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) also known as the Global Goals (GGs) initiated by the United Nations Conference in 2012 and by September 2015 adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. The SDGs constitute the focus of the UN Agenda 2030 in the belief that they would have been achieved in the year 2030. The aim of this paper is to rethink the SDGs through a discourse of their content, importance, challenges faced in implementing them and the roles of management scientists. The study's methodology is a review of literature, drawing largely from the existing body of knowledge for a new perspective, the re-thinking perspective. The study findings include what the SDGs seek to address, the importance of the SDGs, the challenges faced in the implementation of these goals and the roles of management scientists in ensuring the realization of these goals. The identified roles of the management scholar cut across advocacy and the various fields of management within the framework of the 17 SDGs. Thus, the paper recommends that scholars should bring their expertise in entrepreneurship, investment, human resource, green, financial, product, process, conflict, and international management to bear in the pursuit of these goals. This is what "rethinking the SDGs" involves on the part of management scholars or scientists. It is the expectation of this paper that this rethinking facilitates the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Keywords: Sustainable Development Goals, SDG Content, SDG Importance, SDG Implementation Challenges, Management Scientist Roles.

Introduction

Over the years, nature has been exploited in developing most systems. Nevertheless, with the advent of technology and modernization, the trajectory of development tasks comprehension. The advancement has implications for the health and welfare of humans as well as the environment and has given to factors that portend setbacks or obstacles to humans in the future. And so, it has become imperative that a master plan is put in place to cater for humanity as well as curb environmental degradation; hence, the concerns for sustainability and sustainable development. For this reason, the United Nations and its member countries, on the 25th of September 2015, approved a set of seventeen (17) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) or Global Goals (GG's), symbolizing a creative, innovative, brand new comprehensive and understandable way of rethinking and dealing with ecological, social, and economic problems that are inter-twined (United Nations, 2015). Insofar as the "transformative agenda" (United Nations, 2014) of the SDGs tackles all the crucial and vital global predicaments that endanger and jeopardize the future, in addition to poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, peace and justice, it is imperative to say that an exigent or urgent unified approach is required.

According to the United Nations (2017), SDGs simply stands for Sustainable Developmental Goals or otherwise called Global Goals (GGs). These goals are a compilation of seventeen (17) joined, knit, and connected global goals modeled to be a road map, strategy and master plan to attain, accomplish or realize a more improved, effective, practical set of targets and that are sustainable and accessible to everyone around the world by the year 2030 (United Nations, 2017). The United Nations General Assembly (UN-GA) inaugurated the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015 and these goals are expected, anticipated and targeted to be realized by the year 2030 (United Nations, 2015). The seventeen (17) close knit and connected global goals are contained and incorporated in a United Nations General Assembly (UN-GA) Resolution known as the **2030 Agenda** or what is simply or popularly referred to as **Agenda 2030**. In 2015, the Millennium Development Goals came to an end and was superseded by the seventeen (17) SDGs that came into existence as the future global development prototype or blueprint of the world. This study's focus is on how these goals could be achieved and how can management scientists contribute to their achievements.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) or Global Goals (GGs)

The seventeen (17) close knit and connected Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) are guided by a motto or mission statement which is: "A blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all people and the world by 2030". As stated earlier, the goals were established in 2015 by the United Nations with a global outreach, it's a non-profit project that is owned or ran or supported by both the United Nations and the community and can be reached at sdgs.un.org (United Nations, 2017). The seventeen (17) SDGs or GGs are as follows:

1. **No Poverty:** This goal seeks to end extreme poverty worldwide by the year 2030. This goal comprises of seven (7) targets and thirteen (13) indicators that are used to assess its progression (United Nations Sustainable Development knowledge platform, 2017).
2. **Zero Hunger:** This goal was set up to end hunger by achieving food security, boost as well as enhance nutrition and it is also established for agricultural sustainability. This goal consists of eight (8) targets and

fourteen (14) indicators as its measures (United Nations, 2017).

