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# Developing Global Leaders

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Insights from African Case Studies

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Eva Jordans · Bettina Ng'weno  
Helen Spencer-Oatey

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Helen Spencer-Oatey

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*To all leaders transforming Africa*

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Eva Jordans, Bettina Ng'weno  
and Helen Spencer-Oatey

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# Introduction

*Eva Jordans, Bettina Ng’weno, and Helen Spencer-Oatey*

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

The initial idea for this book emerged in early 2015. It came from a reaction against common stereotypes of leaders in Africa, where political leaders and dictators have come to stand for all African leaders. Contrary to this stereotype, in organizations and businesses all over Africa, senior leaders and increasingly young leaders are full of ambition and drive, wanting to make a difference, inspire others, and be a different, “new” type of leader. This volume looks at leaders and leadership experience in Africa outside of the context of politics. We illustrate the diversity of “new” leaders in Africa, their aspirations and ideas for a different future, and how they handle the complex contexts in which they operate.

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Many young leaders lack support: they do not have readily available role models, support, or spaces to put their ideas into practice. Very few young leaders in Africa get a chance to participate in Leadership Development programmes. We set out to document how operational leaders in Africa perceive their role, the challenges they experience, and how they operate effectively as leaders. Our research focuses in particular on the perceptions and experiences of leaders in an age of innovation and transformation.

Out of the 54 African countries, we selected five case study countries in sub-Saharan Africa, two in West Africa—Nigeria and Ghana—and three in East Africa—Kenya, Tanzania, and Rwanda. See Fig. 1.1 showing these countries on the map of Africa.

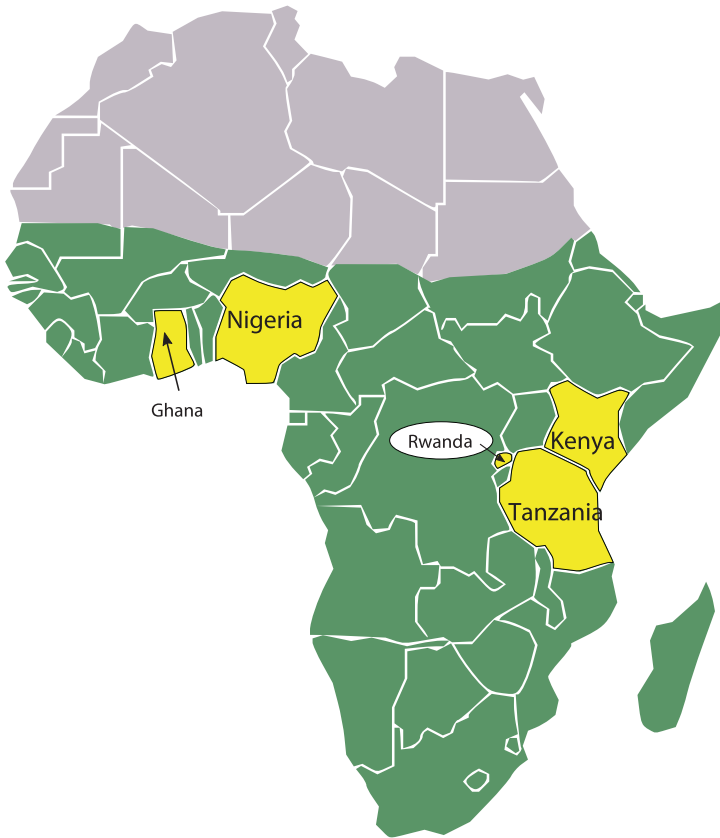


Fig. 1.1 Map of Africa showing our five case study countries marked in yellow

We also wanted to include a range of leadership contexts, from both a national perspective and an organizational/sector perspective, and to gather the viewpoints of senior and young leaders. Our five case studies focus on the following:

- Leadership in science in Ghana
- Leadership in business in Nigeria
- Leading across the generations in Tanzania
- Leadership in the private sector in Kenya
- Leadership in rural development in Rwanda

Needless to say, these case studies can only provide a snapshot of leadership in the vast continent of Africa, with so many countries and sectors. However, our aim has been to gain rich insights, probing as deeply as possible into the range of experiences and viewpoints of different people within any one context, and then to explore what similarities and differences exist across the various contexts. Our selection of these leadership contexts was partially opportunistic, but also driven by theoretical considerations to acknowledge the diversity of this continent. Our aim is to support the development of the next generation of leaders across Africa, hoping that the documented experiences can serve as examples for young leaders.

Part I, “Foundations”, comprises three conceptual chapters. Chapter 2, “Global Leadership: Key Concepts and Frameworks”, provides an overview of key concepts and frameworks relating to global leadership. It starts by exploring definitions of leadership and then considers in turn four key elements of leadership: leaders, followers, purpose, and context. Chapter 3, “Leadership in Africa: Past, Present, and Future Perspectives”, explores the historical/political context of leadership in Africa, looking at cultural and social diversity, as well as the changing political, economic, and demographic contexts that allow the reader to understand the broader picture of the action of leaders in the five case study countries. Of particular note, in these five countries, age stands out as a dividing line on how people understand and want leadership to be. Chapter 4, “Understanding Historical, Political, and Demographic Context of Leadership in Africa”, presents a review of the more recent literature on leadership in Africa, identifies gaps, and builds a framework for understanding the case studies. Our study aims to respond to the identified gaps, notably producing case

studies of diverse African leaders, describing their personal experiences and leadership journeys, including their successes and challenges.

Part II presents our empirical studies and findings. It starts with a methodology chapter, Chap. 5, which describes the *research methodology* used when conducting the case studies and follow-up survey. Chapters 6, 7, 8 and 9 present our five case studies. Chapter 6, “Young Leaders Transforming Science in Ghana”, focuses on leadership in science and presents the case study findings from Ghana. Chapter 7, “Leadership and Culture in Corporate Organizations in Nigeria”, focuses on leadership in business and presents the case study findings from Nigeria. Chapter 8, “Bridging the Generation Gap: Perceptions of Leadership by Senior and Young Leaders in Tanzania”, focuses on age and the generation gap and presents the case study findings from Tanzania. Chapter 9, “Changing Leadership Perceptions: Leaders in the Private Sector in Kenya”, focuses on leadership in the private sector and presents the case study findings from Kenya. Lastly Chap. 10, “Emerging People-Oriented Leadership in Rural Development in Rwanda”, focuses on leadership in rural development and presents the case study findings from Rwanda. Part II concludes with Chap. 11, “Leadership Development Needs and Experiences: Survey Findings”, which reports the findings from our Africa wide survey.

In Part III we consider the implications and applications of what has emerged from our research. Chapter 12, “Understanding Leadership and Its Development in Africa”, draws conclusions based on the empirical data collected and formulates the implications and applications of our findings. We focus on the “how”: how African leaders could develop leadership skills in an era of transformation.

Our research demonstrates that there is a diversity of “new” leaders— young as well as senior, female as well as male. Many are transformative, flexible, struggling, or successful, and all are determined.

In the era of globalization, there is an increasing need to offer guidance on how leaders can adjust their leadership style to suit situational contexts. This book illustrates to scholars and leaders how leadership can be developed and contributes to the fostering of a new community of leaders, integrating cutting-edge knowledge on Leadership Development in Africa.

PART I

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# Foundations



# Global Leadership: Key Concepts and Frameworks

*Helen Spencer-Oatey*

## 2.1 DEFINING LEADERSHIP

Leadership is notoriously difficult to define. Over 40 years ago, Ralph Stogdill (1974) argued that “there are almost as many different definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept” (p. 7). Gary Yukl (2013), in his well-known book on leadership in organizations, recently argued along the same lines, maintaining that the following comment by Bennis (1959, p. 260) is as true today as it was back in 1959:

Always, it seems, the concept of leadership eludes us or turns up in another form to taunt us again with its slipperiness and complexity. So we have invented an endless proliferation of terms to deal with it ... and still the concept is not sufficiently defined. (Yukl, 2013, p. 18)

Nevertheless, people continue to put forward definitions, including Yukl himself, some referring to “leaders” and others to “leadership”. A few examples are given in Table 2.1.

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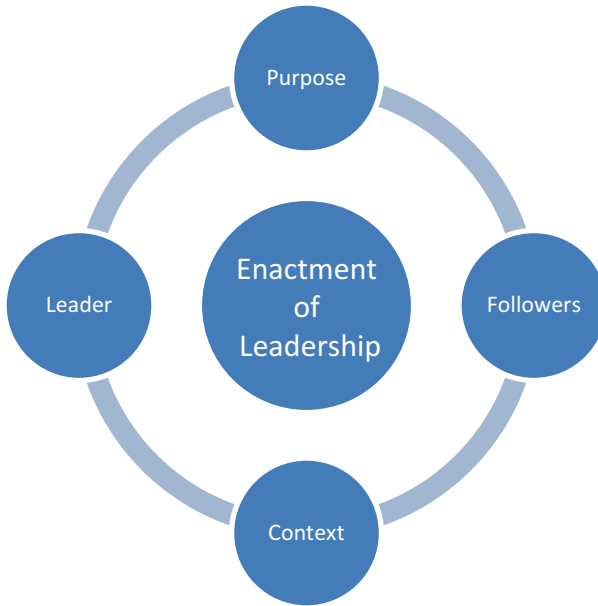
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**Table 2.1** Definitions of leaders and leadership and their foci

<i>Definitions of leaders and leadership</i>	<i>Focus</i>
“Leadership is the ability of an individual to influence, motivate, and enable others to contribute toward the effectiveness and success of the organizations of which they are members.” (House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004, p. 15)	Ability/ competence
“[L]eaders must have the ability to induce ‘cognitive redefinition’ by articulating and selling new values and concepts or creating the conditions for others to find these new values and concepts. They must be able to bring to the surface, review, and change some of the group’s basic assumptions. ... the leader must be able not only to lead but also to listen, to involve the group in achieving its own insights into its cultural dilemmas, and to be genuinely participative in his or her approach to learning and change.” (Schein, 2010, p. 382)	Ability
“Leaders need to shape the future, get things done, manage others, invest in others, and demonstrate personal proficiency.” (Ulrich & Smallwood, 2012, p. 32)	Behaviour
“Leaders determine or clarify goals for a group of individuals and bring together the energies of members of that group to accomplish these goals.” (Keohane, 2014, p. 152)	Behaviour
“Leadership is the process of influencing others to understand and agree about what needs to be done and how to do it, and the process of facilitating individual and collective efforts to accomplish shared objectives.” (Yukl, 2013, p. 23)	Process
“Leadership is an activity or set of activities, observable to others, that occurs in a group, organization or institution, and which involves a leader and followers who willingly subscribe to common purposes and work together to achieve them.” (Clark & Clark, 1996, p. 25)	Process
“Leadership is not a person or a position. It is a complex moral relationship between people based in trust, obligation, commitment, and a shared vision of the good.” (Ciulla, 2014, p. xv)	Relationship

As Table 2.1 indicates, these definitions take different stances towards leaders and leadership, some focusing on the leader (his/her ability/competence and behaviour) and others focusing on leadership as a process and as a relationship. Is it possible, then, to gain an overarching perspective to what Ulrich and Smallwood (2012, p. 10) refer to as a “hodgepodge of ideas” and “concept clutter”? One possibility is to build on the definition given by Clark and Clark (1996) (see Table 2.1). They identify leadership as an activity or process that has a number of interconnected elements: a leader and followers, who work in a particular organiza-



**Fig. 2.1** The leadership multiplex

tion or context and have a common purpose or aim. In this view, leadership is not simply the behaviour or qualities of the person in charge (i.e. the leader); rather it is the enactment of a complex and dynamic interaction of four key elements, as shown in Fig. 2.1. We call this the leadership multiplex.

This perspective is in line with that put forward by Ladkin (2010). She suggests that leadership is like a cube that can be viewed from different angles, and likewise proposes that there are four key elements. She argues that all people associated with leadership (traditionally labelled as leaders and followers) inevitably function within a context (a community that typically has a history and its own organizational culture) and have some kind of *raison d'être* or purpose. Moreover, all of these elements (leaders, followers, context, purpose) interact dynamically, in that the followers' interpretations of the purpose and the context (for instance) will influence how they interpret what the leader says and does; similarly, the converse will be true of the leaders' interpretations.

We feel this dynamic conceptualization, which we label the leadership multiplex, is particularly helpful and we draw on it throughout the book. It also forms the organizing principle for this chapter.

## 2.2 FOCUS ON THE LEADER

A very large proportion of the literature on leadership has focused on the person of the leader, seeking to identify the characteristics of “great leaders”. This is typically done through studying and/or interviewing (highly) successful leaders and identifying their traits, characteristics, and/or behaviours, in the hope of specifying the “key ingredients” of a successful leader. Bird (2013) reports that over 150 different competencies have been associated with global leadership effectiveness, and a study by the Council for Excellence in Management and Leadership (2002) lists an even larger number of leadership competencies. This is clearly far too large a number for ease of handling, especially in terms of Leadership Development. However, as Bird (2013) argues, very often there are conceptual overlaps in such lists and some rationalization is both needed and feasible.

House et al. (2004), in their Global Leadership and Organizational Behaviour Effectiveness (GLOBE) study, identified 21 primary leader attributes or behaviours, which they grouped into six categories, as shown in Table 2.2. Their aim was to explore the extent to which these characteristics are universally endorsed or are subject to contextual variation.

Bird (2013) has similarly proposed a smaller set of core competencies. In his case he identified 15 competencies, divided into three categories. These are shown in Table 2.3. Bird (2013) further explains that each of these 15 competencies is a complex, multifaceted construct, spanning “predispositional, attitudinal, cognitive, behavioral, and knowledge aspects” (p. 95).

A careful look at both House et al.’s (2004) and Bird’s (2013) conceptualizations shows that although they were focusing on identifying the attributes or competencies of leaders, their listed competencies also incorporated other elements of the leadership multiplex. We discuss these in turn below.

## 2.3 LEADERSHIP AND PURPOSE/GOAL

Yukl (2013, p. 25) points out that an important indicator of leadership effectiveness is the extent to which goals are achieved and the performance of the organization or team is enhanced. Clearly, this is a very important element, and many companies try to measure it through a range of key performance indicators. However, it is very important to remember (as the leadership multiplex indicates) that goal achievement is affected by a number of factors.

**Table 2.2** Project GLOBE's (House et al., 2004) conceptualization of leader behaviour and attributes

<i>Leadership behaviour</i>	<i>Gloss</i>	<i>Sub-scales</i>
Charismatic/ value-based leadership	Ability to inspire, motivate, and expect high-performance outcomes from others based on firmly held core values	1. Visionary 2. Inspirational 3. Self-sacrifice 4. Integrity 5. Decisive 6. Performance-oriented
Team-oriented leadership	Effective team building and implementation of common purpose or goal among team members	7. Collaborative team orientation 8. Team integrator 9. Diplomatic 10. Malevolent (reverse scored) 11. Administratively competent
Participative leadership	Degree to which managers involve others in making and implementing decisions	12. Nonparticipative (reverse scored) 13. Autocratic (reverse scored)
Humane-oriented leadership	Supportive and considerate leadership, including compassion and generosity	14. Modesty 15. Humane orientation
Autonomous leadership	Independent and individualistic attributes	16. Autonomous leadership
Self-protective leadership	Ensuring safety and security of individual and group through status enhancement and face-saving.	17. Self-centred 18. Status conscious 19. Conflict inducer 20. Face saver 21. Procedural

**Table 2.3** Bird's (2013, p. 96) framework of nested global leadership competencies

<i>Managing self</i>	<i>Managing people and relationships</i>	<i>Business and organizational acumen</i>
1. Inquisitiveness	6. Valuing people	11. Vision and strategic thinking
2. Global mindset	7. Cross-cultural communication	12. Leading change
3. Flexibility	8. Interpersonal skills	13. Business savvy
4. Character	9. Teaming skills	14. Organizational savvy
5. Resilience	10. Empowering others	15. Managing communities

More than 60 years ago, Robert Blake and Jane Mouton (1964), who were working on Leadership Development at the company Exxon, put forward a framework that has become a classic in the management/leadership literature. They argued that there are two key axes underlying leaders' behaviour: concern for task and concern for people. They maintained that most leaders can be categorized according to the relative importance they attach to each of the dimensions. Some have a high concern for task or production and low concern for people (authority/obedience manager), while some show the reverse tendency, paying great attention to people and attributing limited importance to task (easy-going, supportive manager).

One might assume that the most effective leader is one who pays great attention to both task and people—the team manager in Blake and Mouton's terminology (1964). However, a more dynamic interpretation would suggest that the relative importance of each axis needs to flex and change according to the situation. Sometimes the emphasis needs to be on the task and sometimes on the people.

The need for flexibility in leadership styles has been refined and developed into a widely used leadership model, known as situational leadership, by Hersey and Blanchard (1988). The fundamental principle of their model is that there is no single "best" style of leadership. Effective leadership is on the one hand task-relevant, and on the other hand successful leaders are those who adapt their leadership style to the performance readiness (ability and willingness) of the individual or group they are attempting to lead or influence. In other words, effective leadership not only varies with the task, job, or function that needs to be accomplished but also depends on the person or group that is being influenced because the people can never be ignored.

While a conventional view of leadership expects the leader to develop a vision which sets the goal or purpose, and then to promote its adoption across the organization, Raelin (2006, p. 65) asks the fundamental question: "What happens if people in the ranks don't truly 'believe the message'?" Ladkin (2010) explains this as follows:

The leader may well sight the far-off realm but mobilizing towards it requires stepping back into the maelstrom of followers' realities. It involves discussion, debate, compromise, experimentation, uncertainty, ambiguity, giving up long-held beliefs and taking on new ones on the part of all of those involved, including the 'leader'. Ladkin (2010, pp. 124–125)

This brings us to the important role of “followers” in the leadership multiplex, which we turn to next.

## 2.4 THE RELATIONAL DYNAMIC BETWEEN LEADERS AND FOLLOWERS

At this point it is important to distinguish between leaders and leadership. Often the two are treated as virtually synonymous, and the definitions given in Table 2.1 might have given that impression, as the terms “leader” and “leadership” are both included in the same table. However, as Fig. 2.1 shows, leadership is a multiplex of several factors, all of which interact. In relation to this, Ladkin (2010) draws a distinction between “headship” on the one hand, which is held by the person in the group or team with the highest level of authority or hierarchical power, and leadership on the other, which is a process of influence that moves among different individuals as they contribute their different areas of expertise in completing a task. In terms of French and Raven’s (1959) conceptualization of power, a head or leader has legitimate power, but different members of a team or organization may have different types of expert power and they may each perform leadership at different stages of a project when one or other takes the lead over certain aspects.

Nevertheless, “heads” or “leaders” may take different stances towards this, as we have already indicated in our discussion above of Blake and Mouton’s leadership grid (1964). In fact, several theories of leadership style that revolve around the leader–follower dynamic have been proposed, with two important ones being transformational leadership and servant leadership. Burns (1978) initially brought the notion of transformational leadership to prominence and it was further developed by Bass (1985) who identified a number of key transformational leadership characteristics (cited by Harrison, 2018, pp. 47–48):

1. Leaders behave in ways that inspire and motivate their followers;
2. Followers view leaders as role models;
3. Leaders stimulate their followers to be creative and innovative;
4. Leaders treat their followers differently, promoting each follower’s personal growth.

