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Relationship between ethics and politics: an issue of a short vision on road infrastructure in Madagascar: SOFIA-DIANA region

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ABSTRACT: The public works sector undoubtedly contributes to the economic development of the country. This sector is unfortunately damaged and destroyed by local populations for various reasons. This study was conducted in two regions which are the region of Diana and that of Sofia with the objective of identifying the sources of degradation of road infrastructure. The methods consist of: (i) developing questionnaires on politicians concerned by these two regions and the neighboring populations of these infrastructures and (ii) carrying out statistical analyzes of the data using the analysis of variances. The majorities of the people surveyed are the district heads and the regional directors, who represent 35% each. The causes of the degradation of road infrastructure are significantly higher for non-compliance with load, lack of awareness and nozzle theft. The Measures taken into account for the fight against the degradation of road infrastructure are significantly higher for law enforcement, program exit, public awareness, rain barriers and adequate sanitation. These infrastructures constitute sources of income for certain populations and also for the Malagasy State, from which they deserve to be maintained and protected.

Keywords : *ethics, politics, issue, infrastructure, Madagascar*

I. INTRODUCTION

The public works sector undoubtedly contributes to the economic development of the country by opening up areas with strong economic potential and maintaining the good condition of the road network. Therefore, good communication channels ensure the circulation of people and goods and services, thus contributing to the fight against poverty. The roads must be in line with the development actions and comply with the regulations in force in terms of investment and environmental compatibility (MECIE Decree), it is important to provide regional managers with skills in the management of social impacts and Environmental (GISE) more adapted in their principles of action.

However, in all regions of Madagascar, the poor state of the roads is alarming and makes everyone cry and raises big questions about the “incorrect” behavior of public officials, local authorities and local people exercising local management responsibilities. The use of the word “ethics” in Madagascar’s road infrastructure management policy in response to a code of good conduct is very worrying, as confirmed by Mottoul [1]. As well mentioned in the requirement of Emile Durkheim, translated by Müller [2], according to him, our first duty consists in founding a new morality. If we take the Malagasy situation, the malaise manifests itself in the traditional society which is transformed into anarchy. Social consciousness is increasingly reflected in nation building and the lack of hindsight on ethical distortion and the rise of moral individualism is becoming the challenge for many political and state figures. As for Madagascar, the professional ethics seen by public officials must be taken seriously, but they are ignored and pretend to be invisible. However, according to Aernoudt [3], unethical behavior is linked with manipulation and blackmail.

The Coalition for Human Rights in Development said that many investments initiated in Africa are increasing, but these increased investments do not guarantee positive development results, in 2017. The economic performance of African countries, including Madagascar, remain disappointing, like most administrations, according to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs [4]. According to the World Bank study [5], in most Sub-Saharan African countries, the failure of the transport sector hinders economic growth as well as

national and international trade and suffers economic losses due to the deterioration massive roads [6]. Roads are designed to support a certain amount of traffic and loads for a specific period; and they must always be in good condition and passable and require planned, regular, controlled and well-managed road maintenance to be effective [7], once degradation has occurred, it must be taken into account, to avoid enormous expenditure.

Yet policies only focus on the short term. They act of an action favoring immediate results at the expense of future results; they are afraid to take risks, so they prefer to act in the short term, often to preserve their own image. Once elected, they deceive people. In addition, according to Péan [8], he referred to civil servants and non-civil servants, in this case elected officials, who are experiencing a crisis of morality and responsibility in their functions, public funds being diverted for the benefit of their own interests. Disregard the general interest.

Then, according to the Technical Committee [9], climate change can have a direct impact on the performance of transport infrastructure, in particular the viability of pavements and road networks. Road maintenance must be considered from an environmental point of view. In Madagascar, on the other hand, the Big Island has lost nearly half of its forests and the situation has worsened, with nearly 10% of its area lost [10], and Ndranto Razanakamanarina, president of Union Voahary Gasy, said large-scale environmental damage has affected road maintenance, quoted in RFI, published 2019-01-29.

The country's political and administrative decision makers and those responsible for the road network are aware of the magnitude of the problem, but cannot stop the process. In terms of decentralization, the central power has low budgetary resources, and allocated a budget that is lower than the needs and rather theoretical and the State has imposed permanent constraints on road infrastructure projects in Madagascar, and the planning of investment projects remains heavily dependent on international donors.

Citizen involvement is also weak. The user's load on the road is not respected, in fact, taxi-brousse follow-ups such as traffic controllers, related technical services such as Gendarmerie follow-ups do not perform correctly [11]. Traffic laws are also not better enforced [5].

The objective of this article is to analyze the integration of ethical dimensions in the management of projects and programs that the Department of Public Works invests in RN6 to empower communities and decentralized structures in the management of social and environmental impacts in their constituencies.