3. **Good Health and Well-being:** This goal was set up by the UN to ensure that people irrespective of their age are entitled to good health as it promotes healthy well-being. The goal consists of thirteen (13) targets and twenty-eight (28) indicators as measures to monitor its progression (Ritchie & Mispy, 2018).
4. **Quality Education:** This goal was established by the UN to make sure that everyone is included and entitled to have equitable and quality education that will last a life time with lots of learning prospects and opportunities. This goal contains ten (10) targets and eleven (11) indicators as its benchmark (UNESCO, 2020).
5. **Gender Equality:** This goal was developed that all gender, be it male or female, is treated equally. It was especially initiated to give every woman and girl a sense of belonging, emancipate and enfranchise them (women and girls) to be who they want to be and do what they want to do, be it in the family setting, community, workplace and the nation at large. This goal has no clear-cut target nor indicators, but its benchmark is ascertained by its pledge or motto which is "Leave No One Behind" (United Nations, 2016).
6. **Clean Water and Sanitation:** This goal is all about making sure that there exist availability of clean portable water and good sanitation by all and how these can be sustained. The goal has eight (8) targets and eleven (11) indicators as its measures (United Nations, 2018).
7. **Affordable and Clean Energy:** This is all about how all and sundry can have access to inexpensive, steady, dependable, continuous, and ultramodern energy. This goal comprises of five (5) targets and six (6) indicators as its standard (Ritchie & Mispy, 2018).
8. **Decent Work and Economic growth:** This goal was initiated to address and promote the issues pertaining to reasonable, respectable and acceptable work, economic boom and appropriate employment that can be sustained and available to everyone. It consists of twelve (12) targets but no indicators (United Nations, 2020).
9. **Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure:** This goal is on how to build long-lasting infrastructure as well as foster economic growth globally that is sustainable and in

addition encourage innovation. The goal consists of eight (8) targets and twelve (12) indicators as its benchmark (Nations Economic and Social Council, 2020).

10. **Reduced Inequality:** Reduction of inequality of income within and between nations is the aim of this goal. This goal consists of ten (10) targets but no precise or clear-cut indicators mentioned (United Nations, 2017).
11. **Sustainable Cities and Communities:** This goal has ten (10) targets and fourteen (14) indicators, and the goal tends to address the issues on how to make communities, cities, sustainable and all-embracing of the diverse cultures, so everyone can leave in a safe environment without fear of seclusion or segregation or molestation or discrimination. The goal seeks that everyone should abide together in harmony for survival thereby ensuring sustainability (UNESCO, 2020).
12. **Responsible Consumption and Production:** This was established to guarantee the rethinking and innovation of consumption and production and how they can be sustained on a long term. The goal is comprised of eleven (11) targets, but no indicators established (Walker & Tony, 2021).
13. **Climate Action:** This goal has no targets nor indicators. It was setup to tackle the bane of the depletion of the climate. The goal seeks to control the effects of effluents or pollutions discharged into the climate by addressing climate change, and so it encourages and supports the use of renewable energy for sustainable development (IEA, IRENA, UNSD, WB, WHO, 2019).
14. **Life Below Water:** This goal aims to safeguard, preserve and naturally take advantage of the marine life which includes the seas, marine resource, oceans etc. so as to be able to guarantee sustainable development. This goal is made up of seven targets and no indicators (United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2020).
15. **Life On Land:** This goal promotes the protection and restoration, rethinking and reviving the environmental ecosystems, forestry, eliminate desertification, stop and rethink land degradation and also stop the loss of biodiversity in addition to looking for a way to enhance their sustainability. This goal has only targets (9) with no indicators (<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org>, 2020).
16. **Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions:** Goal 16 aims to foster peace, promote justice

and establish strong institutions. The goal is made up of ten (10) targets, but no indicators outlined (United Nations, 2017).

17. **Partnerships for the Goals:** This last and final goal talks about ways, methods and mechanisms of cementing, consolidating and sustaining the implementation of the SDGs in addition to restoring and rethinking the global alliance on how to sustain the developments thereof. This last SDG comprises of nineteen (19) targets and 24 indicators as its yardstick (Peccia, Kelej, Hamdy, & Fahmi, 2017).

Researchers like Singh (2016) and Swain (2018) have studied the challenges, problems, issues and the prospects, opportunities and advantages of the SDGs. Other researchers like Horton (2014) have postulated that these goals are precarious and difficult to attain, accomplish and actualize because of the multiplicity of the factors contained therein. Anyhow, the significance of incorporating interrelationships and reliance amongst the goals, taking a central or core approach, and reinforcing governance and establishments have been featured and emphasized in some researches so as to attain these goals (Griggs, Nilsson, Stevance, & McCollum, 2017; Nash, Blythe, Cvitanovic, Fulton, Halpern, Milner-Gulland, Addison, Pecl, Watson, & Blanchard, 2020; Le Blanc, 2015; Bleischwitz, Spataru, VanDeveer, Obersteiner, Van der Voet, Johnson, Andrews-Speed, Boersma, Ho- H., & Van Vuuren, 2018; Liu, Hull, Godfray, Tilman, Gleick, Ho- H, Pahl-Wostl, Xu, Chung, Sun, 2018; Sachs, 2012). Notwithstanding, the importance and relevance of the SDGs can be discerned from various viewpoints, and this is discussed next.