These ideas are taken a step further by Greenleaf (1977/2002) who proposed the notion of servant leadership and the following basic precepts (cited by Daft with Lane, 2014):

1. *Put service before self-interest*: The organization exists as much to provide meaningful work to the person as the person exists to perform work for the organization.
2. *Listen first to affirm others*: One of the servant leader's greatest gifts to others is listening authentically.
3. *Inspire trust by being trustworthy*: Servant leaders build trust by doing what they say they will do, being honest with others, and focusing on the well-being of others.
4. Nourish others and help them become whole.

Despite the positive-sounding nature of transformational and servant leadership, they have still been criticized (e.g. by Yukl, 2013). For example, it is not clear how a servant leadership style can cope effectively with periods of organizational turbulence and the need to downsize.

An alternative framework that can capture the leader–follower relationship in a more nuanced way is one proposed by Redeker, de Fries, Rouckhout, Vermeren, and Filip (2014). Their model is based on a widely accepted premise among psychology scholars (e.g. Acton & Revelle, 2002; Wiggins, 1979) that interpersonal interactions are best summarized by two main dimensions, agency and affiliation, which in turn relates to the circumplex model of interpersonal behaviour developed by Leary (1957).

The scale ends of these dimensions have been variously named as follows:

- *Dimension 1*: Agency—control/dominance/authority versus flexibility/submission/disengaged
- *Dimension 2*: Affiliation—warm/friendly/trusting versus cold/hostile/distrustful

These two dimensions or axes have been shown to underlie a much larger set of interpersonal traits that have been organized into a circumplex. Redeker et al. (2014) have proposed that the same fundamental conceptualization can be applied to leadership, focusing on the interactional styles that leaders may have with their followers. Their leadership circumplex is shown in Fig. 2.2 and explanations of the different leadership styles

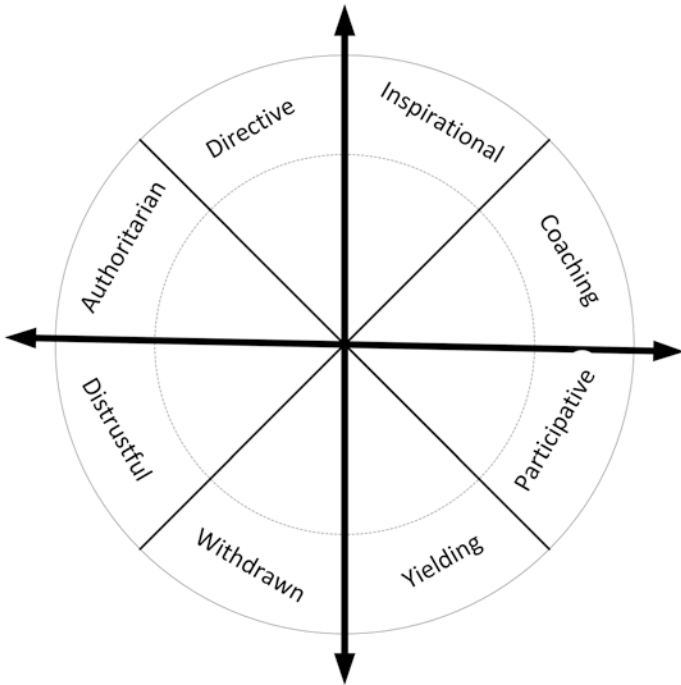


Fig. 2.2 The leadership circumplex. (Source: From Redeker et al., 2014, p. 442)

are given in Table 2.4. As we explain in Chap. 5, we used this framework as a key foundation for some of the data collection for each of the case studies.

Redeker et al. (2014) do not evaluate whether some styles are “better” than others; their aim is to demonstrate the psychometric validity of the model. Yet the labelling seems to suggest that certain leadership styles are positive while others are negative; for example, styles that combine warmth with control (inspirational and coaching styles) sound positive while styles that combine coldness with disengagement (distrustful and withdrawn styles) sound very negative. However, the situation is likely to be more complex than this. On the one hand, each end of the two core dimensions could have positive and negative versions, as Figs. 2.3 and 2.4 illustrate.

A second complexity is that the quality of the relationship between leaders and followers is to a large extent dependent on the expectations of



**Table 2.4** Leadership styles of the leadership circumplex (Redeker et al., 2014, p. 441)

<i>Leadership style</i>	<i>Gloss (tendencies to ...)</i>
Coaching	... show their appreciation for their subordinates and let them know how important they are; stimulate their subordinates through positive communication; listen to the opinion of their subordinates
Inspirational	... stimulate and persuade subordinates through a clear vision; act decisively when performance and/or organizational problems arise, and motivate subordinates to perform optimally
Directive	... try to reach success competitively; actively monitor and correct subordinates; behave strictly towards subordinates
Authoritarian	... force subordinates to obey them, be harsh on subordinates, and to not accept criticism
Distrustful	... be suspicious of the motives of subordinates; be quick and negative in their judgement; stay distant from their subordinates
Withdrawn	... be personally and professionally absent; avoid confrontations and responsibilities; act too late when problems arise
Yielding	... be very flexible when interacting with subordinates; be hesitant to provide guidance; put the subordinates' interest above the company's interest, and avoid being the centre of attention
Participative	... include subordinates in all processes; easily accept and incorporate subordinates' propositions; show their understanding of the feelings and emotions of their subordinates

leadership that they all hold. If they are compatible, then everyone may feel satisfied, but if leaders and followers hold differing expectations, then tensions and dissatisfaction are likely to arise. For example, if followers want and expect their leader to give clear instructions, and this is what the leader does, then their respective expectations match and all is well. On the other hand, if the followers want and expect their leader to give clear instructions while the leader prefers a more participative style, both parties may be dissatisfied. As Molinsky (2013, pp. 6–7) illustrates with an authentic story of an American manager in India, the followers may interpret the lack of instructions from their boss as evidence of incompetence, while the leader may judge the followers as not showing enough initiative. A similar mismatch of expectations is evident in several of our case studies, especially between young and senior leaders.

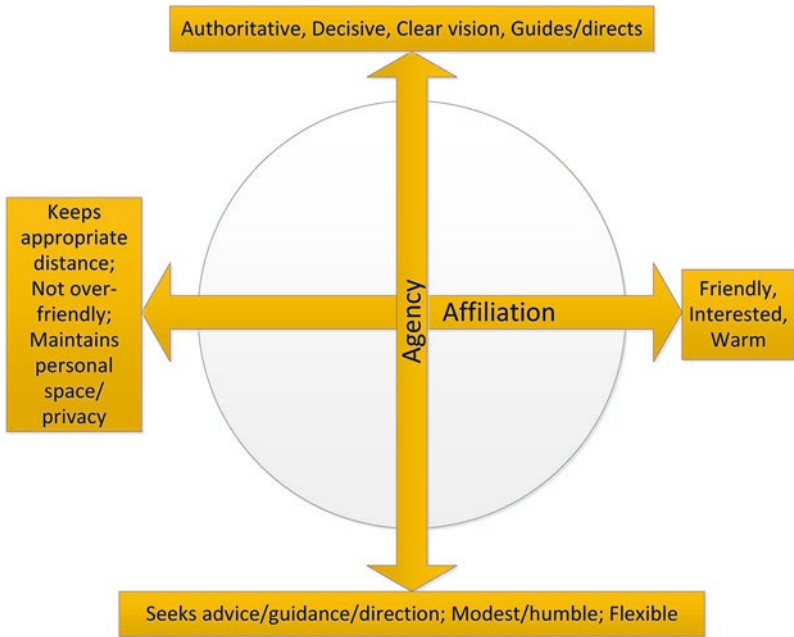


Fig. 2.3 Adaptive variant of the interpersonal circumplex

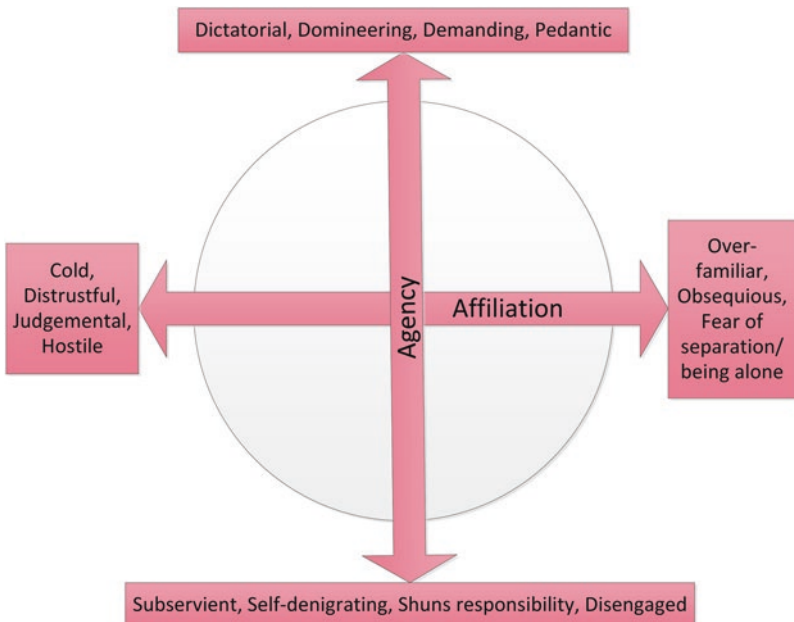


Fig. 2.4 Maladaptive variant of the interpersonal circumplex

In the next section we consider the potential sources of such different expectations, but here we note another important aspect of the dynamic between leaders and followers—the power of stories. As Ladkin (2010) points out, it is normal for stories about leaders to circulate widely among followers. The leader him/herself is very rarely present when such stories are told and re-told, and typically has very little control over their spread. Sometimes the stories may be positive, but equally often (or perhaps more often) they may be negative. In large organizations, the only way in which some followers will know anything about their leaders is through the stories that are told about them, and they will have little or no opportunity to assess how accurate or otherwise those stories are. From a leader's point of view, it is important to be aware that however accurate or inaccurate the stories are, they inevitably impact on the leader's reputation, either enhancing it in the eyes of the followers or else undermining it. Stories are thus enormously powerful influences on the dynamic of the relationship between leader and follower, with the power to shift it positively or negatively. It behoves leaders, therefore, to be very consciously aware of this phenomenon, even though they can rarely control stories per se since such stories are first and foremost socially constructed and interpreted by others. In our case study chapters, we report a number of stories about leaders that their followers shared, as well as stories about followers that their leaders referred to. Clearly the stories not only reflected the dynamics of the leader–follower relationships but also helped construct those relationships and hence impacted them.

## 2.5 LEADERSHIP AND CONTEXT

The fourth element of the leadership multiplex is context. Context can be interpreted in numerous ways. One way is in terms of dyadic relations, such as the relationship between a leader and an individual follower, including their various previous interactions and hence the history of their relationship. These previous interactions will affect how well they understand each other, how much they know about each other's viewpoints and can anticipate each other's reactions, how much they like each other and trust each other, and so on. These personal histories then set up expectations as to what the other will do or “should” do, and then if expectations are not met, this can lead to disappointment and

negativity. Each may judge the other to have “fallen short”, yet often those expectations are subconscious and only emerge when something goes wrong. As Ladkin (2010, p. 39) points out, followers very rarely say to a new leader “this is what I expect of you”, and yet when those subconscious expectations are not met, they typically feel annoyed and let down.

Another way of interpreting the context is in terms of community or social group. Members of the same social group often have widely shared expectations about what leaders should or should not do and what followers should or should not do. These expectations are associated with their cultural beliefs and practices, and so it is important to explore this further. Culture is notoriously difficult to define (for an overview of the concept, see Spencer-Oatey, 2012; Spencer-Oatey & Franklin, 2009, chapter 2) and one simple but helpful approach is that used by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL, 2015). They conceptualize manifestations of culture in terms of widely shared products, practices, and perspectives. Moran (2001) also takes this approach, and Table 2.5 provides paraphrases of his interpretations, applying them to the workplace context.

Most cross-cultural research to date has focused on perspectives—the deep-seated values that people hold. Key figures who have taken this

**Table 2.5** Manifestations of culture according to Moran’s (2001) threefold categorization

Products	These are the “concrete” or “codified” aspects of culture. They include physical objects such as buildings, office furniture, office equipment, and how they are arranged (e.g. open plan or individual offices). They also include less immediately visible aspects, such as a company’s mission statement.
Practices	These are the regularities of behaviour that group members typically display, such as shaking hands or bowing when meeting a new client. They include common patterns of handling meetings—who chairs (the leader or a follower), who can speak when, turn-taking patterns and rights, and so on. These practices reflect the rules, conventions, and norms of the social group in which we are interacting.
Perspectives	These are the deep-seated and often unconscious attitudes, values, and beliefs that we hold about life and our interactions with people, such as attitude towards hierarchy, the need for modesty or self-promotion, and the relative importance of independence and self-sufficiency.

approach include Hofstede (2001), House et al. (2004), Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck (1961), Schwartz (2011), and Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner (2012) (for an overview of these various frameworks, see chapter 2 of Spencer-Oatey & Franklin, 2009). This has resulted in a number of different conceptualizations of a range of cultural value dimensions, many of which are relevant to leadership. Some key values that are particularly pertinent are as follows:

1. *Attitude to power/hierarchical difference*: The extent to which people accept that power is/should be unequally distributed.
2. *Strength of ties among group members*: How strongly in-group and out-group members are differentiated and treated differently.
3. *Gender*: How far gender roles are differentiated.
4. *Uncertainty*: How far people accept and feel comfortable with uncertainty or have a strong need for predictability.
5. *Time*: Whether people's orientation is short-term or long-term, and how far they want to plan in advance.
6. *Attitude towards the environment*: Whether people feel they can and should master/control nature, seek to work in harmony with it, or submit themselves to the higher forces of nature.

The first three can particularly affect the dynamic of leader–follower relations, while the latter three can affect the goals that are set (i.e. “purpose” in the leadership multiplex), the timeframes that are planned for achieving the goals, and how ambitious they are. Moreover, the value dimension, uncertainty–predictability, is particularly relevant to the notion of change. Leaders often instigate change of different kinds and this can have a major impact on followers. Conversely, as followers' beliefs and attitudes change (e.g. in their attitudes towards power and involvement in decision making) and as they start expecting their leaders to alter their leadership style accordingly, this can bring uncertainty to leaders, who may be more or less open to such change. Our case studies reveal that this seems to be a widespread issue, with a desire for more people-oriented leadership, including servant leadership, often being mentioned.

The cultural value dimensions mentioned above are regarded as etic concepts; in other words, they are taken as universal and thus valid for research across different societies, including for comparison purposes. However, other research focuses on specific societies and aims to identify context-specific, emic concepts. *Ubuntu* is one such emic concept that is

important in certain regions of Africa and emerged in some of our case studies.

Originally in the field of cross-cultural psychology it was implicitly assumed that people's deep-seated values directly affected their behaviour. While this can sometimes occur, it is now clear that there are two fundamental problems with this assumption. Firstly, values can be manifested in behaviour in numerous different ways; in other words, there is no one-to-one relationship between values and behaviour. For instance, suppose someone has a strong belief in hierarchical relations and is being introduced to a new senior member of staff. In one cultural context the respect may be manifested through bowing and use of honorifics/politeness particles, while in another it is shown through use of formal address terms and avoidance of colloquialisms. This can be partly because of differences in linguistic features (e.g. some languages do not have a system of honorifics) but more broadly simply because of different cultural practices. This therefore brings us to the second level of cultural manifestations—practices.

Some practices can operate at a national level (e.g. whether we drive on the right or the left), but more frequently they are quite localized and apply to smaller social groups. Let us take, for example, the handling of meetings. There can be numerous differences in terms of how much debate takes place in meetings, who chairs the meetings (the most senior “head”, another leader, or a more junior colleague), whether decisions are made by those present or whether the meetings simply ratify decisions made beforehand by a select group, and so on. Both leaders and followers build up expectations around these practices and start believing that meetings “should” proceed in a certain way; in other words, in Cialdini's (2012) terms, the practices can become injunctive norms. Needless to say, all this can affect the dynamics of the leadership multiplex.

## 2.6 GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

Up to now in this chapter we have not distinguished between leadership and global leadership. What then is the difference? Caligiuri (2006, p. 220) identifies ten tasks that she found to be common among—or unique to—people in global leadership positions:

1. Global leaders work with colleagues from other countries.
2. Global leaders interact with external clients from other countries.
3. Global leaders interact with internal clients from other countries.

4. Global leaders may need to speak in a language other than their mother tongue at work.
5. Global leaders supervise employees who are of different nationalities.
6. Global leaders develop a strategic business plan on a worldwide basis for their unit.
7. Global leaders manage a budget on a worldwide basis for their unit.
8. Global leaders negotiate in other countries or with people from other countries.
9. Global leaders manage foreign suppliers or vendors.
10. Global leaders manage risk on a worldwide basis for their unit.

Even a cursory glance at this list shows that “global” is equated with “national difference” and, in one case, with language differences. Yet this may be too narrow an interpretation. Cabrera (2012), past president of Thunderbird School of Global Management, comments as follows:

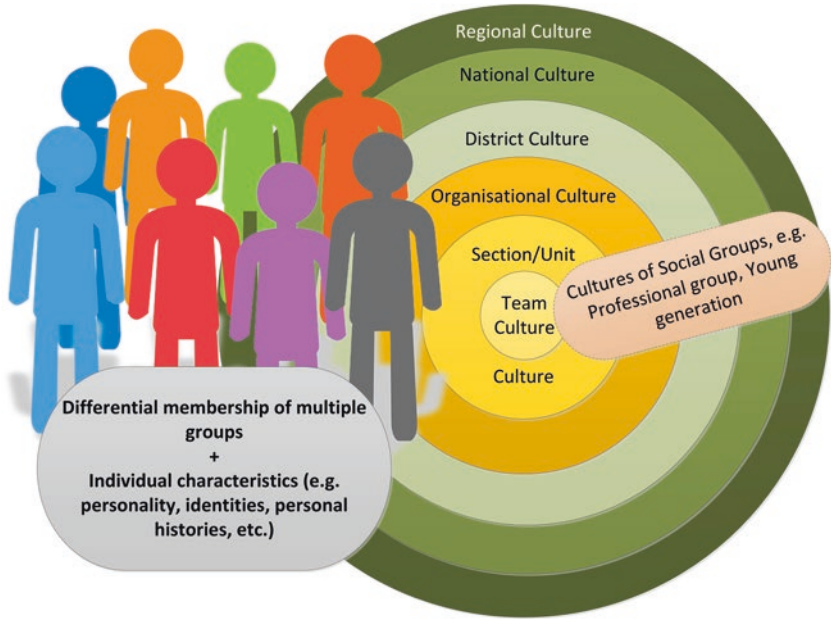
Truly global leaders act as bridge builders, connectors of resources and talent across cultural and political boundaries. ... The global mindset allows leaders to *connect* with individuals and organizations across boundaries.

In a similar vein, the World Economic Forum (2019), in relation to their Global Leadership Fellowship programme, describes global leaders as follows, also linking it with systems leadership:

dynamic, engaged and driven individuals who possess a high degree of intellectual curiosity and service-oriented humility; an entrepreneur in the global public interest with a profound sense of purpose regardless of the scale and scope of the challenge.

Systems leadership is about cultivating a shared vision for change—working together with all stakeholders of global society. It’s about empowering widespread innovation and action based on mutual accountability and collaboration.