II. METHODS

The study was carried out in the region of Diana and region of Sofia in the north and north-east of Madagascar in 2021. After the training carried out by 32 actors and development managers from local authorities and technicians from the decentralized structures of the Ministry of Public Works in these regions and also the local populations, namely District Manager, Deputy District, Mayor, Regional Director, Prefect and his advisers, questionnaires have been drawn up with these officials through the particular importance that is given in these regions crossed by the RN6. The only access route to the north, and given the environmental issues that appear to be decisive there. A questionnaire with an open or closed answer. We addressed questions on what are the main causes of the degradation of road infrastructure in the integration of environmental and social dimensions in the management of road projects on the RN6 road and also we asked a question on the application of laws and the regulations in accordance with the environmental legislation in force and the provisions of the endowments and the technical and financial capacities to restore the roads against the impacts of climate change. At the end of the training, questionnaires were put to the participants in order to assess the participants' understanding of the local road infrastructure situations and the experiences of the local population. Data were processed by one-way ANOVA analysis for comparison of means. The difference between the groups with a statistically homogeneous mean was confirmed by the Newman-Keuls test at the 5% threshold ($p < 0.005$).

III. RESULTS

3.1. The socio-professional categories of the people surveyed

The majority of the people surveyed are the district heads and the regional directors who represent 35% each (Tab. 1).

3.2. Causes of road infrastructure degradation

The causes of road infrastructure degradation are significantly higher for non-compliance with load, lack of awareness and nozzle theft (Fig. 1).

3.3. Measures taken into account for the fight against the deterioration of road infrastructure

Measures taken into account for the fight against degradation of road infrastructure are significantly higher for law enforcement, program exit, public awareness, rain barriers and adequate sanitation (Fig. 2).

IV. FIGURES AND TABLES

Table 1. Socio-professional categories of people surveyed

Participant Category	Effective
District Manager	9
District Deputy	2
Mayor	4
Regional director	9
Prefect	1
To advise	1
Total	26

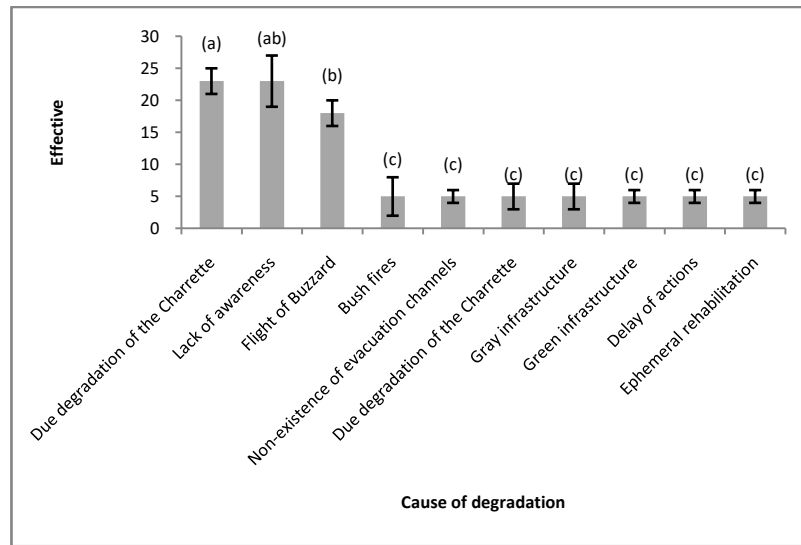


Figure 1. Causes of road infrastructure degradation.

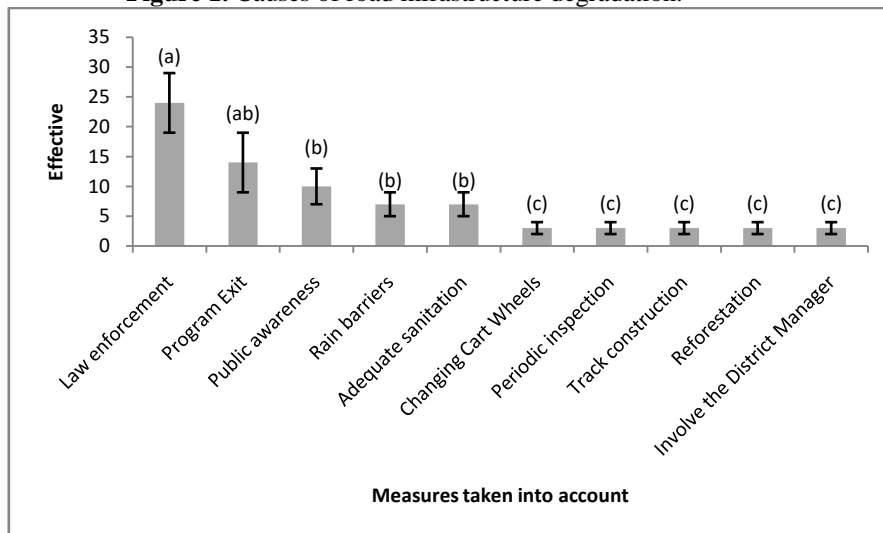


Figure 2. Measures taken into account for the fight against the deterioration of road infrastructure