Importance, Reasons and Relevance of the SDGs

The SDGs are considered important as they help in tackling crucial human necessities, managing climate change, creating financial stability, and maintaining biodiversity.

Tackling Crucial Human Necessities: As the population around the globe snowballs and increases in an astronomical rate, there is a pivotal need for the necessities of life like air, drinking water, food, and shelter. And so, to attain these, suitable, prompt and acceptable strategies need be put in place in addition to establishing infrastructures that will ensure the certification and assurance that these bare or basic necessities

of life will be sustained on a long term (Li *et al*,2018).

Managing Climate Change: Rodriguez, Üрге-Vorsatz, and Barau (2018) surmises that the master plan for sustainable development and climate change consists of as well as revealed a myriad of universal facts, indicating that sustainable development is a solution or panacea to the skills, expertise and competence required for alleviating, assuaging, providing a palliative as well as modifying, remodeling and revamping (rethinking) the situation. It is assumed that tackling the aforementioned together and collectively can unanimously benefit the generations of tomorrow. And one of the cardinal reasons of setting-up the SDGs is to mitigate the enormous consumption of dangerous fossil-based sources (oil, coal and natural gas). Rohde and Muller (2015) investigated and came to the conclusion that in China over 1.2 million of its population died from air pollution emanating from the production and consumption of electricity created from coal and other fossil-based energy or fossil-based fuels. Since the over dependence on these fossil-based energy or fossil-based fuels is not only unsustainable as well as it being a recipe for disaster, the 17 SDGs of Agenda 2030 focus on rethinking and remodeling ecofriendly energy or fuels that are sustainable (McCollum, Echeverri, Busch, Pachauri, Parkinson, Rogelj, Krey, Minx, Nilsson, Stevance, & Riahi 2018; Nerini, Tomei, To, Bisaga, Parikh, Black, Borrion, Spataru, Castan-Broto, Anandarajah, Milligan, & Mulugetta, 2018).

Creating Financial Stability: The implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals can go a long way to significantly ensure financial and economic stability throughout the world, in the sense that energy plays a vital role, and in the words of Ban Ki-moon who was the former Secretary-General of the United Nations: “energy is the golden thread that connects economic growth, social equity, and environmental sustainability” (Detchon & van Leeuwen 2014). Laestadius (2015) opined that by attaining the SDGs in the energy sector, a plethora of continuous jobs will be established or created, influencing the economic stability, insofar as the developing countries can cash in on the low carbon policy by taking advantage of the ecofriendly forms of energy (example solar energy) in order to position themselves to

compete with the developed countries and by so doing create financial stability for their economies.

Maintaining Biodiversity: The biodiversity system is a natural biological variety or ecosystem that is structured, formed and systemized in a way that all the different species or forms of life depend on each other for survival and to maintain balance in a cyclical form. But of late globally, the world’s lavish and profligate lifestyle has affected the biodiversity system in the worst way possible. The goal or target of the SDGs is to advocate and champion the world to become environmentally friendly in addition to promoting the sustainability of nature, thereby ensuring a balance and long-term survivability of all species in the biodiversity system (Opoku, 2019; Rosa, Pereira, Ferrier, Alkemade, Acosta, Akcakaya, den Belder, Fazel, Fujimori, Harfoot, Harhash, Harrison, Hauck, Hendriks, Hernandez, Jetz, Karlsson-Vinkhuyzen, Kim, King, Kok, Kolomytsev, Lazarova, Leadley, Lundquist, Marquez, Meyer, Navarro, Nesshoever, Ngo, Ninan, Palomo, Pereira, Peterson, Pichs, Popp, Purvis, Ravera, Rondinini, Sathyapalan, Schipper, Seppelt, Settele, Sitas, van Vuuren, 2017; Schultz, Tyrrell, & Ebenhard, 2016).

Implementation Challenges of the SDGs.

Member countries of the United Nations face several challenges in implementing the SDGs or GGs. This section examines some of these implementation challenges of the Sustainable Development Goals.