These descriptions make it clear that global leadership entails connecting across a wide range of boundaries, not just national and linguistic ones. There are all kinds of boundaries in the workplace (and beyond) that people need to work across, such as age, religious belief, professional group, and so on, and all these various boundaries can affect interaction and the leadership multiplex. This is because different cultural groupings,



**Fig. 2.5** Potential cultural groupings and boundaries that “global leaders” need to span

whatever their size, can have their own cultural practices and perspectives, which can give rise to different expectations and evaluative judgements. Figure 2.5 illustrates (not comprehensively) some of the different types of groupings that can occur. Sometimes smaller groups are nested within larger groups (e.g. a department within an organization), but sometimes smaller groups may cut across larger groups (e.g. a team may be made up of people from different departments). Moreover, individual people can be members of multiple groups, with different individuals showing different membership constellations. In addition, of course, individuals have their own personal characteristics, such as personalities, senses of identity, personal histories, and so on.

Recent theorizing on leadership, diverse teams, and the issue of boundaries has led to the development of a particularly useful theory: faultline theory (e.g. Chrobot-Mason, Ruderman, Weber, & Ernst, 2009; Chrobot-Mason, Ruderman, Weber, Ohlott, & Dalton, 2007; Gratton, Voigt, & Erickson, 2007; Lau & Murnighan, 1998). This theory helps explain why sharp



boundaries or faultlines may appear among staff members and what leaders can do about it. Gratton et al. (2007, p. 25) offer the following overview:

In the geological analogy to faultlines, various external factors (such as pressure) have an impact on how a fault actually fractures. ... Strong faultlines emerge in a team when there are a few fairly homogeneous subgroups that are able to identify themselves. ... Strong faultlines can create a fracture in the social fabric of the team. This fracture can become a source of tension and a barrier to the creation of trust and goodwill and to the exchange of knowledge and information.

Gratton et al. (2007), Chrobot-Mason et al. (2007), and Chrobot-Mason et al. (2009) all point out that managing faultlines is a major leadership challenge. Gratton et al. (2007, pp. 27–28) go on to make a number of recommendations for leaders when in charge of a diverse project team.

1. Diagnose the probability of faultlines emerging;
2. Focus on task orientation when a team is newly formed;
3. Learn when to make the switch to a relationship orientation;
4. Switch to relationship building when the time is right.

Yet strong boundaries or faultlines are not necessarily restricted to project teams—they can apply to any group of people. This is illustrated by our case studies, where age and the differential treatment of younger and older employees has emerged as a noticeable faultline source.

## 2.7 ROUTE(S) TO BECOMING A GLOBAL LEADER

How then can individuals develop the qualities needed to become an effective global leader who can manage the various facets of the leadership multiplex with dexterity and flexibility? There are innumerable “self-help” books on leadership, and many specify a series of steps that people need to take in order to climb up the leadership ladder. For example, Maxwell (2018, p. 8) identifies five levels of leadership, arguing that people should aim to move from Level 1 to Level 5:

- *The five levels of leadership*  
*Level 1 (Rights):* People follow because they have to.  
*Level 2 (Relationships):* People follow because they want to.

*Level 3 (Results):* People follow because of what you have done for the organization

*Level 4 (Reproduction):* People follow because of what you have done for them.

*Level 5 (Respect):* People follow because of who you are and what you represent.

The associated chapters in such books describe how to move from one level to the next. For example, Radcliffe (2012) identifies three key elements:

1. Make your practice conscious practice  
*Most learning and growing as a leader takes place in real-life situations.*
2. Build your support team  
*A personal support team is essential.*
3. Know and go beyond your limits  
*Don't limit yourself—notice and reduce the ways in which you limit yourself; focus on what you're like when you're at your best.*

Baum (2007) digs even more deeply than this and, in analysing a large number of successful (and less successful) leaders, points to the following elements that helped the effective leaders climb up the leadership ladder (Table 2.6).

Our case studies illustrate the role of many of these factors.

**Table 2.6** Factors aiding the routes to leadership (derived from Baum, 2007)

<i>Context/circumstances</i>	<i>Attitudes</i>	<i>People</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Undesirable circumstances (e.g. poverty, dead-end job) lead to a strong desire for something better;</li> <li>• Early experiences of leadership provide a taster;</li> <li>• Difficult circumstances provide an opportunity to learn.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Willingness to move out of one's comfort zone and to "swim in water over one's head";</li> <li>• Willingness to learn from failure ("what really matters is how fast you get up after you're knocked down" (p. 158);</li> <li>• Confidence to embrace risk.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Key qualities (e.g. self-confidence) fostered by others, for example, a parent, a teacher;</li> <li>• Observes and learns from others—both what to do and what not to do;</li> <li>• Builds contacts—for support and for a resource network;</li> <li>• Connect with others—understand and support other staff.</li> </ul>

## 2.8 CONCLUDING COMMENTS

In this chapter we have provided an overview of key concepts and frameworks associated with leadership. We have argued that leadership is not simply the responsibility of the leader, but rather is a dynamic process that is enacted by leaders and followers in a particular context and for particular purposes or goals.

Given the major importance of context for understanding leadership, the next chapter explores the historical/political context of leadership in Africa.

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# Leadership in Africa: Past, Present, and Future Perspectives

*Estelle-Marie Heussen-Montgomery and Eva Jordans*

## 3.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter we take an analytic dive into how leadership has been studied and practised in Africa. In the following chapter we look at the political, economic, social, and cultural context in which leadership takes place within the variety and complexities of what exists and is generally characteristic of African nations. We have come to understand that there are many forces pulling on leaders in Africa and shaping concepts of leadership. Yet the concept of “leadership” in general continues to be illusive from a worldwide perspective, as was indicated in Chap. 2. Given the increasing demand for “global leaders”, it is vital to understand the characteristics of leadership in as many different contexts as possible. The exciting challenge for African leaders is how they can capture the positive essence of what is useful to them.

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Numerous publications have explored the characteristics of good leadership in general, but the majority have taken a contextualized Western standpoint, such as Baum (2007), Blake and Mouton (1964), Hersey and Blanchard (1988), Ladkin (2010), Maxwell (2018), Redeker, de Fries, Rouckhout, Vermeren, and Filip (2014), and Schein (2010) that were referenced in Chap. 2. A few have taken an Asian perspective, such as Ulrich and Sutton (2010), Center for Creative Leadership (2018), Berman and Haque (2014), and DeKrey, Messick, and Anderson (2007), while very few have taken an African viewpoint. Like other regions of the world, leadership frameworks are not new in the context of the African continent and they have been promulgated throughout its multifaceted history, aiming to address current socio-economic demands and future prospectives for growth. One may possibly speak of an American Leadership style because implicitly this is understood to reflect the single country, the USA. Yet referring to European leadership, Asian leadership, or South-American leadership would bring the same challenges as one would have trying to distil African leadership, since all of these continents are composed of many different countries. In this chapter, we capture and make sense of the past, present, and future characteristics of leadership in Africa: a vastly diverse continent in terms of its culture, languages, topography, and political histories.

However, considering Africa's diversity, Iwowo (2015) poses the question of how leadership is conceptualized with respect to Africa and, more so, the implications of this for Leadership Development in contemporary African organizations. She states (2015, p. 414):

[I]t is evident that just as western or mainstream [theories] have been judged inadequate in addressing leadership and management capacity building in the face of African cultural complexity, it is equally doubtful as to whether an institutionalised all-African approach [or indigenised model of leadership in Africa] is indeed a solution to its hydra-headed leadership problems given the fiercely debated issue of its cultural pluralism.

African scholars, in seeking to resist western domination in leadership and management, must first avoid simplistic binary oppositions, as the unbridled romanticization of "an African culture" would merely serve to reiterate pre-existing ideological prejudices and "reinforce the very binary which colonial and imperial discourse uses to keep the marginalized in subjection" (Nkomo, 2011, p. 378). Rather, Iwowo proposes "a leadership development model in which current mainstream theories are examined and understood in the light of the prevailing socio-cultural work environment and subsequently contextualized via creative adaptation within a cultural 'third space'" (2015, p. 420).

The available literature on leadership in Africa has increased considerably over the past decade. For example, a search on what was published from 2010–2019 in the “Business Source Complete” database gave 1328 returns (for peer-reviewed articles). The same search for the decade before that—2000–2009—gave only 435 results. This means that the number of articles published on leadership in Africa in the last decade has more than tripled compared to the decade before. Palgrave has also started publishing a book series on African leadership, with 11 already published or forthcoming (including this one).

Nkomo (2011) in her search for “African” leadership and management reviewed the available organization studies literature (both journal articles and books) at the time. Her review thus did not include the surge of studies that were published in the last decade. Nkomo identified four broad categories. First, there is a body of literature under the general rubric of what is known as African management development (Jackson, 2004). This body of literature focuses on the need for capable leadership and management in Africa and arose contemporaneously with development management studies. The second category is a body of work on national culture that has become quite prominent in recent years. These texts examine “African” leadership and management in the context of describing Africa’s national culture primarily within Geert Hofstede’s (1980) seminal typology or the Global Leadership and Organizational Behaviour Effectiveness (GLOBE) study more current framework (House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004). The third category consists of representations of “African” leadership and management that appear in discussions of precursors to management theory in popular management textbooks (e.g. Griffin, 2008). Finally, Nkomo identified a small but growing body of literature on “African” management philosophy authored primarily by African scholars.

In this chapter we focus on more recent publications, that is, the last decade, and on those publications that aim at developing a theoretical framework for understanding leadership in Africa. As our case studies document the experiences of leaders in civic situations, both in government, in NGOs, in science and in business, we have looked for insights from the literature concerning those types of situations, especially the more recent literature which includes more studies of these civic leaders. The ultimate aim is to provide a framework against which we can analyse and understand the findings of our five case studies, to identify gaps that we address through this volume, as well as deliver a perspective that may trigger ideas on the paradigm shift that future leaders seek.



We present our review in the following sections: Focus on the Leader (Sect. 3.2), Relation Between Leader and Follower (Sect. 3.3), Women Leaders in Africa (Sect. 3.4), Leadership Philosophy and Values in Africa (Sect. 3.5), and lastly Future African Leaders and Leadership Development (Sect. 3.6). In each of these sections it becomes clear there are certain gaps in the literature.

## 3.2 FOCUS ON THE LEADER: OVERWHELMINGLY POLITICAL AND MALE

Jallow states that “while there are only a few cases of good political leadership in Africa since independence, there appears to be a critical mass of civic leaders whose stories need to be studied and shared” (2014b, p. 2). Jallow’s statement implies that most research on leadership in Africa has focused on political leaders, such as national leaders and presidents. Furthermore, a focus on women’s engagement in leadership and management in Africa reveals their marginalization (Nkomo & Ngambi, 2009), even though there are women leading in all sectors of the society. Our own review of the literature also indicates that civic leaders, such as teachers, doctors, scientists, artists, middle managers, youth, or women, are absent from most analyses of leaders in Africa, almost as if they don’t exist in the past and present in Africa.

### 3.2.1 *Pre-colonial Times*

Pre-colonial African leaders have typically been studied with reference to chiefs, kings, and sultans, emphasizing both the power of chiefs and the constraints from the community on that power. Amah (2019) states that in pre-colonial Africa leaders were very powerful and had authority to punish and demand obedience. However, their powers were moderated either by a council of chiefs or by some rituals to avoid the abuse of powers. For example, Schapera (1970) noted that although the chiefs in Botswana were very powerful, such powers were moderated by the activities of senior members of the community and some local advisory bodies. Sanction was given when any chief operated in a manner that was not to the best interest of the community. The interest of the community took precedence over any other interests, be it that of the chief or his councils. Chiefs who lost the complete confidence of their people by the way they exercised their powers were effectively removed by being forced to abdicate or to commit suicide or sent in exile. Most studies, however, do not deal

with the much more complex and nuanced issue of being a leader in an acephalous state—a state with no head leader. This is a greatly under-researched area in the study of African leaders, as leaders in such states were more difficult to identify by outsiders, often temporary, but still powerful and effective. What skills of leadership were needed in this very different environment? While these states are no longer in place, our volume shows the importance of consensus building, of networks, of demonstrating ability, of regional specificity, and of leaders adapting to the cultural habits of followers to be effective, all of which may have been important values in such complex societies.

### 3.2.2 *Colonial Times*

Jallow (2014a) in his introduction to the volume *Leadership in Colonial Africa* indicates that leadership during colonial times reveal processes of imperialism and the various ways in which African leaders responded to these processes. He looks at three different types of leaders: colonial administrators, chiefs, and nationalist leaders. The latter category consisted of two subcategories: nationalist politicians and guerrilla leaders. He argues that the three categories of leaders operated in conceptually distinct but empirically intersecting fields of leadership. As a result, colonial administrators were extremely powerful and influential in shaping political Africa as we know it today. They “pacified” resistant African leaders, negotiated colonial boundaries with parties to the Berlin Conference of 1884–1885, created and oversaw “native” administrative units or other structures, promoted commerce, and controlled the chiefs through whom most colonial policy was implemented (Jallow, 2014a). Jallow explains the situation as follows:

African chiefs were expected to behave at once like monarchs to their people and unquestioning subjects to the Empire. The two roles required distinctly different sets of behaviour and attitudes that must have made their performance patently awkward, if not neurotic. (Jallow, 2014a, p. 10)

We conclude that African chiefs in colonial times were somehow like present-day middle managers with mid-level power—juggling mandates between their community and colonial authority. Historically, limited power was given to these leaders, whereas at the same time they had absolute power in other spaces. As such, the chiefs in colonial times are not very representative examples of typical leaders in Africa. For understanding leadership in Africa you need thus to understand the context beyond a leader’s community. In the present day, the complexity of globalization

and trade-offs between community and higher authority are evident. Our book shows how this resonates in our case studies, and how leaders aim to be good leaders in complex contexts, with leaders balancing community and higher levels of authority. We also see that this raises insecurity about the extent of a leader's power.

### 3.2.3 *Post-colonial Times*

Jallow (2014b, p. 2) in his introduction to the volume *Leadership in Post-colonial Africa* states: “while some studies highlight in graphic detail the extent of leadership failure in postcolonial Africa, others show that good leadership has flourished in Africa in spite of the failure of state leadership, in some cases precisely because of the failure of state leadership.” He further states that

[u]nder colonial rule, Western political structures and institutions were haphazardly superimposed on African political structures and institutions characterized by notions and perceptions of leadership at variance with the new political frameworks. The immediate postcolonial situation demanded a transformation of the authoritarian cultures, if not structures of the colonial state into cultures of inclusiveness and collective responsibility for the new national project. (2014b, p. 2)

He goes on to add in the introduction to the volume *Leadership in Post-colonial Africa* that

[f]ormer nationalist leaders who took over from colonial governors maintained aspects of the colonial state in post-colonial space that inevitably engendered civic and civil conflict and sabotaged the continent's prospects for creative leadership and growth. (2014b, p. 2)

On the other hand, Fistein (2014) indicates that in the literature on African independence leadership, Amílcar Cabral (who led the nationalist movement of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde Islands and the ensuing war of independence against the Portuguese government in Guinea-Bissau) is generally considered a shining example and rightly so. Cabral was a superb organizer and a visionary leader whose integrity, accountability, and willingness to listen to and learn from ordinary people set him apart from contemporaries and continues to inspire scholars of African leadership to this day (Hotep, 2010; Mende, 2006). Fistein (2014, p. 88) states that “[t]he combination of making his country seem interesting in the eyes of

the international community and knowing what ordinary people want, enabled Cabral to generate the kind of foreign aid that benefited the country as a whole and not just the military or the elites.” Furthermore, Fistein concludes that “persistence was the hallmark of Cabral’s entire enterprise. There were ‘no easy victories,’ and his diplomatic efforts rarely brought immediate benefits. His motto seemed to be ‘if at first you don’t succeed, try again’” (Fistein, 2014, p. 88). As such Cabral displayed a range of positive leadership characteristics such as vision, consultation, organization, diplomacy, and perseverance.

Jallow (2014b) distinguishes between what he calls “dark” and “bright” leadership. He explains dark leadership as including political repression and corruption as symptoms of autocratic and transactional leadership of heads of state, such as in Ghana, Guinea, Malawi, and Zaire immediately after independence and more recently in South Africa and Zimbabwe (further detailed by Banda, 2014, Carney, 2014; Kamil, 2014; and Lieberfeld, 2014). Thus, he argues “the colonial state lives on in postcolonial Africa” (Jallow, 2014b, p. 8). As Crawford Young puts it, “in metamorphosis the (colonial) caterpillar becomes (a post-colonial) butterfly without losing its inner essences” (1994, p. 2). “Bright post-colonial political leader” exceptions mentioned by Jallow (2014b) include, for example, Nelson Mandela (South Africa), and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf (Liberia). Not mentioned in his book, but widely recognized as an example of a “bright” political leader was Seretse Khama, the first President of Botswana.

Below we present Malawi and Guinea as two examples that fit Jallow’s idea of “dark” leadership.

Banda (2014) describes how Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda ruled Malawi from 1964 to 1994. He argues that Dr. Banda presided over one of the most brutal dictatorships in post-colonial Africa. Starting from 1966, Dr. Banda oversaw the constitutional change, which turned Malawi into a one-party state. In 1971, he oversaw the constitutional amendment, which declared him “President for life”. The Banda government instituted a reign of terror overseen by the Malawi Congress Party’s paramilitary group, the Malawi Young Pioneers, which was given powers to arrest people without a warrant despite not being constitutionally mandated to do so. Dr. Banda made extensive use of the special branch of the Malawi Police Force, which was mandated to spy on behalf of the regime and was used to silence Banda’s perceived opponents, both within Malawi and outside the country. As such, Banda demonstrated non-democratic, authoritarian, and distrustful leadership, and ruled by instilling fear.

Kamil (2014) describes the legacy of Ahmed Sékou Touré, Guinea's independence struggle leader and first President after Independence from 1958 to 1984, in his chapter called "Tyrant Hero". He states that "between heroism and tyranny lies an intriguing personality with extraordinary capacity for both admirable and despicable deeds". Over time, Touré arrested large numbers of suspected political opponents and imprisoned them in concentration camps, and about 50,000 are believed to have been killed in detention camps (Kasuka, 2013). Kamil (2014, p. 49) concludes that "Sékou's vision of a socially, economically, and politically exemplary Guinea never materialized; in fact, it went in the opposite direction. But the atrocities committed in its pursuit constitute an enormous moral debt he owes his country." Sékou thus demonstrated initially visionary, but increasingly dictatorial and tyrannical leadership traits.

Jallow (2014b) is not all negative, however, and states that

[t]here have been good leaders in Africa, some political, most civic, whose examples are worthy of emulation by future African leaders. It is noteworthy that, increasingly, in Africa as in many other parts of the world, dictatorship is a dying breed. Dictatorship of the kind represented by Nkrumah [in Ghana], Mobutu [in Congo] or Bokassa [Central African Republic] is hardly imaginable in today's Africa, thanks partly to the increasing integration and mutual visibility of the global socio-economic and political community.