V. DISCUSSION

The aim of our research is to understand the behavior of STD and CTD public officials on their integration into environmental and social policies in the management of deteriorated road infrastructure on the RN6 road. Thus, we have been able to observe that all public officials and elected officials have clearly noted the major sources of the deterioration of road infrastructures in these areas, such as bush fires which are growing and causing the phenomenon of erosion, the absence of the development of an urban plan, the illegal occupation of the right-of-way zone, the criterion for choosing the rehabilitation of the road, the choice of priority of the MTP and the State, the protection of the road, etc The act of vandalism was noted and frequent.

Despite all these situations, the study shows us that the assumption of responsibility by the STDs of the

MTP is hesitant. Local authorities are finding it difficult to raise awareness and reduce bushfires. With regard to road maintenance, the services concerned have difficulty in enforcing transport regulations and the non-existence of water drainage channels also aggravates the situation, such as the case of lack of respect for the rain dam, the highway code (tonnage) and also texts on the environment. Often, the public agents and the elected officials always accuse that the unconsciousness of the local population on the theft of nozzle, the theft of rampart of bridge and the accessories, the irresponsibility of the whole of the local population remains a brake in the infrastructure management, hence the act of vandalism increases on site.

However, applying the laws and regulations in accordance with the environmental legislation in force is a major blocking scourge in this country, moreover, the land, justice, gendarme and police services are insensitive and turn a blind eye to investing in the steps to eradicate corruption and bad habits. Considering hundreds of buzzards destroyed and stolen, the situation becomes worse. Otherwise, human resources at the regional level are limited; otherwise, the imbalance between financial needs and the availability of financial resources does not help matters. The collaboration between the ministries and the CTDs must be solid and reflect a national unity, with a big problem of centralization of power in Madagascar. These CTDs are always in the last concern of central power in terms of subsidies and often wait for decision-making at the central level that they can act at the local level, while the situation becomes catastrophic. Admittedly, the ministry's funding requirement is far from being satisfied, but external funding sometimes increases, but the public money management crisis is turning in other directions, like pharaonic projects that do not yet seem to solve the real problems of all Madagascans.

However, Malagasy public officials have nevertheless seen and observed the delays of this country in terms of road infrastructure harming and penalizing the Malagasy economy and penalizing the populations to develop their activities. Some political and ministerial leaders want the situation not to improve for multiple reasons such as the closure of productive borders to foreign investors or operators from other regions to avoid their installation and domination. Above all, if the mentality of Madagascar's senior executives does not change towards corruption and general laxity, in the majority of cases, no one in this country believes for the moment that corruption will be reduced completely. Therefore, no clear initiative could be put forward by the majority of Malagasy people, however, thanks to new technology, social mobilization has evolved a lot. The social and political pressure in this country is so strong and supported by armed forces. The Malagasy social educational system, inspired by a Malagasy proverb "mamy ny aina" still hinders the taking of initiative to manifest and move against injustice in Madagascar. And for the moment, everyone does what they think and want.

VI. CONCLUSION

This article questions the behavior of Malagasy public officials and elected officials as well as the local population in the management of road infrastructures respecting the sustainable environment. We have proven in this study that the Malagasy state and political leaders note the causes of the degradation of road infrastructures and the misappropriation of the local population on these infrastructures. Despite the good knowledge of these causes, public officials and elected officials show themselves to be insensitive or even ignorant. Moreover, they are not persuaded to provide concrete solutions or to want to apply the laws and regulations in force on the environment. With regard to their roles and duties as local or regional authorities, the decentralization of power is broken down, particularly in terms of public finance, in fact, even if in the face of observed damage, local public officials have no means neither financial nor technical to solve these problems immediately, it is necessary to wait for the decision of the exchange which is 500 km from the urgent situation. At the central and regional level, respect for ethics must be considered as a value of a strong State in solidarity with its people, whose public institutions and all public officials are at the service of the supreme interest of the nation and to all citizens.

From this point of view, the improvement of the environmental management system, and the subsequent occupation of the road infrastructures by the beneficiaries, must be valued by all those responsible, must share experiences, share means and act as citizens. Furthermore, the challenge for all Malagasy must be strictly applicable to all, regardless of their status and rank.

In other words, "Ignoring the environment: biological, physical and human, is to aggravate the already worrying degradation of the infrastructures of our country, which must therefore be stopped as a source of poverty for the Malagasy population".

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