1. **Poorly defined goals:** A few of these goals are not well defined. Though most of the goals have clearly spelt out targets and indicators (SDGs 1-4, 6-7, 9-11 and 17), others have no targets nor indicators (SDGs 5 and 13), and yet some others have targets but no indicators (SDGs 8 and 14-16). This has made most countries to interpret these goals as they comprehend thereby leading to poor implementation or execution. There is then no gainsaying that it is exigent that all the SDGs must have targets, indicators in addition to benchmarks alongside an official agreement with the various member governments for implementation and execution (Biermann, Kanie, & Kim, 2017).
2. **Lack of unified action:** In the words of Henry and Vollan (2014), it is hard, complicated and problematic to get all parties when in a group setting to work together in

- order to accomplish the needed goals in which the group was set up for in the first place. Several diverse collaborative concerns, problems, difficulties do arise, impeding and hampering the successful accomplishment of the goals.
3. **Conflicting goals:** The seventeen (17) SDGs or GGS by UN were established to guarantee the sustainability of the economy and environment. But there might be a clash between certain goals which may lead to some goals being substituted for another when it is crystal clear that both goals cannot be achieved together, especially when these conflicting goals have been ascertained. And as McNeill, Nesheim, and Brouwer (2012) surmised that until such a time as to the ascertaining of these conflicting goals needing substitution, it will be impossible to accomplish these goals established by the UN.
 4. **Accountability:** A huge barrier in accomplishing the SDGs or GGS is ensuring accountability for assurances made to the SDGs or GGS by member nations. Assurances made for the accomplishment of the SDGs or GGS is to make sure that the goals set by the UN will be implemented and accomplished at the said time earmarked for it, with targets and indicators adhered-to to the letter by member nations. And so, the absence of accountability will lower or mitigate the possibilities of appropriately accomplishing or realizing these goals (Janus, Keijzer, & Post, 2015; Ocampo, & Gómez-Arteaga, 2016).
 5. **Financial constraints:** The SDGs or GGS set up by the UN require finance before they can be accomplished, implemented or executed. And so, a lot of money needs to be earmarked for such ventures and as can be gleaned from developing countries this would be a herculean task as compared to their counterparts in the developed world (Jaiyesimi, 2016).
 6. **Lack of capacity:** Jaiyesimi (2016) opined that most member nations of the UN lack the requisite competencies or capabilities like adequate skills, appropriate tools, qualified and appropriate education etc. needed to bring the SDGs or GGS to efficient accomplishment. Most of these member countries like the developing countries are hampered by their geographical location, lack of sufficient finance, lack of personnel with requisite competencies etc. to see that these goals are attained.
 7. **Inadequate technology and data:** In this era of globalization, it is imperative that countries move and adapt to the latest technology available because the success or failure of their endeavors depends on the acquisition or lack of its technology. As can be ascertained from the SDGs, an extensive voluminous data needs to be collected, monitored, observed and analyzed and so will require appropriate technological equipment which the developing countries do not possess, and this will pose a problem in achieving the SDGs or GGS (Easterly, 2012).
 8. **Restraining culture:** Every country has its peculiar norms, beliefs, ways of life etc. (culture) binding the populace and citizens of a place, community, state, region, and nation. Some cultures forbid or disallow citizens/populace from being open to contemporary thoughts (rethinking), new ideas, and development. And with these ingrained beliefs of keeping things the way it should be for ions, no matter the developmental strides recorded worldwide, it would be a herculean task to achieve any of the SDGs or GGS established by the UN (Ashencaen, Parker, Man, Garcia, & Sylvester, 2019).

The Roles of a Management Scientist in Implementing the SDGs

A manager, according to Gardner (2019), is one that organizes, supervises, orchestrates, and presides over an organization, establishment, company firm etc. A manager is one who undertakes the managerial roles of planning, organizing, directing and controlling, or creates an environment to influence behaviour towards the achievement of goals, or gets things done through others (Zeb-Obipi, 2021; Jaja & Zeb-Obipi, 2005). Management science has been defined as the application of scientific methods, including quantitative techniques and behavioral or social science perspectives, to the study and practice of management (Hartzell, 2007). Consequently, it could be argued that a management scientist is a scholar and practitioner who is able to apply scientific methods evident in quantitative and behavioural techniques to the theory and practice of management. As a practitioner, the scientist can be amongst other things, one that is innovative, manages and disseminates information in a skillful manner as

well as gets things done when they need to be done. A management scientist is also one that is a monitor, is a negotiator, disturbance handler, figurehead, a leader, resource allocator, a spokesperson, an entrepreneur, disseminator, and a liaison (Mintzberg, 1973). Any nation that wants to achieve the SDGs needs persons who can perform all these roles as they are vital for the attainment of sustainable development; and herein comes the management scientist. These roles are herein considered within the framework of the seventeen (17) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

No Poverty: This requires guaranteeing or making certain that equal rights are given to both the rich and the poor when accessing economic assets or resources like the control and ownership of land, natural resources etc. Also, both the rich and the poor should be able to have access to the necessities of life, including having equal rights to loan facilities. The management scientist could point out how these would be done.