In reference to Jallow's notion of "bright" leaders, Robtel Pailey (2014) analysed the leadership styles and legacy of Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Liberia's and Africa's first female president. Pailey concludes that Johnson Sirleaf

on the one hand, succeeded in unsettling patriarchal structures by lowering Liberia's 'power distance' (Hofstede, 2001; House et al., 2004) thereby increasing her accessibility to average Liberian citizens through face-to-face community and national consultations. She also introduced gender-sensitive reforms to improve the conditions of women and girls while enhancing the livelihoods of market women throughout the country. On the other hand, however, Johnson Sirleaf invoked "motherhood" as a cultural trope to further entrench patriarchy by appointing men, most notably her three sons, in strategic positions of power at the expense of equally competent women. (Pailey, 2014, p. 184)

Johnson Sirleaf thus displayed positive leadership characteristics such as consultation and a participatory leadership style, as well as focusing on gender issues. However, she also displayed some nepotism and reinforced patriarchy.

Insights into political leaders as presented above are relevant to some extent as they shape the mindset of emerging African leaders, even those outside of politics; they function as role models—both in a positive, example setting manner, but also in a negative way that motivates others to seek transformation.

Based on our reading of the literature, most publications are indeed mainly focused on political rather than civic leaders. In addition, they focus on ideas of authority that resonate well in both the western world and contemporary times. This has resulted in a focus on certain communities with these authority structures, and on men as well as senior leaders. As a result, there has been insufficient focus on the context, such as interaction between leaders and the community and existing traditions.

### 3.3 RELATION BETWEEN LEADER AND FOLLOWER LEADERSHIP STYLES

As suggested in Chap. 2, a relation exists between leaders and followers, which greatly influences leadership behaviour, and one could further argue that leadership style interfaces with a person's general character (personality). Furthermore, it was argued that the dynamics of leader–follower relationships are shaped and influenced by expectations on both sides. Iwowo (2015) quotes Yukl (2002) when stating that while earlier studies had centred primarily on understanding and shaping the role of the individual leader, more recent perspectives have defined leadership as a process in which intentional influence is extended by one person over other people to guide, structure, and facilitate activities and relationships in a group or organization.

Research on leadership styles is a more recent and increasingly common focus of research on leadership in Africa. Two concepts appear regularly in the literature on leadership in Africa. The first is transformational leadership and the second is servant leadership, which are both detailed in Sect. 2.4 of Chap. 2 (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978; Greenleaf, 2010). Given the colonial and post-colonial history of leadership in Africa, and especially the “dark side” as illustrated above, it could very well be a reaction to pivot

towards leaders with opposing styles. Styles that instead aim to transform or effect a change; styles that centre around the followers as opposed to the autocratic and self-serving styles often witnessed in Africa's political leaders in colonial and post-colonial times.

Below we present a few examples from research documenting aspects of transformational and servant leadership and its impact in our case study countries: Kenya, Rwanda, and Ghana.

Koech and Namusonge (2012, p. 9) studied the effect of three leadership styles on organization performance in state corporations in Kenya. Based on their survey findings from 72 managers, they found that correlations between transformational leadership factors and organizational performance ratings were high, whereas correlations between the transactional leadership behaviours and organizational performance were relatively low. As such, the transformational leadership style had the biggest positive impact on the performance of employees, and in turn the organization. In a similar vein, Puni, Ofei, and Okoe (2014) documented the effect of leadership on the financial performance of two Ghanaian banks. In their research they compared the autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire leadership styles and their impact on financial performance represented by net profit. It was evident that democratic leadership style contributed significantly to financial performance, compared to the autocratic and laissez-faire leadership styles. They state that “[c]learly managers in the two banks are more democratic in their leadership approach because they believe that the calibre of workers they are dealing with is high: they are self-motivated, like responsibility and challenging work, and by involving them in the decision-making process they can build a strong team spirit, high performance and satisfaction” (2014, p. 182). These studies documented the impact of different leadership styles on mostly professional staff, with transformational and democratic styles showing their effectiveness, especially with professional staff.

A survey among Rwandan adults working in non-government sectors found that “servant leadership is positively and significantly related to leader effectiveness” (Brubaker, 2013, p. 114). F. Owusu, Kalipeni, Awortwi, and Kiiru (2017), in their survey of research leaders in Africa, documented similar results, with “people-orientated/relations-orientated” the most preferred leadership style, while “laissez-faire” and “paternalistic” were the least liked.

Although there are some studies of leaders in Africa that focus on interaction between leaders and followers, notably few studies focus on a description of how the interaction between leaders and followers is experienced. Again, few studies focus on women leaders and youth.

### 3.4 WOMEN LEADERS IN AFRICA

Our literature review indicates that the literature that focuses on political leaders in Africa has mostly studied men. However, some examples of research on women leaders were discussed above; both political and civic leaders, such as Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia.

Ngunjiri (2014) tells the inspiring story of the first African woman to win the Nobel Prize for peace. Ngunjiri argues that Wangari Maathai's "pioneering" and "radical" leadership style—demonstrated in her work as an academic at the University of Nairobi, as founder of the Greenbelt Movement, and with the National Council of Women of Kenya. As a leader, Maathai demonstrates many leadership approaches, the overall approach being "radical leadership", defined as engaging in transformative actions towards the common good in spite of the personal cost. Ngunjiri (2014, p. 130) also comments: "Professor Maathai's legacy has left us with leadership lessons that we can mine for a long time. She illustrates spirited resiliency, radical African feminist agency, and transformative leadership, which overall I dub radical transformative leadership." She further states (p. 133) that "Professor Maathai displayed critical servant leadership, giving up the comforts of a tenured professorship and the comforts of home in order to achieve a self-transcendent goal: the goal of environmental justice that had an impact on millions of rural women in Kenya and beyond." Maathai reflected as follows on her leadership experiences: "It is the giving of self that characterizes prophets, saints, and many local heroes" (Maathai, 2010, p. 15). Maathai's leadership style is characterized by a pioneering vision, the urge to transform and to "do good".

In her book, Madimbo (2016) paints a picture of African women leaders from Malawi, by providing portraits of 11 Malawian women leaders, both senior civic and political leaders.

What is evident from the literature on women leaders in Africa is that they have all made a difference in their roles, and mostly feature as examples of "bright side" leaders. In achieving their goals, they have faced considerable gender-based hurdles in their careers and in performing their leadership roles. The women studied have all shown considerable perseverance, and as such serve as role models for younger female leaders in Africa. However, it can be questioned to what extent these personal strug-



gles have led to systemic improvements for women leaders, as our Kenya case study chapter, for example, shows that women leaders continue to face similar constraints today.

Even the literature with a focus on women leaders has thus predominantly been looking at famous women who entered politics, such as Sirleaf and Maathai. Less is known about women leaders who were not also politicians, as well as young women.

### 3.5 LEADERSHIP PHILOSOPHY AND VALUES IN AFRICA

Metz (2018) advances a reading of the ethic of communion, and then considers what it entails for good leadership. He states that “[d]espite having been a largely oral tradition until recently, African philosophy and related ideas have been in existence for at least several hundred years and their implications for leadership merit global consideration” (2018, p. 27). Furthermore, based on the interpretation of communion by representative African theorists, she states that

[t]wo distinct relational goods are repeatedly mentioned, namely, considering oneself part of the whole, being close, sharing a way of life, belonging and experiencing oneself as bound up with others, on the one hand, and then achieving the good of all, being sympathetic, acting for the common good, serving the community and being committed to the good of one’s society, on the other. (2018, p. 40)

These two facets of a communal relationship have been distinguished and reconstructed with some precision (Metz, 2013, 2017). We will see that our case studies demonstrate these two aspects of communion very clearly. Metz (2018, p. 42) further states that “the most common saying in an African context about good leadership is: ‘A king is a king through his people’” (e.g. also mentioned by Mofuoa, 2015, p. 32; Pheko & Linchwe, 2008, p. 399). There is also this remark: “Leaders have a deep awareness that they are what they are because of other people” (Nussbaum, Palsule, & Mkhize, 2010, p. 10). It would make sense to construe these statements about leadership this way: “one should become a real leader, which one can do insofar as one relates communally and enables others to commune” (Metz, 2018, p. 42). A good example of this is *Ubuntu*, the most well-known and quoted “African Leadership” philosophy. Ubuntu is underscored by the notion of social sensitivity and personal responsibility

for the well-being of others and understood in a specific way among Nguni/isiZulu. It was picked up politically as a governing principle/ideology.

Its meaning was best articulated as “that profound African sense that each of us is human through the humanity of other human beings”, by former South African president Nelson Mandela in a speech at his 80th Birthday Party in 1998. Hailey (2008) indicates that Ubuntu represents a collection of values, including harmony, compassion, respect, human dignity, consensus, and collective unity. Archbishop Desmond Tutu (1999) noted that Ubuntu is very difficult to render into a western language other than to characterize it as “my humanity is caught up, is inextricably bound up, in what is yours”. Ubuntu is also commonly referred to as African humanism. Although it can be disputed to what extent the concept is known and widely used outside South Africa, Gaylord (2004) points out “there is a history of humanistic thinking among African leaders commonly linked with the de-colonialization process and African socialism. This can be traced back through Kaunda’s talk of ‘African humanism’ in Zambia, Nyerere’s introduction of ‘ujamaa’ in Tanzania, Nkrumah’s concept of ‘conscientism’ in the newly independent Ghana and Azikiwe’s concept of ‘community’ as the basis for national unity [Nigeria].”

This concept is an instance of servant leadership, which, as Metz confirms, abounds in the literature on African approaches to leadership (i.e. Bhengu, 2006, pp. 185–187, 229; Khoza, 2006, pp. 58–59; Mbigi & Maree, 2005, p. 102; Msila, 2014; Ndlovu, 2016). Metz shows how the Afro-communal ethic applies, what the final goal of an organization should be, how decisions ought to be made within it, how to deal with non-performing or misbehaving employees, how to make decisions in a firm, and whom to treat as a stakeholder. He does not provide empirical evidence, but analyses how a leader or a firm would or should act in the spirit of communion. As such, he aims to show how leadership behaviour can be theoretically grounded on the basic value of communion that is prominent in African philosophical discussions of morality. With our case studies we aim to fill the gap of empirical evidence by demonstrating how some leaders understand their actions to be communally and ethically oriented, notably through the notion of “doing good”.

Bert van Pinxteren’s work (2019) has focused on how colonialism has impacted the characteristics of African nations based on original ethnolinguistic groups. His work uses the database of the Afrobarometer, a non-partisan, pan-African research institution conducting public attitude

surveys on democracy, governance, the economy, and society in 30+ countries repeated on a regular cycle. Pinxteren delved into 35 countries and 198 ethnolinguistic groups. He concludes that important cultural differences remain in Africa: both between, but also within nations. It is important to keep in mind that whilst 198 ethnolinguistics group sounds like a large number, there are over 3000 represented in the continent with 21 out of the 30 most linguistically diverse countries in the world being African. Following in the same vein, Jackson (2004) highlights the cultural diversity and power dynamics that impact intra-Africa cross-border relations and inter-ethnic relations within or outside the post-colonial national borders. Both van Pinxteren's and Jackson's work thus illustrate the need to study and be aware of the cultural diversity within Africa, and within post-colonial nations. This diversity makes it impossible to speak of "African" leadership, but also studying cultural values per nations may overlook the ethnic differences within nations.

Lituchy, Galperin, and Punnett present the preliminary findings of their LEAD (Leadership Effectiveness in Africa and the African Diaspora) research programme across multiple countries in Africa (Lituchy, Galperin, & Punnett, 2017). This book considers leadership from an Afro-centric perspective and studies components of leadership from an African perspective, the impact of culture on leadership in Africa and the African diaspora, as well as the similarities and differences between leadership in Africa and the African diaspora. At the beginning of the research programme, African participants agreed on many leadership traits. Fairness/impartiality, commitment/dedication, honesty/trustworthiness, and being knowledgeable were all common descriptors of effective leadership. The respondents from Ghana, Kenya, and Nigeria agreed that effective leaders were visionary, charismatic, intelligent, and innovative. The research programme is still ongoing, and it will be interesting to see what kind of empirical evidence emerges.

The LEAD programme puts the research results into the context of cross-cultural research. A few cross-cultural studies have included African countries in global comparative studies, such as Hofstede (2001) and House et al. (2004). Hofstede's study covered 50 countries and 3 regions worldwide, including East Africa (Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia), West Africa (Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone), South Africa; and Egypt as part of Arab-speaking countries. Hofstede's (1980, 2001) research was based on questionnaires completed by more than 100,000 IBM employ-

ees. Building upon Hofstede's research and other cross-cultural studies, House et al. (2004) research covered 60 countries, including the following countries in sub-Saharan Africa: Namibia, Nigeria, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, and Egypt and Morocco in Northern Africa. The results of their Global Leadership and Organizational Behaviour Effectiveness Study (GLOBE) were published in 2004, among 17,370 middle managers across food processing, financial services, and telecommunication corporations.

Although all nine dimensions of the GLOBE study directly or indirectly impact leadership behaviour, we have chosen the following three dimensions for a closer look: power distance, in-group collectivism and humane orientation (definitions as used in GLOBE study), because these dimensions resonate most closely with key insights that have emerged from our case studies. Below the key findings from the comparative studies on these three dimensions are presented, which will highlight some regional differences within Africa, as well as how the African scores compare to other countries in the world.

### 3.5.1 *Power Distance—Perception of Hierarchy*

Power distance: The degree to which a community maintains inequality among its members by stratification of individuals and groups with respect to power, authority, prestige, status, wealth, and material possessions. The critical aspects are the establishment and maintenance of dominance and control of the less powerful by the more powerful. The studies measured the extent to which a society is perceived to practise and encourage behaviours that enact power differences (See Table 3.1 for main characteristics of power distance.).

On a range from the greatest power distance to the least power distance country, we can see the following scores for practices (Table 3.2).

From the findings it can be concluded that African countries are characterized mostly by high to medium high power distance. Within Africa, West Africa and Morocco rank highest, and East Africa shows high to medium power distance. The GLOBE data for South Africa have distinguished between white and black samples and this indicates that among the black sample power distance is quite low. When people are asked how the power *should be* distributed in a society most responded that a low(er) power distance would be desirable.

**Table 3.1** Characteristics of power distance

<i>High hierarchy/power distance societies have these characteristics...</i>	<i>Low hierarchy/power distance societies have these characteristics...</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bias towards power being held and executed by a few people at the top</li> <li>• Pyramid structures with many layers of power</li> <li>• Subordinates show great respect for decision makers</li> <li>• Subordinates will tell the leader what they think he/she wants to hear</li> <li>• Subordinates follow instructions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bias towards decisions made by consensus</li> <li>• Relatively flat organizational management structures</li> <li>• Leaders consult widely before taking important decisions</li> <li>• Everyone at all layers engages in active and open debate as this is considered to lead to better decision making</li> <li>• Subordinates take initiative as taking individual responsibility is highly regarded</li> </ul>

**Table 3.2** Scores of power distance in selected countries

<i>Country</i>	<i>GLOBE score (from 7 to 1)</i>	<i>Band</i>	<i>Country/region</i>	<i>Hofstede score (from 11 to 104)</i>
Nigeria/ Morocco	5.80	High power distance (A)	Malaysia	104
Zimbabwe	5.67		Arab countries	80
Zambia	5.31		West Africa	77
Namibia	5.29			
France	5.28	High to medium power distance (B)	France	68
South Africa (white sample)	5.16		East Africa	64
England	5.15		South Africa	49
Egypt	4.92			
USA	4.88	Medium to low power distance (C)	USA	40
Israel	4.73		Great Britain	35
South Africa (black sample)	4.11		Denmark	18
Denmark	3.89	Low power distance (D)	Austria	11

### 3.5.2 *In-Group Collectivism*

In-group collectivism: The degree to which individuals express pride, loyalty, and interdependence in their families. Here are some of the characteristics of societies that have high and low in-group collectivism (Table 3.3).

On a range from the most in-group collectivist country to the least in-group collectivist country, we can see the following scores for practices (Table 3.4).

**Table 3.3** Characteristics of in-group collectivism

<i>High in-group collectivism societies have these characteristics...</i>	<i>Low in-group collectivism societies have these characteristics...</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Close ties between family members</li> <li>• Recruitment off in-group/family members</li> <li>• Respect for authority</li> <li>• Loyalty and relationship prevails over task</li> <li>• Extended family structures</li> <li>• Maintenance of harmony and saving face</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loose ties between family members</li> <li>• No family relations at work</li> <li>• Limited respect for authority</li> <li>• Task prevails over relationship</li> <li>• Nuclear family structures</li> <li>• Speaking the truth: confrontation</li> </ul>

**Table 3.4** Scores of in-group collectivism in selected countries

<i>Country</i>	<i>GLOBE score (from 7 to 1)</i>	<i>Band</i>	<i>Country/region</i>	<i>Hofstede score (from 6 to 91)</i>
Philippines	6.36	High in-group collectivism (A)	Guatemala	6
Morocco	5.87		West Africa	20
Zambia	5.84		East Africa	27
Egypt	5.64			
Zimbabwe	5.57	Medium in-group collectivism (B)		
Nigeria	5.55			
South Africa (black sample)	5.09		Arab countries	38
			South Africa	65
Namibia	4.52	Low in-group collectivism (C)		
South Africa (white sample)	4.50			
USA	4.25		Denmark	74
England	4.08		Great Britain	89
Denmark	3.53		USA	91

From the findings of both Hofstede and GLOBE studies, it can be concluded that African countries are characterized mostly by high in-group collectivism, with South Africa categorized as medium in-group collectivist.

### 3.5.3 *Humane Orientation*

Humane orientation is the degree to which a collective encourages and rewards individuals for being fair, altruistic, generous, caring, and kind to others (Table 3.5).

Since this dimension was not part of Hofstede's study, only the GLOBE findings are presented in Table 3.6. On a range from the most Humane oriented country to the least Humane oriented country, we can see the following scores for practices.

**Table 3.5** Characteristics of humane orientation

<i>High humane orientation societies have characteristics such as...</i>	<i>Low humane orientation societies have characteristics such as...</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The interests of others are important.</li> <li>• People are motivated primarily by a need for belonging and affiliation.</li> <li>• Members of society are responsible for promoting the well-being of others.</li> <li>• People are urged to be sensitive to all forms of racial discrimination.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One's own self-interest is important.</li> <li>• People are motivated primarily by a need for power and material possessions.</li> <li>• The state provides social and economic support for individuals' well-being.</li> <li>• People are not sensitive to all forms of racial discrimination.</li> </ul>

**Table 3.6** Scores of humane orientation in selected countries

<i>Country</i>	<i>GLOBE score (from 7 to 1)</i>	<i>Band</i>
Zambia	5.23	High humane orientation A
Egypt	4.73	
Zimbabwe	4.45	High to medium humane orientation B
South Africa (black sample)	4.34	
USA	4.17	Medium to low humane orientation C
Nigeria	4.10	
Namibia	3.96	
England	3.72	
South Africa (white sample)	3.49	Low humane orientation D
France	3.40	
Germany	3.18	

The findings indicate most African countries ranked as high or high to medium humane orientation, with a few countries in medium to low category.

### 3.5.4 *Implications for Leadership*

Overall, the sub-Saharan African countries can thus be typified as high to medium high power distance, high in-group collectivism, and high or high to medium humane orientation.

Taking these cross-cultural results, which also tie in with the definition of Ubuntu described earlier, we start to see three characteristics or dimensions of African leadership that resonate with each other and with our own data:

1. *Community*: Collectivism, “doing good”, and teamwork
2. *Hierarchy*: Authority (power distance), transformational leadership, with a widespread desire for lower enactment of hierarchy than currently practised
3. *Humane orientation*: People-oriented leadership and leadership characteristics such as integrity and servant leadership

Though these themes are apparent in the cross-cultural research of Hofstede and House et al., their research does not capture the changes in perceptions that are currently happening, as it is a static measurement of perceptions and values. Also, in line with van Pinxteren and Jackson, it is questionable to what extent nations in African are homogenous entities given their ethnolinguistic diversity.

Few studies document the above three themes empirically, such as “doing good” and teamwork, transformation or change in leadership styles, and changes in perceptions of hierarchy in Africa. They are also rarely linked to organizational and cultural values, and empirical studies document leaders’ attributes, notably of integrity.

## 3.6 FUTURE AFRICAN LEADERS AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Literature that explores actual experiences of Leadership Development in Africa is rare. Looking to shape the future leadership in Africa, Iwowo (2015) asks, “where do we go from here?” One clear path is to cultivate centres of excellence within the African context quite similar to what the



USA has done with Leadership Development programmes. Some institutions have taken up the challenge articulated by Iwowo, often with the aid of Western aid organizations. For example, a review of initiatives and ways to develop leaders in Africa shows that there is a range of initiatives on Leadership Development emerging. However, in terms of both total spending and number of leaders accessing these programmes, the numbers are still very limited. In addition, effective African Leadership Development programmes cannot be copied from the West, but instead need to be developed and need to respond to the African challenges and reality, including being planned and conducted in a context-sensitive way.

One widely documented Leadership Development initiative is that of the African Leadership University (ALU), with its first campus in Mauritius and its second in Rwanda. It was founded in 2015 by Fred Swaniker, who was born in Ghana and lived and worked in ten African countries. Swaniker argues that “[i]n Africa, good leaders make more of a difference than in the rest of the world. We need leaders who are ethical; leaders who are entrepreneurial; leaders who are hard working” (Holmes, 2019). ALU’s stated approach is to seek out leadership potential in the selection process, provide the opportunity for leadership in practice throughout the academic programme, and create leadership networks along the way via internships and mentorship. “It’s potential, plus practice, plus opportunity,” Swaniker says. “When you do those things and put them together, great leaders can emerge” (Holmes, 2019). The ALU aims to produce three million young African leaders over the next 50 years. The first class of those leaders, made up 79 people hailing from more than 40 countries across the continent, graduated on June 12, 2019 (Baker, 2019). However, to date no studies have been done on the outcome and impact of ALU. Baker further states that Fred is deeply passionate about Africa and believes that the missing ingredient on the continent is good leadership. Baker quotes Swaniker: “The point of ALU is to create a cadre of African leaders and entrepreneurs who are trained to solve African problems. We want a generation of Africans who are thinking on a continent-wide scale, who have networks across the continent, who can build pan-African businesses and grow economies and drive trade.” This resonates with leadership characteristics such as entrepreneurship, integrity, innovation, and networking: in short, the definition of global leaders.

Another initiative, the Africa Leadership Initiative (ALI), was launched in 2001 in South Africa. Over the last 12 years some 170 successful African leaders, who were already leaders before joining the programme, in nine classes have taken part in the intensive, transformational, and profound

fellowship programme that fosters their leadership vision and their true commitment to address the most crucial social challenges in Southern Africa (ALI, 2019).

Following the success of the Africa Leadership Initiative, Isaac and Khumo Shongwe founded YALI for a younger generation: The Young Africa Leadership Initiative (YALI, 2019). The Young African Leaders Initiative has received support from the US Department of State and was started in 2010 by President Barack Obama. The motive was to reach out to Africa's future leaders in their younger days and prepare them to lead their societies with integrity. YALI carries the same principles and core values as its older counterpart ALI. It defines itself as a pan-African youth initiative with an aim of transforming young African professionals into values-based African leaders. To empower and train the leaders of the future, the YALI Regional Leadership Center East Africa team has developed a high-tech, hands-on learning environment that includes involvement, exploration, and self-reflection (YALI, 2019).

Bolden and P. Kirk (2005) researched a pan-African Leadership Development programme sponsored by the British Council. The programme explored the manner in which participants use their understanding of leadership to facilitate beneficial social change in their communities. The InterAction programme involved 300 men and women from 19 sub-Saharan countries. The programme aimed to transform Africa through the development of a new generation of leaders who are encouraged not only to take up their own leadership roles but to share their insights and learning to develop and inspire others within their communities. Rather than bringing in "experts" from the "developed world", InterAction embraced African wisdom, acknowledging the strengths and contributions of all participants and partners, and used a facilitative, discursive, and experiential approach rather than a more didactic teaching based format.

Bolden and P. Kirk (2005, p. 8) state, in a section on the shedding of past images of leadership, the following:

[T]hrough life experience as well as the experience of the InterAction leadership programme participants have become clear about the nature of leadership. Interestingly, this seems to come most often out of a process of rejecting what they have experienced as the shortcomings of previously held notions of leadership. The process of sifting through their experience has resulted in participants rejecting past images of leadership which for them were negative, exclusive and inhibiting and, instead embracing a more affirmative, inclusive and "life giving" view.

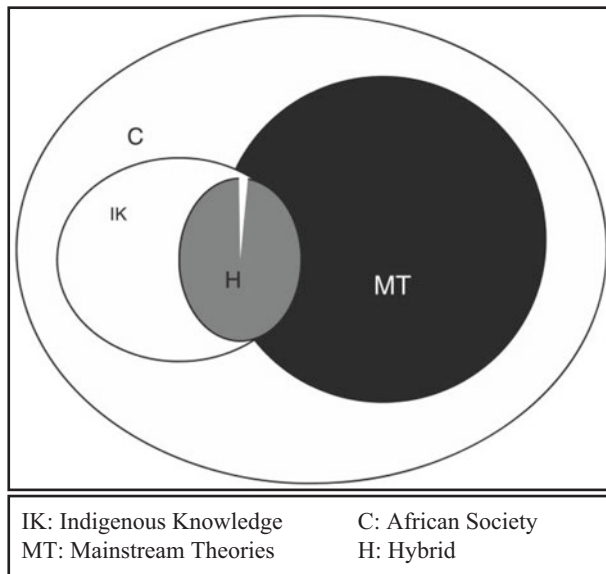
Iwowo (2019) argues that “for effective leadership development one first of all needs to acknowledge that leadership development is not a ‘one size fits all’. Even if it would be a ‘one size’, then what size or whose size would this ‘one size’ be, given the diversity in the world?” Some studies on the future of leadership in Africa tend towards being prescriptive and lay out what ought to be done. For example, in his recent book on globalization and leadership in Africa, Amah (2019) focuses on servant leadership and young leaders to shift the mindset in Africa. He concludes:

Future African leaders must embrace the concept of servant leadership with all its requirements for service to enhance their people’s development as a means of developing a formidable country and continent. They must look inwards for a way out of African challenges rather than becoming slaves to other powers in the attempt to develop their countries and people. They must be good managers of resources and not worsen the level of corruption by their behaviours and insensitivity. (Amah, 2019, p. 105)

Other authors are putting emphasis on the concept of Ubuntu as central to Leadership Development in Africa (e.g. Bhengu, 2006; Mbigi & Maree, 2005; Msila, 2014). In order to avoid being prescriptive, Iwowo (2019) states that

while there is need to re-appraise leadership development in Africa which is still heavily influenced by Western/Anglo-Saxon leadership theory, sweeping ourselves back to a ‘glorious African past’, as the African Renaissance thought school would have us believe is the solution, is also not realistic. We need to relate to the “now”, which is shaped both by history, our colonial past, and also influenced by present day interactions with the rest of the world. There is an absence of a local indigenous conceptual framework that facilitates leadership development practice. Therefore, in its absence, one must adapt global leadership development interventions and frameworks to the specific socio-cultural context, the local framework in which leadership theory is applied. (Iwowo, 2019, Skype interview on July 11)

In earlier work, Iwowo has called this approach the “third space” or Hybrid model (2015) showing interfacing paradigms, as illustrated in Fig. 3.1. This model provides a suggestion of how to move forward with Leadership Development that considers the perspectives of past (indigenous knowledge and African society), present (African society and mainstream theories), and future (hybrid: a combination of indigenous and mainstream).



**Fig. 3.1** A “third space” for leadership development. (Source: Iwowo, 2015, p. 424)

It would be interesting to document what kind of leaders are produced by adopting this “Third space” Leadership Development, and how those leaders would contribute to our imagining global leaders’ role and impact. In this respect, the examples we see in this book help us think about future leaders in Africa, their successes and challenges, and needs in terms of Leadership Development.

Regarding future efforts to transform Leadership Development, a number of authors have proposed practical ways to develop leadership in Africa, including:

- Critical and comparative examination, with a view to creatively appropriating mainstream [meaning Western leadership] knowledge in the socio-cultural context of “those who must practice it”, in a way that is not only recognizable to them, but that is contextually resonant of their lived and experienced forms of work (Iwowo, 2011; Kelly, White, Martin, & Rouncefield, 2006); in other words addressing the practical question of “how I can apply it here and now”.

A useful developmental technique is to keep reflective journals prior and post leadership training (Iwowo, 2015).

- Preparation of case studies on leadership in Africa and use of these in Leadership Development training programmes in the continent (Iwowo, 2011)
- *Storytelling*: Generating and sharing real-life operational stories on leadership (Iwowo, 2015)
- Study of books/biographies written by African male and female leaders (Madimbo, 2016)
- Production of descriptive rather than prescriptive studies of leadership in Africa (Nkomo, 2011)

Our volume aims to respond to these practical ways forward, notably by producing case studies of diverse African leaders, describing their personal experiences and leadership journeys with their successes and challenges.

### 3.7 CONCLUSIONS

Based on our literature review, we identify three key characteristics or dimensions of African leadership that resonate with each other and with our case study data:

1. *Community*: collectivism, “doing good”, and teamwork
2. *Hierarchy*: authority (power distance), transformational leadership, with a widespread desire for lower enactment of hierarchy than currently practised
3. *Humane orientation*: people-oriented leadership and leadership characteristics such as integrity, servant leadership

Our review of literature on leadership in Africa has identified several gaps. These include:

1. Too strong a focus on chiefs/kings and Presidents and ideas of authority that resonate well in both the western world and contemporary times. This has resulted in a focus on certain communities with these authority structures, and on men. In the literature there is a predominant focus on political leaders as an example of leadership more generally. As a result, there has been insufficient focus on

the context, such as interaction between leaders and the community and existing traditions.

2. There are few descriptive studies of leaders in Africa that focus on interaction between leaders and followers. There have been particularly few studies taking an African perspective on servant and transformational leadership, and also few studies focus on women leaders and youth.
3. Even those publications that focus on women leaders have predominantly been looking at famous women who entered politics, such as Sirleaf and Maathai. Less is known about women leaders who were not politicians, nor female leaders who are young.
4. Few studies explore the desire for change in leadership styles and behaviour, (a) using empirical studies to document perceptions of hierarchy in Africa, linked to organizational and cultural values, and (b) examining the attributes of leaders that people are looking for, notably integrity and doing good.
5. The literature analysing the need for and experiences with Leadership Development in Africa is very limited. The existing literature tends to be prescriptive rather than conceptual or descriptive. Most writing tells African leaders what they should do rather than demonstrating what is working or what they want to do and have done. The more recent literature includes more studies of civic leaders. Research on leadership styles, and its impact, is also a more recent and increasingly common focus of research on leadership in Africa. From this research, two concepts of leadership styles appear regularly. The first is transformational leadership and the second is servant leadership. Given the history of leadership in Africa, and especially the “dark side”, it could very well be a reaction to pivot towards leaders with opposing styles to “dark side” leaders, eager to transform Africa.

In this volume of case studies, we aim to address the identified gaps in several ways. We decided to study civic leaders, both in government and non-government and business organizations. We also included in each case study a diversity of leaders: we engaged both men and women and senior and young leaders. Our case studies are descriptive and aim to tell their stories, including how they have become leaders and view leadership changes and challenges. Our volume emphasizes the context, doubts, struggles, and successes of civic leaders and presents their experience and

advice on how to deal with the rapidly changing environment in which they find themselves. We also describe several leader–follower interactions in order to understand the transformation and change in perceptions that are widespread.

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## CHAPTER 4

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# The Historical, Political, and Demographic Context of Leadership in Africa

*Bettina Ng'weno*

### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter looks at the political, economic, social, and demographic context in which leadership takes place within the cultural and historical variety and complexities of Africa. Contrary to much of the literature on leadership in Africa, visible on the ground in various African countries is a wide range of different kinds of leaders: young as well as old, female as well as male, transformative, flexible, struggling, undermined, determined, and successful. This volume looks at leaders and leadership experience in Africa outside of the context of politics to better illustrate the diversity of leaders in Africa, their aspirations, and ideas for a different future. In this chapter, we focus on the complex contexts and histories from which leaders operate in the five countries highlighted in the case studies chapters.

Since 2000, Africa has gone through substantial changes that affect the experiences, demands, and perspectives of leadership of African leaders and those with whom they work. These changes have been political (decentralization), economic (rapid growth), social (urbanization), educational

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(expanded), and demographic (productive portion of population surpassed 50%). They have been productive of new African societies, cultures, and work environments. Our overall study highlights some of the similarities and differences experienced by African leaders as they face these changes. This chapter gives a contextual framework to African leadership by focusing on some of the major dynamics of this interface between difference and similarity. Rather than search for convergence we strive to capture “the variety and complexity of the leadership and management phenomenon that may exist within the continent” (Nkomo, 2011, p. 378). Throughout this chapter there is a tension between what is similar and what is different between and within African countries. General trends move most African countries in one direction but specific histories, cultures, demographics, and politics heighten or reduce a general trend and give it a local specific aspect that is felt differently in different parts of Africa. In addition, there are many values (e.g. respect for elders) and cultural practices (e.g. consensus building) that are important across Africa, but are embodied and enacted in radically different ways, such that what one person might do or say in one country or region would not be the same for another person, country, or region.

This volume incorporates survey material from a wide range of African countries but looks specifically at leadership case studies in two West African countries (Ghana and Nigeria) and three East African countries (Kenya, Rwanda, and Tanzania). These countries make up just under 10% of Africa's 54 countries. Nevertheless, they represent 28% of Africa's total population, now estimated at 1.216 billion people. While the countries on which this volume focuses through case studies vary greatly in population, gross domestic product (GDP), resources, history, and culture, and as such, can give only an idea of the totality of leadership in Africa, they are also Anglophone countries who recognize English as one of their official languages and where English often predominates in government and business affairs.

Our volume documents the process of change taking place in many parts of Africa as well as the desire for change and the struggle about how it should be achieved. This chapter looks at the cultural and social diversity, as well as the changing political, economic, and demographic context, that allow the reader to understand the action of leaders in the five countries case studies. Of particular note, in these five countries, age stands out as a dividing line on how people understand and want leadership to be. Young leaders not only have a different take on leadership, but they also want to be different. However, they find they do not have readily available role models, support, access, or spaces to put their ideas into practice. This chapter puts this dynamic, among others, into context.

## 4.2 CULTURAL AND SOCIAL DIVERSITY

One striking thing about African countries is their internal diversity as well as intracontinental. Thus, the vast majority of African leaders exist in multicultural, multilingual, pluri-ethnic, and cosmopolitan societies. These societies additionally share colonial and postcolonial processes that structure institutions, organizations, and government. As a result, these societies hold multiple conceptualizations of tradition, culture, values, authority, and purpose. At the same time, the similar colonial structures, the process of decolonization, the restructuring during structural adjustment, the revolution of information technology, and the demographic shift towards a majority productive population give the appearance of a uniform continent where life appears similar across countries. African leaders working in their own countries or across Africa are then faced with familiar circumstances or institutions, but also radically different societies and cultures.

Culturally, leaders in Africa deal with different styles of interpersonal interactions including whether it is culturally acceptable to be humble or proud, direct or indirect, self-referent or self-effacing, formal or informal, attentive to hierarchy or treat all people the same, display wealth or not, which vary considerably across the continent. They have thus learned to be very flexible in their interactions. This is most obvious in the negotiation of conflict and consensus, which has resulted in management styles that may be considered “typically African” in that they are very flexible, without being specifically representative of any one country or individual. As most of this chapter shows, African populations are rapidly changing and a leader in Africa will be confronted with extremely varied cultures of management and ideas about conflict and consensus due to age, mobility, gender, and location.

In many circumstances African leaders find themselves having to learn from new situations and peoples, adjusting to cultural and political contexts, acquiring familiarity with new technology, and having to innovate to manage dynamic situations. As such, flexibility is a key ingredient to successful leadership. For example, one senior male business leader from Kenya described having to adjust to working in Zimbabwe as follows:

He first had to adjust because of institutional procedures, and then because of cultural differences, and finally because of institutional hierarchy expectations. As he notes, in the end it was he, the leader, who had to change to be effective.

*Senior male business leader personal experience: "Noticing differences as a leader in Zimbabwe"*

The methods that I had and culture that I had in Kenya did not apply in Zimbabwe. For instance, in Kenya if someone steals, and you have sufficient evidence, you ask them to leave in a fairly direct fashion. There is very little to discuss. In Zimbabwe, they steal, you have evidence, there is a due process that you have to go through, where they bring lawyers, etc. as part of labour law.

In Zimbabwe there is an expectation that you greet everyone every morning and the greeting is usually initiated by the more senior person. I was informed that I don't greet people. So, I retorted that they did not greet me either and I never refused to respond to any greetings I received. They said, "but you are the boss you are supposed to greet first." I said where I come from we greet each other, rank notwithstanding.

In Zimbabwe you are expected to behave more in line with your position and hierarchy than in most places I have worked. I learnt that you have got to play the game according to the set rules and you will not get the respect of your peers if you behave differently. You can get away with it if you are the top boss but not as a peer. What I learned is that it is a different culture from what I knew, and I had to unlearn many things, understand how things are and operate in this environment. You either fit in or change the culture. But you can't change a culture if you are one person alone. Capo, senior male business leader, retail and media sector

The cultures of the five countries in the case studies vary both because of the many societies that make up each country and the different histories and locations of each country. Between each country and within each country there are regional and local ways of dealing with things such as conflict and management of the legacies of colonialism. Major events that affect cultural understandings of leadership include histories of war, slave trade, colonialism, and genocide that have forced a reconsideration of leadership at different moments in history.

### 4.3 STRUCTURES OF POLITICAL AUTHORITY

Leaders in Africa have rich and diverse traditions of political leadership on which to draw and with which they must deal in their work as leaders. These traditions range from acephalous societies to kingdoms, democracies to military regimes, and colonial to socialist governments. As such, the structuring and importance of hierarchy varies greatly across Africa.

Societies in Africa have grown out of a range of political traditions, some of which were highly centralized such as kingdoms with extremely powerful individual leaders, and others were highly decentralized such as acephalous states where leadership was a collective effort and individual leaders rose as needed (usually in religious or military contexts) but had no permanent positions. In both of these forms of societies, kinship, age, and gender were very important for structuring power and remain so in much of contemporary Africa. Kinship, age, and gender were particularly important to the governance of acephalous societies, in the form of matrilineal or patrilineal lineage, age groups, and reproductivity.