Zero Hunger: To achieve this entails making the populace aware of the importance of subsistence farming and the need and essence for greenhouse farming. It also involves the need to procure state of the art agricultural equipment to aid and ease the farming process to elevate and eradicate hunger in the land. The management scientist could lead in the advocacy to create the needed awareness.

Good Health and Well-being: This requires efforts geared towards the elimination of maternal death or pregnancy-related death and child fatality, sex education as well as mental wellness. Also required is enlightenment on the side-effects of unhealthy diet, self-medication, substance abuse and the importance of contacting a doctor instead of patronizing traditional herbalists or roadside chemists. By establishing the link between these factors and people productivity and living standards, the management scientist would elicit the needed commitment by society to pursue the achievement of this goal.

Quality Education: According to this goal, everyone should be entitled to quality education irrespective of the gender, status, religion, culture or age. Hence, free basic education as well as adult education should be encouraged, latest technological equipment should be acquired to boost online classes. The acquisition of quality

education enhances their ability to seek gainful employment. The processes leading to quality education need to be better managed if they are to attain the desired quality education. The services of the management scholar become imperative.

Gender Equality: This requires that equal opportunities be given to both genders irrespective of the sector of an economy to foster development. Efforts are expected to be made to remove the barriers to female emancipation. Given the knowledge of the management scientist on the relationship between diversity management on one hand and productivity, job satisfaction, talent retention on the other hand, the management scholar can make useful contributions to the achievement of this goal.

Clean Water and Sanitation: It is imperative to ensure that the people are provided clean portable water by making sure that communities have clean portable water that is safe for drinking to eradicate pipe borne water diseases. On the area of sanitation, awareness should be made on the importance of clean and healthy surroundings, designated areas should be earmarked for waste disposal receptacles to booster a clean environment and so enhance development. Lots of resources are required to provide clean water and sanitary environment. The expertise of the management scientist is required to generate and manage the needed resources for the attainment of this goal.

Affordable and Clean Energy: People should be enlightened on the dangers of the usage of fossil-based energy that has led to the depletion of the ozone layer as well as diseases and deaths due to dangerous gasses emanating into the air and so the usage of renewable energy like solar energy should be promoted, encouraged and made affordable to the people. This goal falls within the domain of green management wherein the management scholar is concerned with prevention of wastages, exploration of alternate resources and resource renewal; and in relation to people management, it defines Green Human Resource Management.

Decent Work and Economic growth: Decent work refers to the availability of employment in conditions of freedom, equity, human security and dignity. It defines opportunities for productive work with fair income, security in the workplace and social protection for families, better prospects

for personal development and social integration, freedom for people to express their concerns, organize and participate in decisions affecting their lives and equality of opportunity and treatment for all women and men (Zeb-Obipi, 2015). This goal requires that people enjoy satisfactory work conditions, full employment and increase in goods and services. Here there are two traditional concepts of work that have been of interest to management scholars: Instrumental and Central-Life Interest Concepts of work. Decent Work concept emerges as a reconciliatory plank in hands of a management scholar to design work conditions to achieve the indicants of decent work and economic growth.

Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure: This goal requires encouraging people to be innovative in the areas of technology, industrial and infrastructural revolution. Doing so transforms a country's image globally and accelerate the developmental strides of the nation. Management scholars are in the forefront of innovation management and could leverage on their knowledge in this area to contribute to the achievement of this goal.

Reduced Inequality: This entails measures aimed at addressing wage inequality within and between nations through income growth, empowerment, non-discrimination, protection policies, regulation and monitoring, enhanced representation, safe and orderly migration, appropriate differential policies, development assistance and reduced transaction costs. Scholars in the various fields of management (accounting, business administration, finance, marketing etc.) and at different levels are better disposed to ensuring all these.

Sustainable Cities and Communities: This goal requires making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable. The means of doing these would entail planning, organizing, directing and controlling and these define the jurisdiction of the management scholar.