In the five countries of our study the whole range of kinds of authority is present within each of the countries. Countries like Nigeria, Ghana, and Rwanda have famous kingdoms such as the Ashanti kingdom of Ghana while at the same time having acephalous societies such as the Chakali also in Ghana (Daannaa, 1994). Tanzania, with the exception of Zanzibar, is perhaps the country least wedded to hierarchy both traditionally and today, due to having decentralized states in the past, as well as a socialist government after independence.

These different forms of local political authority were disrupted, enhanced, reinvented, and/or fundamentally changed by European colonialism. European interactions with these African countries also differed substantially. Nigeria and Ghana had a much longer intense trade relationship with Europe that structured internal markets and politics going back a few hundred years, that later turned into a colonial relationship. In contrast, the East African relationship had almost no period of trade before the colonial presence, besides the Portuguese along the coast. In addition, Kenya is the only country that was a settler colony of Britain set aside for European settlement. Tanganyika and Rwanda were first part of German East Africa and after the First World War Tanganyika was mandated to Britain and Rwanda to Belgium. Tanganyika, Zanzibar, Ghana, Nigeria, and the ten-mile coastal strip of Kenya were all British Protectorates while the rest of Kenya was a crown colony.



### 4.3.1 *Indirect Rule and Local Government*

After the First World War, due to lack of resources, European powers in Africa enhanced their systems of indirect rule—which was the administration of people in the colonies through “local authorities”, in particular, chiefs (Berry, 1992). In the case of Rwanda, this had long been the practice with the Germans ruling through and enhancing the powers of the kings. Likewise, in Zanzibar the British upheld the power of the Sultans, and in Ghana the power of the chiefs and kings, and regents in place of kings. In most places where there was an elaborate system of chiefs and the colonial powers enhanced the power of these chiefs while removing their basis for rule. That is to say, the colonial power severed the tie with the community as the source of chiefly power and replaced it with a European mandate. In places where there was no system of chiefs, or where the leaders had risen temporarily in order to deal with the European presence (such as military leaders), colonial powers invented systems of local chiefs to administer on their behalf, giving individual benefits to the rulers. The result of indirect rule was a system of chiefs/kings whose power was now obtained from the colonial, and later postcolonial, state but whose legitimacy was supposed to come from the community. With time these “traditional” authorities have gained power through colonial and postcolonial administrative privileges, collection of market taxes, and power over the distribution of land.

The incorporation of the system of chiefs into local government across independent Africa was meant to co-opt the local authorities under a national banner and at the same time not “disrupt” tradition with the overall aim of legitimizing the state. This produced a legacy of tensions between the roles of chiefs as representing a community or representing the state (colonial or postcolonial). This tension bubbles up to the surface every now and again depending on local politics.

Thus, most republics in Africa have had to deal with traditional authorities of different varieties that predate them as polities. In many countries there have been movements to promote the power of local authorities at different times since independence. One such movement was led by the late Libyan ruler Muammar Gaddafi who sponsored and convened traditional kings, sultans, sheiks, and tribal leaders in an effort to produce a unified cross-continental African government and to by-pass elected government rulers. The appeal of traditional leaders, then, is not just a recovery of ancient ways of ruling but very much a politics of the present that

reaches back to ideas about the past to legitimate new ways of ruling. Such processes of legitimation increase in appeal when people are wary of current institutions and politicians. The variety of locations of authority mean that tradition and custom are important to the success of leaders in Africa. This was expressed by one senior male information technology (IT) consultant in Nigeria:

*Senior male consultant personal experience: "Understanding the importance of culture in Nigeria"*

As a leader in Nigeria, you should take into account the context of the cultural norms of the people you are leading and adapt this to suit your specific leadership style. Some cultural norms create structure and breaking this then creates chaos, not progress.

Leadership and styles of Leadership are not constant. Leaders in Nigeria need to analysis their environments constantly, react to changes and adjust their leadership style to suit the constantly changing environments. **Mr R.**, senior male consultant, IT sector

Chiefs are the strongest in places that had strong kingdoms and in general carry more power in West Africa as compared to East Africa where the vast majority of chiefs were a colonial invention. Today the position of the chief in East Africa functions as the most local form of local government and is not necessarily related to the community, but is expected to continue to function as the distribution of local authority. Chiefs in West Africa and in Ghana in particular, although stripped of some of their independence with the postcolonial state, remained in control of land and land distribution and as such wield considerable power. With growing urbanism chiefs often became beneficiaries of the conversion of rural to urban land (Ubink, 2007).

#### 4.3.2 *Political Leaders of Postcolonial States*

Although this volume focuses on leadership in Africa outside the context of politics, our respondents in surveys and interviews used political leadership as a point of comparison. Publicly on an international scale, the concern over political leadership is highlighted by the Mo Ibrahim Foundation Prize for Achievement in African Leadership (awarded to ex-presidents),

which, established in 2006, sets out to improve leadership and governance across Africa. When the foundation feels that no leader is deserving of the prize it does not award it. The last recipient of the prize was ex-president of Liberia, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf in 2017 for her work on reconciliation and nation building. Respondents often talked about political leaders as role models for what, or what not, to do. The leaders they turn to as examples were political leaders who were instrumental in bringing about important moments of change like, Nelson Mandela (end of Apartheid), Julius Nyerere (independence and unification of Tanzania), and Paul Kagame (end of the genocide in Rwanda). These particular figures are also important as they are understood as selfless and uncorrupt leaders.

In 1957 Ghana was the first country, of the five we focus on, to gain independence. Tanganyika became independent in 1961, Rwanda in 1962 and Nigeria, and Zanzibar and Kenya in 1963. In 1964 after the Zanzibari revolution that removed the sultan, Zanzibar and Tanganyika unified to form Tanzania. All these countries achieved independence through a negotiated settlement, except for Kenya, which as a settler colony gained independence through armed struggle (Mau Mau).

In terms of politics, Tanzania has had the most stable civilian government. Ruled as a one-party state until the 1990s, it had a smooth succession of civilian rulers throughout its independent history who have alternated between representatives of the mainland (Tanganyika) and of Zanzibar until recently with multi-party elections. Kenya too has only had civilian rulers but a lot fewer. Also, a single-party state until 1992, Kenya now has term limits for the presidency. However, its election politics have turned violent since the reintroduction of multi-party elections. Ghana, Nigeria, and Rwanda have had both civilian and military rulers and coup d'états that have put in military rulers. The power of the military in those three countries is much greater than in Kenya or Tanzania. Nigeria and Rwanda faced devastating wars, including the Nigerian/Biafra civil war in 1967–1970 in the case of Nigeria, and the 1994 genocide in the case of Rwanda. However, today the rulers of these five countries are elected, although Rwanda's president Paul Kagame and Nigeria's president Muhammadu Buhari both have military backgrounds. President Kagame, who led the military end to the genocide, became president in 2000 and has ruled for 19 years, the longest of any of the presidents of the five countries. A constitutional referendum was held in Rwanda in December 2015. The amendments to the constitution allowed President Kagame to run for a third term of office in 2017, as well as shortened presidential terms from

seven to five years, although the latter change would not come into effect until 2024. Tanzania was the sole socialist country in the group with long standing ties to China.

#### 4.4 ECONOMIC CONTEXT

In 2016 the African Development Bank declared Africa to be the world's second-fastest growing region (2017). According to World Bank data for 2018, six of the ten fastest growing economies in the world are in Africa (World Bank, 2018a). The fastest growing African countries were Ghana (8.3%), Ethiopia (8.2%), Côte D'Ivoire (7.2%), Djibouti (7%), Senegal (6.9%), and Tanzania (6.8%) (Adegoke, 2018). The World Bank forecasts that Africa will expand its average overall growth from 3.1% in 2018 to 3.5% in 2019 (Adegoke, 2018). This overall growth rate is affected by the slow pace of growth in three oil and mineral rich countries, Nigeria, South Africa, and Angola, who make up about 60% of sub-Saharan Africa's annual GDP (Obulutsa, 2018). Nigeria is Africa's largest economy with the largest population (15% of the population of Africa) and a GDP of \$376.3 billion. Leaders in Africa face this dynamic moment of growth from varied positions, histories, and cultures and with access to very different recourses.

The five case studies presented here—Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, and Tanzania—differ considerably economically because of their history, political climate, and topography. Between 2010 and 2015, “GDP across Africa grew at 3.3 percent a year, markedly slower than its 5.4 percent average annual growth rate between 2000 and 2010” (Bughin et al., 2016, p. 2). For countries with oil, this growth was slowed by the falling oil prices. Thus, in some countries GDP growth is decelerating (including Nigeria) and in others it is accelerating (including Ghana, Kenya, and Tanzania).

##### 4.4.1 *Economic Structure*

Many African countries have similar economic structures that depend on the production of raw materials. The African Development Bank argues that most of Africa's growth “reflects an economic structure that depends heavily on primary commodities and the extractive sector, with little progress in labor-intensive manufacturing” (2019, p. 2). In addition, African countries have been actively connected to the rest of the world through

trade for centuries. West African countries in general have a long history of cross-country trade where traders, both male and female, journey considerable distances in order to trade. East Africa was connected across the Indian Ocean to Asian traders and markets.

Nigeria and Ghana are oil rich countries but also have many other important minerals. Nigeria is Africa's largest oil exporter and has the largest natural gas reserves in Africa (World Bank, 2018b). Tanzania has a number of minerals as well and since 2010 it has witnessed further exploration and discoveries of significant quantities of natural gas. In contrast, Rwanda and Kenya have been highly dependent on agriculture as the backbone of the economy. In terms of climate Ghana, Nigeria, and Rwanda have higher rainfall and more fertile soils than either Tanzania or Kenya which are both very susceptible to droughts. All five countries have expanding manufacturing, digital technology goods, and services (World Bank, 2018a, 2018b, 2018c, 2018d, 2018e).

Today Nigeria is the world's 27th largest economy but has the lowest growth rate of any of the five countries. After a decade of over 5% growth, Nigeria's growth hit negative numbers (-1.62%) in 2016 due to falling oil prices since 2014 (World Bank, 2018b). Nevertheless, it is expected to grow at 2.8% in 2019. Ghana has a more varied and diversified economy including hydrocarbons and industrial minerals but also shipping, agriculture (in particular cocoa), and digital technology. Ghana had a GDP growth of 14% in 2011 that fell to around 2.9% by 2014. It has slowly been growing out of that dip due to oil and gas production reaching 8.1% in 2017 (Dontoh & Van Vuuren, 2018). Kenya is more dependent on agriculture and services and had a GDP of 5.7% in 2018 which is projected to increase in the following years (World Bank, 2018d). Due to the genocide, Rwanda had -50% growth in 1994 but with the help of international aid afterwards, by 1995 had 35% growth rate which slowly fell to around 13% by 2002 and was 8% in 2011 and has been around 6% in 2016 and 2017. Finally, Tanzania is able to expand both agriculture and industry and has grown steadily at a moderate rate since 1992. The World Bank argues that Tanzania has "sustained relatively high economic growth over the last decade, averaging 6-7% a year" (World Bank, 2018e). The Annual GDP growth (in %) of the five countries over the last decade is presented in Fig. 4.1. The graph includes also the average for GDP growth of the world, which shows that the five countries' GDP growth has been much higher than the world's average (with only a few exceptions).

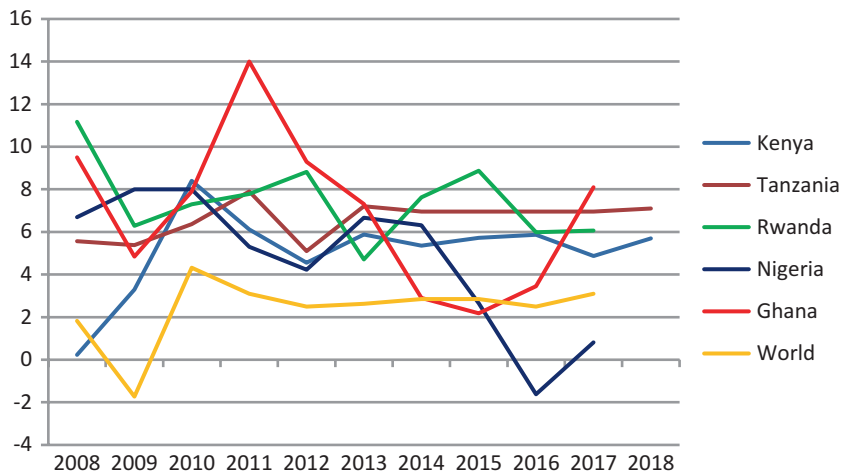


Fig. 4.1 GDP growth (annual in %). (Source: World Bank, <https://data.world-bank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.KD.ZG>)

#### 4.4.2 *Structural Adjustment and Inequality*

Since the 1980s “almost 40 African countries have pursued programs of economic reform supported by balance of payments loans from the IMF [International Monetary Fund] and/or the World Bank, and shaped by the policy conditionality attached to those loans” (Loxley, 1990). These economic reforms, called structural adjustment programmes, asked the participating countries to fundamentally reform their economies including the devaluation of currency, reduction in government employment, privatization, liberalization of markets, and reduction of tariffs and taxes. In addition, reflecting a global trend of an increasing gap between the rich and the poor, leaders in Africa must contend with disparities in resources within and across countries and regions.

Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, and Tanzania went through World Bank imposed structural adjustments of their economies in the 1980s and 1990s. The immediate effect of the structural adjustment programmes was lack and loss of government jobs, growing disparities of wealth, high international competition, as well as political instability. Ghana was seen as the country best able to implement and benefit from structural adjustment programmes. Rwanda was able to mobilize loans post genocide to rebuild

Rwanda. This growth was predominantly government driven and as such stands as an exception to the structural adjustment cutbacks.

All five countries face some level of inequality due to uneven economic growth and have varied approaches to poverty alleviation. In Nigeria “inequality in terms of income and opportunities has been growing rapidly and has adversely affected poverty reduction” (World Bank, 2018a), but this is also the case in Ghana and in Kenya (African Development Bank, 2019). The African Development Bank argues that “Kenya continues to face the challenges of inadequate infrastructure, high income inequality, and high poverty exacerbated by high unemployment, which varies across locations and groups (such as young people)” (2019, p. 156). Out of the five countries, Rwanda has managed to address the issue of inequality the best. The African Development Bank argues that “in terms of social developments, Rwanda has translated its strong growth into reduced poverty and improved equality” (2019, p. 170). The context of inequality and growing disparities is reflected in the concern that leaders in Africa give to the social as well as economic work that they do. The importance of creating opportunities or better futures and building nations stood out in many interviews, especially among youth leaders.

#### 4.4.3 *Informality and Corruption*

Today, young people in Africa cannot expect government employment and are more likely to be informally or self-employed (Chakravarty, Das, & Vaillant, 2017). Women in Informal Employment: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO) use a definition of the informal economy particularly relevant for the African context. They define the informal economy as “the diversified set of economic activities, enterprises, jobs and workers that are not regulated or protected by the state” (WIEGO, 2019). The African Development Bank argues that “one of the most salient features of labor markets in Africa is the high prevalence of informal employment, the default option for a large majority of the growing labor force [...] While data on informal employment are sketchy, it is clear that Africa has the highest rate of estimated informality in the world, at 72 percent of non-agriculture employment—and as high as 90 percent in some countries” (African Development Bank, 2019, p. xvii). The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates that 85.8% of African employment is informal (ILO, 2018). They go on to add that “globally, when the level of education increases, the level of informality decreases” (ILO, 2018).

Some youth leaders have turned this unstable position into entrepreneurship and continuous side hustles. Informality has also had repercussions for growth throughout the economic sector. Bughin et al. argue that that African companies “grow faster than their peers in the rest of the world, and they are more profitable than these peers in most sectors” (2016, p. 23). They go on to state that in wholesale and retail, food and agri-processing, health care, financial services, light manufacturing and construction, large African companies are both more profitable and faster growing than global peers. Nevertheless, although there are many companies in Africa, there are few large companies outside of South Africa, partly due to a high degree of informality (Bughin et al., 2016). Particularly difficult is the transition from small companies to large ones due to corruption, monopolies, and other barriers to entry, as long-term capital is harder to come by than in Europe or the USA.

In any system with large disparities of wealth there are ready entries for corruption. The five countries of our study are no exception. Corruption has economic as well as social costs. It was frequently brought up in our survey and interviews with African leaders, who voiced their concern and demand for integrity and honesty among leaders. All countries make varying attempts to eradicate corruption, with limited success so far. Adebani and Obadare (2011) argue that in Nigeria, for example, economics and politics depend on existing networks of patronage and clientelism that have consolidated and expanded, causing corruption to remain a critical issue. They argue that as such, anti-corruption campaigns pose “serious danger of the material basis of elites and the possibility of their continued reproduction” and thus are ferociously attacked (2011, p. 187). They add that the progress of anti-corruption campaigns is “often determined by the changing location and fortunes” of social forces in the country (2011, p. 188). In particular they argue that the meshing of the dominance of rule centred in a patron with that of dominance of rational-legal bureaucratic power, means that any challenge to corruption comes about in the context of specific politics that ironically was created within the same structural order. As such, the overall structure ends up “neutralizing the emergent subversive institutions (law and organization) and the elements organized around it” (2011, p. 189).

In spite of the entrenched nature of corruption, it was highly criticized by our respondents. Respondents favoured integrity and wanted change. The youth especially critiqued the unequal societies built through corruption and expressed desire for structures that helped others, pulled up soci-



ety, or built the nation, rather than the individual or corporation. Leaders in Africa then face the challenge of transforming entrenched practices or finding ways in which to operate in spaces they would like to change.

## 4.5 SOCIAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC CONTEXT

Most nation states in Africa are around 50 years old, although they contain societies that are a lot older. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, age and gender have been dividing lines for power and authority in Africa that were further enhanced in the colonial and postcolonial context. It is not a surprise, then, that the IMF argues that “being young and being female both serve as disadvantages in the labor market, and that these disadvantages are additive” (Chakravarty et al., 2017, p. 7). These disadvantages are enhanced by the context of informality. Nevertheless, what should be a surprise is that compared to the rest of the world, Africa is doing better on both fronts of youth and gender participation in the labour market (ILO, 2016). The ILO argues in their *World Employment Social Outlook: Trends for Youth* 2016 report that, in terms of both gender and age, there are large differences between the statistics for North Africa and for sub-Saharan Africa, where North Africa is doing a lot less well than the rest of Africa. As the five countries of our study are sub-Saharan countries, this chapter focuses on the statistics for sub-Saharan Africa in reference to youth and women.

### 4.5.1 *Urbanization*

Urbanization is often thought of as a way to boost the economies of countries. Cities are seen as some of the most economically dynamic regions of the world as urban productivity is “more than double that of the countryside” (Bughin et al., 2016, p. 6). Saghir and Santoro argue that the GDP of many sub-Saharan African countries “is concentrated, and even reliant, on the productivity of its urban centers” (2018). Nevertheless, “Africa is currently the least urbanized continent, but its urbanization rate of 3.5 percent per year is the fastest in the world” (Population Connection, 2019). The increasing urban population has political and economic consequences and the change is particularly rapid. “In 1980, only 28 percent of Africans lived in urban areas. Today, the number of Africans living in cities is 40 percent, and is projected to grow to 50 percent by 2030” (Population Connection, 2019).

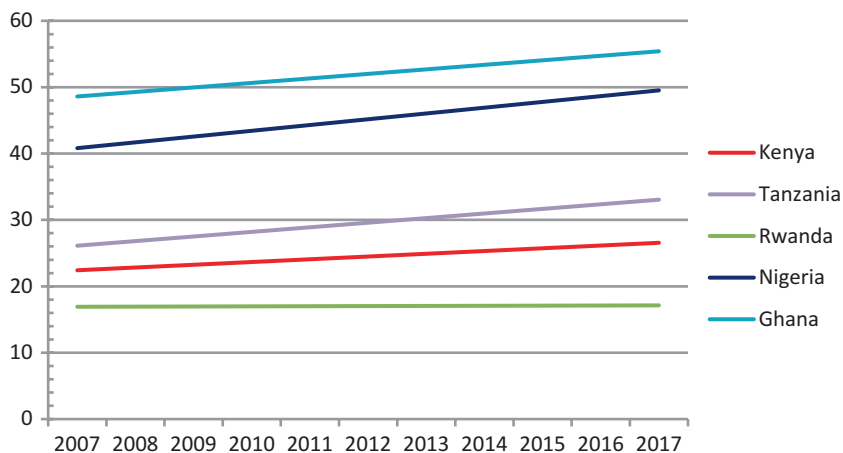


Fig. 4.2 Urbanization (%). (Source: <https://www.statista.com/>)

Yet again, urbanization is a space where the diversity of African countries is important. There is variability in the levels of urbanization by region of Africa and by country. In general, West Africa is more urbanized than East Africa. For instance, in 2017 Ghana was 55% urban and Nigeria 49% while Tanzania was 33%, Kenya 26%, and Rwanda 17% urban (Statista, 2019a, 2019b, 2019c, 2019d, 2019e). The rate of urbanization is also higher in West Africa, which in between 2007 and 2017 was the highest in Nigeria (8.7%) and also high in Ghana (6.8%), whereas it was also relatively high for Tanzania (6.9%), but lower for Kenya (4.1%) and stable for Rwanda (0.2%). This is reflected in Fig. 4.2.

In addition, Lagos is the largest city in Africa with a population of 11.2 million people (Population Connection, 2019). Because of the political and economic importance of cities, leaders often arise in these spaces. In this volume we focus on leadership in rural as well as urban areas to get a wide sense of the different leadership challenges in different African settings.

#### 4.5.2 Youth

Unlike the rest of the world, Africa is marked by its youthful population. Across Africa, since independence every generation is seen as fundamentally different from the previous one. The distinctions between the youth and the elderly and age in general have been mobilized in politics, labour dis-

putes, and cultural productions. Gray argues that “while in most areas of the world populations are decreasing or flatlining, in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa they’re increasing. Nearly half of the world’s young live in Sub-Saharan Africa” (2018, p. 1). While the large young population and its difference from past generations is striking today, it is not a new phenomenon. Rather, it is made more visible because in other parts of the world the populations have grown older. What is interesting is the changing dynamics of the youth demographics—they are more educated, they have a higher access to technology, they are more connected to the rest of the world, and they will live longer. And finally, and most importantly, although a larger overall number, there are less youth as a proportion of the population in Africa today than previous decades.

This high youth population was once seen as a burden to Africa, but in a rapidly ageing world it is now seen as a highly valuable asset and as a growing labour force. Important to the conceptual shift about African youth from burden to asset is a change in the demographics of African countries. While Africa remains the region of the world with the most youthful populations, due to expanded life expectancies, much lower birth rates, and innovations in health and healthcare, the population under age 18 no longer makes up the majority of the population of most African countries. This means that the majority of the population of Africa is of productive age, that is, between 18 and 65 years of age. The economic potential released when this occurs is called the demographic growth dividend (Drummond, Thakoor, & Yu, 2014).

A similar change occurred in Asia and Latin America in the 1970s and contributed to the economic growth that is reaching its peak at present. Africa’s own demographic transition started later, in the mid-1980s (Drummond et al., 2014, p. 7). Drummond et al. (2014) argue that Africa should reap the benefits of this dividend until around 2090 although about 29 African countries will peak around 2050. They also argue that by 2060 Africa will have the highest working age population of any continent. Drummond et al. argue that “with declining mortality and fertility, Africa’s share of the working age population will increase from about 54 percent in 2010 to peak at about 64 percent in 2090. The rising share of Africa’s working age population is increasing its productive potential at a time when most of the advanced economies face an ageing population. Africa’s share of the global working age population is thus projected to increase from 12.6 percent in 2010 to over 41 percent by 2100” (2014, p. 4).

At present in most African countries, over 50% of the population is between 18 and 30 years, creating a youth bulge. This is the space of greatest potential. So, while Africa is young, it is no longer characterized by a larger dependent than productive population, and its productive population have years, decades even, of production ahead of them. Thus, Africa has increasing numbers of youth entering the productive age (18–65 years) while the rest of the world have increasing numbers of elderly leaving it. However, the ILO points out that youth unemployment has been increasing faster than the unemployment of the rest of the population. Partly this is due to the youth bulge where there is the highest total number of people to employ in the youth category, if half of your productive population is between 18 and 30 years old. For instance, in Ghana “the national unemployment rate has hovered around 5–6% in recent years, but is notably higher among Ghanaian youth (10–12% between 2010 and 2013)” (ICEF Monitor, 2016b).

Although according to the ILO, in 2017 youth unemployment in sub-Saharan Africa was the lowest of any continent, the nature of available employment is poor quality, being of low productivity, low income, and low opportunity for growth, and usually being irregular and informal (ILO, 2016). The ILO argue that 90% of new jobs are in the informal economy (Muchira, 2017). Bengelstorff writes that “at no point in its history did Africa have a more educated youth population than today. But at no point in its history did so many young people compete for so few formal jobs” (2019). In the IMF study of eight African countries, including Nigeria, Kenya, Ghana, and Tanzania, “71.7% of the working youth were engaged in self-employment” (Chakravarty et al., 2017, p. 2). The African Development bank argues that “Africa’s labor force is projected to be nearly 40 percent larger by 2030. If current trends continue, only half of new labor force entrants will find employment, and most of the jobs will be in the informal sector. This implies that close to 100 million young people could be without jobs” (2019, p. 45).

Leadership in Africa is often produced through a combination of formal and informal channels. However, access to formal employment, including in government, is highly dependent on higher levels of education and thus favours men. Bengelstorff notes however that youth no longer look to the government for work, but rather to entrepreneurs. For instance, she cites a young man in Ghana, William Senyo, who states that “political leadership has failed us consistently. The entrepreneurs have

actually shown more capacity to lift us up than our political leaders. They have created opportunities” (2019). The youth also look to technology to be able to provide a source of livelihood.

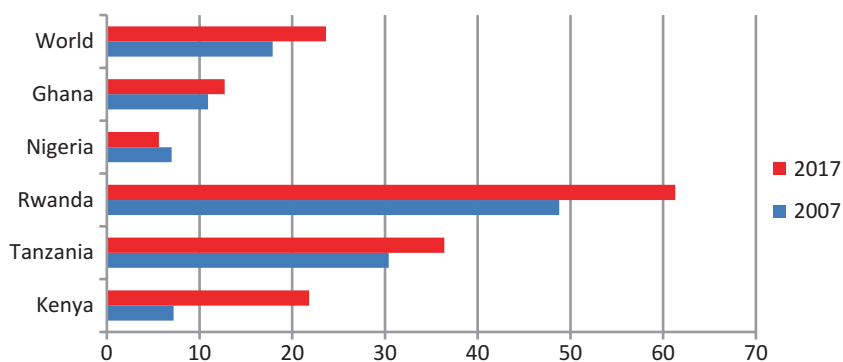
### 4.5.3 *Gender*

Sub-Saharan Africa has a low gender gap in youth unemployment and according to the IMF, “the ratio of female to male labor force participation rates is higher in Sub-Saharan Africa than in any other region” (Chakravarty et al., 2017). In sub-Saharan Africa the gender gap has remained pretty constant for the last 25 years (at between 4 and 6 percentage points) (ILO, 2016). This means that young women are only slightly less employed than young men in sub-Saharan Africa. In North African countries, on the other hand, the gender gap has become worse between 1991 (15% points) and 2016 (21% points) (ILO, 2016). In addition, although the female labour force participation rates are higher in sub-Saharan Africa, they mask underlying challenges for women. As Chakravarty et al. state, “A large majority of employed women work in vulnerable employment. In addition, youth unemployment rates in Sub-Saharan Africa are double those of adult unemployment” (2017). They go on to argue that, in addition, women are employed differently from men. They are less likely to be employees or employers, but rather they are likely to be self-employed or family workers; in other words, in informal work.

Nkomo and Ngambi (2009) argue that there have been few studies of women leadership in Africa and of the few that existed by 2008, they focused mainly on South Africa, Nigeria, and Ghana and only a small percentage focused on leadership styles, while most focused on obstacles or barriers to women’s advancement. This is understandable considering that “discrimination, whether overt or institutionalized, can diminish young women’s job prospects especially when they are unable to accurately signal their abilities in the formal labor market and employers rely on implicit judgments of their abilities” (Chakravarty et al., 2017). Nkomo and Ngambi found that the main barriers that hinder access and ascent to leadership and management for women were “early socialization, limited educational attainment, multiple roles, gender stereotyping, subtle discrimination, and organizational policies and procedures” (Nkomo & Ngambi, 2009, p. 55). A number of these challenges were highlighted in our interviews and surveys.

In addition, Nkomo and Ngambi (2009) argue that women have fared far better in political leadership and public sector management than in the private formal sector. For instance, they mention President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia, as well as a number of female deputy/vice presidents (Uganda, the Gambia, Zimbabwe, South Africa, and Burundi). Using statistics from the Inter-Parliamentary Union, Chalaby argues that “in every year since 2004, Rwanda has had more women in parliament than any other country around the world. For the last four years, it has had a record 64% of its lower house made up of women” (Chalaby, 2017). Although women hold 38% of parliament seats in Ethiopia (World Bank, 2018c), in 2018 the prime minister of Ethiopia, Abiy Ahmed, appointed a gender balanced cabinet announcing that “our women ministers will disprove the old aphorism that women can’t lead” (Allo, 2018). In addition, Sahle-Work Zewde became Ethiopia’s first female president. While the president is a symbolic role, powerful cabinet positions also went to women, including that of defence.

Nevertheless, World Bank data for 2017 show the large variation between countries in Africa of women’s political participation, where Rwanda has 61.3%, Tanzania has 36.4%, Kenya has 21.8%, Ghana has 12.7%, and Nigeria has 5.6% women in parliament (World Bank, 2018c) (see Fig. 4.3). The data show a higher than world average proportion of seats held by women in Rwanda and Tanzania and lower than average in the other three countries.



**Fig. 4.3** Proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments (%). (Source: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SG.GEN.PARL.ZS>)

#### 4.5.4 *Education*

As Africa's demographics shift to be predominantly of productive age, their education greatly affects their ability to transform or lead transformations of African economies. Africa's young population means that there is a growing demand for tertiary education and Africans seek this education both locally and abroad. Since 2004, all five countries that make up the focus of this book's study of leadership offer primary education for free (up to eight years). Beyond that, there is a great variety of education levels across the five countries allowing some countries to take better advantage of the demographic dividend of their youth bulge. Importantly, some countries started expanding their high school and university offering in the 1980s which has allowed them to educate a significant number of students who make up today's youth bulge. This has allowed people to translate informal self-employment into formal entrepreneurship.

Nigeria launched the Universal Basic Education (UBE) in 1999 and made UBE free since 2004 for the first nine years of schooling. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization/International Bureau of Education (UNESCO/IBU) estimates that in 2005/2006 at the primary level (first six years) the net enrolment ratio (share of children of official primary school age that are enrolled in primary school) was 84.2% with more boys enrolled than girls. However, a smaller percentage (77.7%) finish primary school and an even smaller percentage (50%) go on to junior secondary (UNESCO/IBU, 2011a, p. 12). The overall estimated secondary school enrolment rate is 31.4% which leaves over seven million young people not enrolled (UNESCO/IBU, 2011a, p. 16). In addition, there was a massive decline in enrolment from 2006 to 2008 due to attacks on schools by extremists, then there was a slight increase only to fall again in 2014 due to falling oil prices and declining economy (UNESCO, 2018c). According to David Ajikobi (2018), since 2006 this net enrolment rate for primary schools reduced to 65% by 2016, with completion rates also dropping. In addition, Nigeria maintains a disparity between boy and girl education with boys participating at higher rates than girls. Tertiary enrolment is increasing in Nigeria and "is projected to more than double from 2.3 million students in 2013 to 4.8 million by 2024" (ICEF Monitor, 2015).

In 1996 Ghana instituted the Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) programme for all children of school going age (6–14 years) which was amended in 2008 to include two years of pre-

primary education. This includes both primary and junior high school. In 2007 for primary schools the “net enrolment ratio was estimated at 83.4%” (UNESCO/IBU, 2011b, p. 13) which rose to a high of 87% in 2014 and by 2017 was around 84.59% (UNESCO, 2018d). For junior high schools “the net enrolment ratio was estimated at 53%” in 2008 (UNESCO/IBU, 2011b, p. 13) showing a considerable reduction of enrolment, although the education remains free. At the level of senior high schools, the gross enrolment ratio was estimated at only 32.2% in 2008, but increased to 56% by 2017 (UNESCO, 2018d). Ghana has high tertiary education participation, rising from 8.63% in 2008 to 16.6% in 2017. In primary education from 2012 through 2014 there was little difference between girl and boy child education participation, and since 2015 girls have slightly out participated boys. In secondary school the gap remains but is rapidly closing with little difference in 2017. The gap is widest at the tertiary level.

Since 2003, similar to Nigeria and Ghana, Rwanda had nine years of Basic Education including pre-primary, primary, and lower secondary. In 2003 the estimated net enrolment ratio was 78.3% but increased to 93% and 95.8% in 2004 and 2007 respectively (UNESCO/IBU, 2011c, p. 11). Rwanda maintained these high participation rates through 2017 with a rate of 93.93% (UNESCO, 2018e). Throughout primary education since 2008 girls have had higher participation rates than boys, with a shift to a slight increase in boy participation in 2016 for the first time (UNESCO, 2018e). In spite of these immense increases in primary education, at the secondary level the net enrolment in 2007 was only 13.1%, only slightly up from 9.4% in 2000 (UNESCO/IBU, 2011c, p. 17). Nevertheless, by 2016, it had reached 27.67% with girls out numbering boys. Tertiary level is the only place where boys outnumber girls in Rwanda with an overall participation rate of 7.64% in 2017 (UNESCO, 2018e).

Kenya instituted free primary education in 2002 and is slowly moving towards an education system structured similarly to countries in West Africa. In Kenya, there is marked disparity between cities and rural areas in pre-primary education. At the primary level (first eight years) the estimated net enrolment rate increased from 77.3% in 2002 to 86.5% in 2006 and the completion rate increased from 60% in 2001 to 81% in 2007 (UNESCO/IBU, 2011d). At the secondary level, the gross enrolment ratio increased from 25.7% in 2002 to 32.2% in 2006 with an almost 90% completion rate (UNESCO/IBU, 2011d). By 2009, the gross enrolment rate had reached 58% and the net enrolment rate was 48.3% (UNESCO, 2018a). Finally, tertiary education enrolment significantly increased from



4% in 2009 to 11.66% in 2016. This increase came from both public and private increases in higher education institutions. In 2016 there were “68 higher education institutions in Kenya, up from 58 since 2011 alone. Twenty-two are public and the rest—which are responsible for the greatest expansion in Kenya’s higher education capacity—are private” (ICEF Monitor, 2016a). However, at all levels rates were higher for boys than girls. By 2016 gross enrolment ratio are equal between boys and girls at primary level for the first time but by the tertiary level have become substantially different again. In addition, “learning outcomes are better in urban areas, non-arid areas and non-poor households” (Uwezo, 2016, p. 7).

Tanzania has compulsory primary education lasting seven years. Kiswahili is the medium of instruction in primary schools but switches to English in secondary schools and university. Also, instruction in mainland Tanzania and in Zanzibar varies in content and execution. In mainland Tanzania in 2008, the estimated net enrolment ratio was 97.2% dramatically up from 66% in 2001 (UNESCO/IBU, 2011e). In Zanzibar, the estimated net enrolment in 2006 was 75.7% (UNESCO/IBU, 2011e). In fact, Tanzania’s total net primary enrolment increased profoundly between 1998 and 2008, increasing from 49% to reach over 96%. Sadly after 2008 it began to drop again, to reach only 80% by 2014 (Knoema, 2018; UNESCO, 2018b). For secondary school (forms 1–4) the net enrolment ratio was 24.4% in 2008, up from only 8.4% in 2004 (UNESCO/IBU, 2011e) and dropped again to 23.2% in 2017 (UNESCO, 2018b). In 2015 Tanzania had a participation rate in tertiary education of 3.92%. Generally, since 2010 girls have slightly outnumbered boys in primary education but this switches dramatically in secondary education when in 2017 it was about equal (UNESCO, 2018b). Similar to Kenya, at the tertiary level this disparity is most pronounced with men participating almost twice as much as women (UNESCO, 2018b).

Overall, enrolment is much higher in primary school than in secondary education in the five countries. In most countries, enrolment figures have gone up over the last decade with the exception of Tanzania and Nigeria. Tanzania had the highest enrolment rates in 2009, but they decreased to just below Kenya, Rwanda, and Ghana over the decade. Nigeria had a massive decline in enrolment due to Boko Haram attacks on schools and the sharp decline in the economy with dropping prices of oil.

In terms of studying abroad, Ghana “is now the second-largest source of Sub-Saharan students in the US, after only Nigeria and after having

edged out Kenya for the number two spot as of the 2014/15 academic year” (ICEF Monitor, 2016b). Institutions such as the British Council, who encourage students to study in the UK, project that “Nigeria will lead the world in tertiary-age population growth through 2024. The country’s population of 18-to-22 year-olds is forecast to grow from 16.1 million in 2013 to 22.5 million by 2024” (ICEF Monitor, 2015) while “Kenya will have a population of 5.7 million college-aged students by 2024, up from 4.2 million in 2011” (ICEF Monitor, 2016a). As such, soon Africans of university age will outnumber university aged people in other parts of the world. Students abroad sometimes remain there contributing to the “brain drain” but also often do not settle permanently abroad and return with different skills and ideas of leadership that complement those already in use locally.

#### 4.6 AFRICAN LEADERS AND LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

Education, in combination with the youth bulge, is rapidly changing workspaces in Africa. The large number of educated youth entering employment, both informal and formal, means that the workforce is more ready with ideas, more capable to carry out tasks and to innovate, and most importantly, more demanding of their leaders. The contrast between youth expectations and older leadership, the economy or the institutional structure’s ability to meet those expectations, were raised as leadership challenges by a number of leaders in our survey and interviews and is an important challenge with which African leaders are grappling.

Leaders in Africa must deal with countries that are internally and regionally diverse, but have similar historical events and economic or political restructuring such as the timing of independence, structural adjustment, and demographic change. Although facing similar demographic, economic, technological challenges, or circumstances, African leaders draw on a diverse history and tradition of authority and leadership to frame their actions which produce different leadership styles in different countries. Because of the different kinds of local authority developed in conjunction with, or in resistance to, colonial and postcolonial state authority, African leaders often have to have to negotiate authority on multiple levels and especially navigate authority vested in age, gender, and kinship ties when working in business, organizations, or government.