Responsible Consumption and Production: It requires that people get enlightened on the importance of recyclable materials, less dependence on chemicals like fertilizers, less dependence on fossil-based energy that is dangerous to the health of the people and the climate, to sustain development. Management scholars in the fields of marketing, production and

green management can help greatly in achieving this goal.

Climate Action: This demands that urgent action is taken to combat climate change and its impacts. Awareness needs to be created on the dangers of the ozone layer that has brought about climate change, accounting for the increase in wildfire, floods, hurricanes and droughts etc. There is the concern with the emission of dangerous gasses like carbon monoxide, dangerous to human health and the climate. A related concern the need to use renewable energy like solar energy and less usage if not total eradication of fossil-based energy like petrol, coal, etc. Here is another call to duty on the management scholar in green management.

Life Below Water: Measures ought to be put in place to address marine pollution, preserve as well as restore the ecosystem, eradicate the use of chemicals to fish, eradication of ocean acidification which is the absorption of carbon dioxide by the ocean caused by burning of fossil fuels (kpo fire). The more carbon dioxide exists in the atmosphere, the more the ocean absorbs these gasses, causing a dangerous reaction of chemicals in the ocean that endangers the lives of species below water which also endangers the species living above water (humans, tress, birds, reptiles, etc.) when consumed, thereby threatening sustainable living and development. Also, measures should be put in place to encourage small scale fishermen. In addition to conservation advocacy, management scholars in small and medium scale business can contribute to the achievement of this goal.

Life on Land: This calls attention to the risk of deforestation or desertification that leads to extinction of species, decrease in crop yields, hunger, flooding, biodiversity loss, etc. Efforts are required to address land usage, planting of trees should be encouraged, rotational grazing should also be encouraged, crop rotation should be practiced as well as contour bundling should be practiced. The focus is to halt desertification, land degradation and biodiversity loss. The management scholar is expected to play advocacy roles and effect green management.

Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions: To promote the administration of justice, laws should be enacted pertaining to child abuse, human trafficking, violence, kidnapping, extortion, bribery and corruption, illegal arms trade, fraud,

organized crime etc. and whoever is found guilty should be punished in accordance with the law. Also, justice should be perceived and seen to be working for all irrespective of class, status, religion, tribe. Policies should be made and implemented that will hold both the rich and the poor. There should be no selective justice, where the poor are held liable for their criminal actions, but the rich are just given a slap on the wrist when they commit a crime. Government should not just enact laws but must build strong institutions that will implement these laws so as to foster peace and sustain development. Management scholars in the area of conflict management have roles to play in achieving this goal,

Partnerships for the Goals: This goal seeks to foster collaboration and not competition of the SDGs amongst member nations and measures should be put in place to foster collaboration with other nations in achieving sustainable development and not competition amongst member nations on who first has implemented what goal above the other nations. In that case, ways should be sought on how to collaborate with other nations in the areas of technology, financial aid, valuable knowledge, dexterity, competence, skill, prowess and proficiency. The goal entails implementation concerns relating to global partnership in resource mobilization, investment and trade promotion, debt management, knowledge sharing, enabling technology, policy coordination and coherence, leadership respect etc. These are within the immediate interest of scholars of business policy and international business management; hence, their expected roles in the pursuit of the attainment of this goal.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The setting up of the SDGs immediately after the MDGs is a novel idea initiated by the UN. How to attain these goals is the focus of this paper. This is a qualitative study that has added to the body of knowledge on the SDGs. Though the study covered the content, importance and implementation challenges of these goals, the addition is mostly in the form of the possible roles management scholars can play in achieving the SDGs. We have found roles for scholars in the various fields of management; including in the budding field of Green Management. This became necessary given that not all countries are successfully able to implement these goals due to several issues. Most of these issues require the competences of management scholars to resolve.

The SDGs if properly implemented will go a long way in eradicating or curbing many of the social, environmental and political vices that most countries face, especially the developing countries. It is pertinent that countries do come together and collaborate for the effective and efficient execution of these goals to ensure a worldwide development that is sustainable. In view of the diverse roles of the management scholar in the efforts geared towards accomplishing the SDGs, the paper recommends that in addition to advocacy roles, management scholars should bring their expertise in entrepreneurship, investment, human resource, green, financial, product, process, conflict and international management to bear in the pursuit of these goals. This is what “rethinking the SDGs” involves on the part of management scholars. This paper hopes that this rethinking facilitates the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

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