After a number of lean years following the structural adjustment period of the 1980s, Africa is currently continuing an economic growth spurt that took off around 2000, producing an exciting moment for leadership in Africa. The expanding economies create new opportunities for leadership as well as new leaders. Growing as well, however, is the divide between the wealthy and the poor, and between youth and general employment, enhancing already existing social divides. In addition, both youth and women are over-represented in the informal sector which remains a large part of African economies. The expanding African economies are partially a result of urbanization, education access, and the demographic shift from predominantly dependent population structures to predominantly productive ones. Today, the population of most countries in Africa is in the productive ages of 18–65 years old, allowing for the potential of a demographic dividend. This potential is enhanced by the increased access to education and increased urbanization. At the same time, a growing proportion of the educated and of the workforce is female. This means that leaders must deal with a rapidly changing economic environment, new technology, and a new and newly educated workforce, demanding flexibility, adaptability, and continued learning.

Stella Nkomo argues that leadership in Africa has been understood through two interconnected discourses: one of transformative change to create a renaissance and the other of persistent failure (2011). She argues that “both reduce the causes of Africa’s contemporary problems to a crisis in leadership and management” which she sees as dangerous because it hides the connection between the colonial past and the postcolonial present (2011, p. 368). In place of these interconnected discourses of renaissance or failure, Nkomo calls for a descriptive rather than prescriptive study of leadership in Africa. This volume presents such a descriptive study of leaders and leadership in business and organizations in Africa. It emphasizes the context, doubts, struggles, and successes of leaders and presents their experience and advice on how to deal with the rapidly changing environment in which they find themselves. While focusing on leadership experience generally, the volume specifically highlights the challenge of mid-level leaders in the rural government in Rwanda; leaders in science and academic scholarship in Ghana; project management leaders in large business firms in Nigeria; gendered experiences of leaders in private business and governmental boards in Kenya; and intergenerational dynamics of leaders in donor and non-governmental organizations in Tanzania.

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PART II

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Case Studies and Survey Findings



# Methodology

*Eva Jordans and Helen Spencer-Oatey*

## 5.1 RESEARCH APPROACH

As explained in Chap. 1, “Introduction”, a key aim of this book is to hear and share the voices of local leaders, and for that reason, we chose a case study approach as our primary source of data. We wanted to include a range of leadership contexts, from both a national perspective and an organizational/sector perspective, and to gather the viewpoints of senior and junior leaders. Our case studies focus on the following:

- Leadership in science in Ghana
- Leadership in business in Nigeria
- Leading across the generations in Tanzania
- Leadership in the private sector in Kenya
- Leadership in rural development in Rwanda

Needless to say, these case studies can only provide a snapshot of leadership in the vast continent of Africa, with so many countries and sectors.

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However, our aim was to gain as rich insights, probing as deeply as possible into the range of experiences and viewpoints of different people within any one context, and then to explore what similarities and differences exist across the various contexts.

Our selection of these leadership contexts was partially opportunistic but also driven by theoretical considerations to acknowledge the diversity of this continent. We sought out local participants who were interested in the issue of leadership and who were keen to work with one of the book authors in developing and co-authoring a case study. Each of them is an African leader who is involved in developing and supporting leaders. Our broad selection criteria were that countries in both East and West Africa should be included and that all the organizational/sectoral contexts should be different. That (along with constraints on the length of the book) led to five case studies being developed.

Having carried out the case studies, we then used the emerging findings to design a follow-up survey for use with a much broader range of people—people working in any sector in any African country who were willing to comment on their perceptions and experiences of leadership and of being helped to develop as a leader. The aim of this survey was twofold: (a) to examine the broader applicability of the case study findings and (b) to help identify and validate the main leadership needs emerging from all the data sources.

## 5.2 THE CASE STUDIES

Two main data collection methods were used within each of the case studies: an initial survey and semi-structured interviews.

### 5.2.1 *The Initial Survey*

The aim of the initial survey was to collect some preliminary data that would inform the design of the interview questions. The content of this initial survey was drafted on the basis of discussions with leaders in Kenya and Tanzania during the early stages of the project. From these discussions, it became apparent that the following issues were important to the people concerned:

- Perceptions of hierarchy
- Leadership styles and the vocabulary to talk about them

- What it means to be a “good leader”
- Managing challenges, such as change and innovation
- Reasons for losing respect for leaders

As a result, we designed the initial survey to cover the following aspects (see Annex A for the full questionnaire):

- Demographic information on respondents’ nationality, gender, and amount of leadership experience (Questions 1 and 10)
- Three Likert-type questions on perceptions of hierarchy and leadership styles, probing both attitudes towards these issues as well as people’s experiences of them in the workplace (Questions 2, 5, and 7)
- A number of open questions to allow for more issues to emerge that could be usefully followed up in the interviews (Questions 3, 4, 6, 8, and 9)

To probe people’s perceptions of hierarchy, we used one of the power distance items from the Global Leadership and Organizational Behaviour Effectiveness (GLOBE) study (House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004), both society practices (as is) and society values (should be) formats. Regarding different leadership styles and the lack of vocabulary to talk about them, we decided to use Redeker, de Fries, Rouckhout, Vermeren, and Filip (2014) leadership circumplex (see Chap. 2), as it offers a systematic way of conceptualizing and organizing a range of different styles. We used the labels and descriptions of the different styles, but instead of asking respondents to rate the items only in terms of frequency (either in relation to themselves or someone else), as in the original study, we also asked them to make judgements on the suitability of each of the styles for addressing the challenges they were facing in their context. This latter question linked with the previous open item in the survey, which asked respondents to list the challenges they were facing in their contexts.

Information about the respondents is given within each of the case study chapters. Since each case study focused on a specific leadership context, this to a certain extent determined the range of participants asked to complete the initial survey. Moreover, most were contacted via the case study authors’ existing networks. In that sense, the sample was not random. However, the primary purpose of the initial questionnaire was not to conduct a large-scale survey with generalizable results; rather the aim, as explained above, was to gain some preliminary findings which could feed into the planning of the interviews.

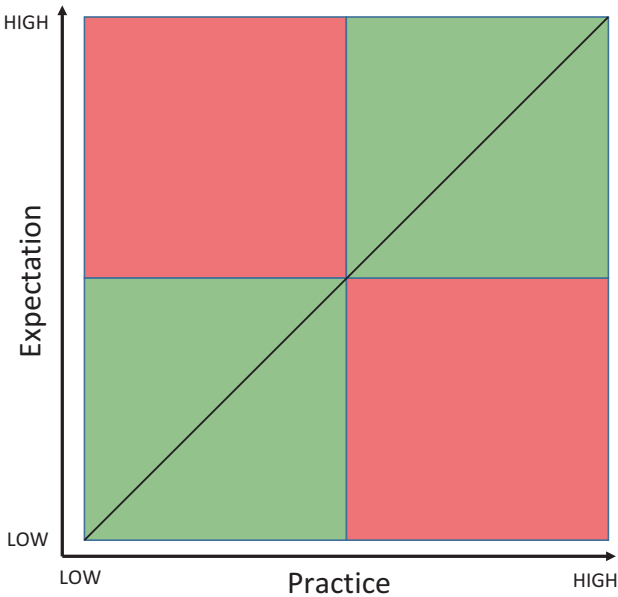


Fig. 5.1 Perceptions of hierarchy matrix

The survey was hosted on SurveyMonkey and links to it were distributed by email to the authors' networks. When sufficient responses had been acquired, the full set of responses was exported from SurveyMonkey into Excel and analysed further by grouping the answers according to common keywords.

For each batch of case study survey results, the Likert-type items were analysed in the following way. The responses to the question on perceptions of hierarchy were plotted on a matrix, with ratings of perceived practice shown on the x-axis and ratings of personal preferences/expectations shown on the y-axis, as shown in Fig. 5.1. The quadrants shaded green represent broadly acceptable situations for respondents whose responses fall there, in that their practice ratings are similar to their preferences or expectations. The quadrants shaded red represent situations that are broadly more problematic, in that people's experiences in practice are different from their preferences. When respondents' ratings of their preferences or expectations are identical to their ratings of their experiences in practice, their scores will fall on the diagonal. The closer people's scores are to the diagonal, the more satisfied they are likely to be. The survey findings on perceptions of hierarchy are reported in this way in each of the case study chapters.

People's ratings of leadership styles are shown on Redeker et al.'s (2014) circumplex. Once again, preference and experience are shown in the same diagram. The concentric circles, numbered 1–6, indicate both the degree of commonness and the degree of suitability. The relative proportion of green shading, amber shading, and red shading indicates the perceived suitability of that style for the given context, with green representing the most suitable styles, amber the average suitable styles and red representing the least suitable styles. For calculating the most suitable styles, the ratings 5 and 6 of the Likert scale were averaged, for the average styles the scale rating 3 and 4 were averaged, and for the least suitable style the Likert ratings for 1 and 2 were averaged. The mean rating of the frequency of occurrence of each type of leadership style is also shown on the circumplex, using blue dotted lines. An example is shown in Fig. 5.2.

## Actual Styles Versus Perceived Suitability

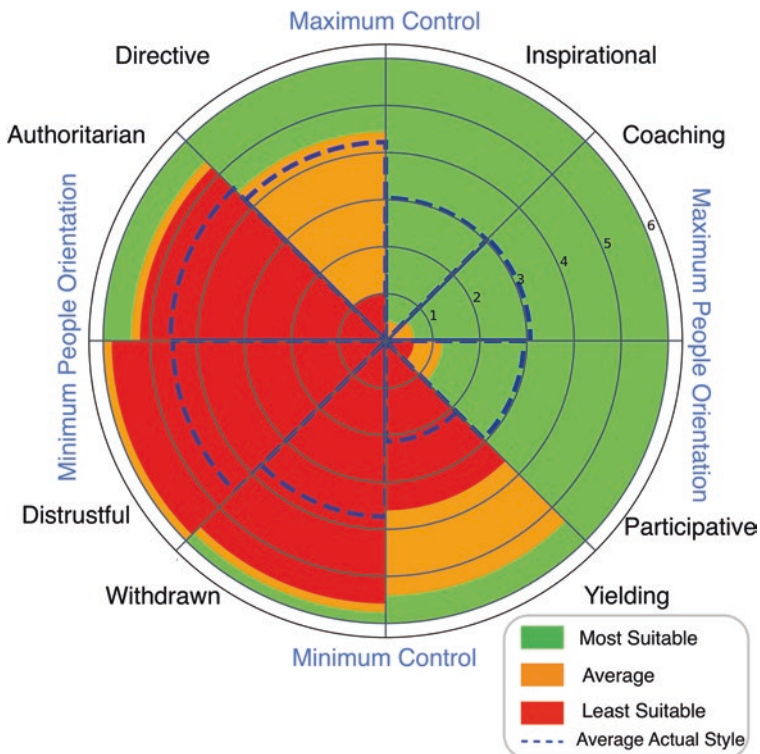


Fig. 5.2 Leadership styles: styles experienced and their perceived suitability

The responses to the open questions were exported to Word and categorized/grouped into themes. Some of these themes were the same as the key concepts used in the coding later. On the one hand, this data then fed into the design of the semi-structured interviews; on the other, they were used to complement the interview data, adding occasional further insights and examples.

### 5.2.2 *The Interviews*

Following the collection of the initial survey data, an interview guide was developed (see Annex B). Seventeen indicative questions were listed, covering the following broad aspects of leadership:

- Personal narrative about becoming a leader
- Beliefs about leadership and experiences of it
- Challenges and successes of being a leader
- Developing and improving as a leader
- Perspectives on leadership in Africa

The interviews were all carried out by the case study authors in English or in the local language. In some cases initial interviews were conducted jointly for training purposes. The local collaborators were given advice on conducting interviews, including the need to be flexible and not to follow the indicative questions in a slavish manner.

In terms of the interviewees, a diverse group of participants was sought, especially both senior and young participants, but also both women and men, and this was successfully achieved. Understandably, though, participants to a certain extent self-selected, as those with a keen interest in leadership volunteered to participate and generously gave up their time to do so. Each case study ultimately involved a group of around 40–50 leaders, usually with the majority completing the initial survey (around 20–30), plus around 10–20 interviewees.

The majority of the interviewees were different from the people who completed the initial survey, although in a small number of cases (indicated in the case study chapters) individuals participated in both. Each interview took between one and two hours to conduct. While the interviews touched on many of the same issues as the initial survey, the goal here was to obtain rich, in-depth data. Participants were asked to provide insights into their

leadership experiences, to recount specific personal experiences in being and becoming a leader, and to talk about specific challenges and successes.

Notes were taken during the interviews, which were later transcribed. Each interviewee then reviewed the draft transcript and made small amendments if necessary. They were also asked to pick a pseudonym so that their stories could be presented anonymously if needed.

The interview transcripts were then imported into the R Qualitative Data Analysis (RQDA) software. Conventional content analysis was used to analyse the interview transcripts, since a case study describes a phenomenon in which existing theory or research literature is limited. Text mining of the transcripts yielded a list of terms that were used frequently. Then the transcripts were read through numerous times to identify key themes (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). This ultimately allowed five categories and 15 codes, along with names for the categories, to flow from the data. The category and code structure is presented in Annex C. The case studies have been written up and organized around these five themes and keywords.

The coding was done by one of the chapter authors and, during the write-up of each of the case study chapters, the respective material was used by each of the case study co-authors. The code attribute function in RQDA was used to explore and report on any associations between codes and attributes, such as age, gender, and in some cases type of organization. As stories are powerful in conveying a message, extensive personal leadership experiences from the interviews and the initial survey are presented in the case study chapters (interview comments in text boxes and survey comments in italics) in order to provide rich data to illustrate the findings.

As explained above, each case study relates to a specific country and leadership context or sphere. However, to ensure coherence across the chapters, each case has been prepared by combining the initial survey and interview data and using the following framework:

1. Introduction
2. *Context*: Specific context of the case study and background
3. The case study data
4. Perceptions of hierarchy
5. Leadership styles and the need for change
6. *Leaders' diversity*: Impact of gender and age
7. *Leaders' attributes*: Perceived qualities of a good leader
8. *The road to becoming a leader*: Leadership Development
9. *Conclusions and discussion*: Overall conclusions and discussion of new insights on the changes in leadership of today's leaders



### 5.3 FOLLOW-UP SURVEY

The follow-up survey was designed to explore and validate on a broader scale the leadership issues and development needs emerging from the case studies. Since the case studies focused on just five African countries and were also topic/sector specific within each of those countries, we felt it would be useful to examine the perceptions of a wider range of people in different African countries who were working in a broader set of contexts. We therefore developed an instrument that did not replicate the issues probed in the initial survey, but rather picked up on those that had emerged from the case study research.

Many case study participants commented on the need for a change in traditional leadership styles and expressed a desire for personal self-development as a leader. So, we designed the survey around these aspects, using the framework shown in Fig. 5.3.

In other words, we decided to probe five aspects of personal Leadership Development, plus routes to developing as a leader:

- *Self*: Me as a leader
- *Employee*: Me and the employees I am responsible for
- *Team*: Me and my team
- *Organization*: Me and my organization
- *Community/society*: Me and the wider community/society
- *Leadership Development*: Routes to becoming a leader

With the help of the case study data, along with insights we had gained from previous research, we drafted five to eight items to probe each of the



Fig. 5.3 Levels of Leadership Development

constructs listed above. Building on the design of the Global Education Profiler (GEP), developed by Spencer-Oatey and Dauber (2015) at the University of Warwick, we asked respondents to answer each of the items in two ways:

- “Importance to me” (IMP) (i.e. how important it is to you to practise or experience this at work, e.g. for carrying out projects well and/or for people’s well-being)

and

- “Frequency of occurrence” (FOO) (i.e. how often you actually practise or experience this in your workplace)

This enabled us to examine not only the issues of importance to the respondents, but also the size of the gap between the importance they attach to something and the extent to which they are experiencing it in their context. This information then enables prioritizing of the development issues.

The draft items were piloted with a small number of people, including with several African respondents, and then near-finalized. This resulted in a total of 33 items, each to be answered in two ways, along with an open question at the end so that people could make any comments they wished about the survey and/or their experiences of leadership. The survey also included several demographic questions: gender, age, nationality, amount of leadership experience, and work context. (See Annex D for a copy of the English version of the survey.) After this, a French version was commissioned, with back translation used to ensure equivalence of meaning. Decentring led to some minor tweaking of the English version. (See Brislin, 1970, for an explanation of the concepts of back translation and decentring.)

Once the survey had been finalized, it was entered into Qualtrics software and formatted so that it could be completed on a mobile as well as on a tablet or desktop. Invitations to participate in the survey (with links to the English and French versions of the survey) were sent out to a range of leadership networks in Africa. In addition, invitations to participate were posted on LinkedIn and professional websites such as eLearning Africa, and individualized emails were sent to other professional contacts, asking for their help both to participate and to forward the link to other contacts. We particularly tried to involve leaders from African countries not represented in the case studies. A forced-choice item on nationality prevented respondents continuing with the survey if they were not from

Africa. In total, 240 completed questionnaires were received, with respondents from 31 different countries in all five regions of Africa (North, West, Central, East, and Southern).

Analysis of the data followed the procedures used by Spencer-Oatey and Dauber (2019) for analysing Global Education Profiler data, since the design of the tool was comparable. A matrix was used for presenting the findings visually, similar in principle to that used to present the case study initial survey data. However, in this case, the quadrants were labelled. When people's IMP and FOO scores are both high, this is the most positive situation and so this quadrant is labelled "flourishing". When people's IMP scores are high but the FOO scores are low, this is a problematic situation because of the failure to meet people's expectations/desires, and so this quadrant is labelled "unfulfilling". When people's IMP scores are low but FOO scores are high, the context is positive in terms of actual experiences, but people's aspirations are low. This quadrant is labelled "nurturing". The fourth quadrant is the most problematic in terms of developing global leaders because people not only attach low levels of importance to it but also experience it very little. This quadrant is labelled "limiting". Figure 5.4 illustrates this matrix and its component quadrants.

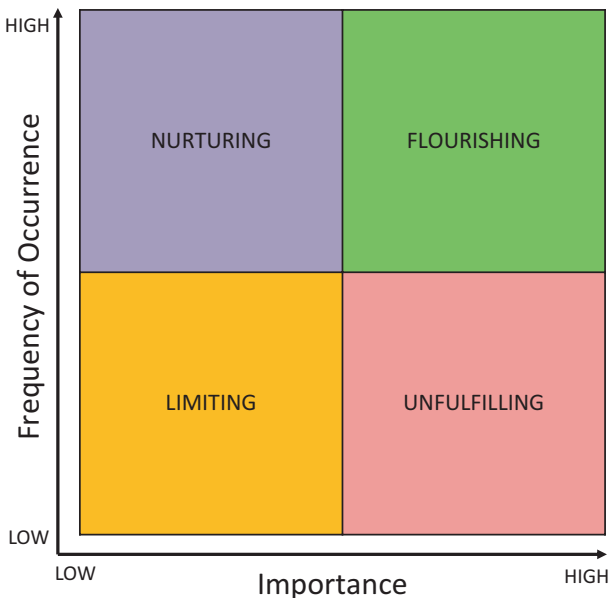


Fig. 5.4 Matrix and quadrants used for presenting the follow-up survey findings

Details of the analyses and the findings used with the follow-up survey are presented in Chap. 11. First, though, we present our case study findings in turn.

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# Young Leaders Transforming Science in Ghana

*Yaw Bediako and Eva Jordans*

## 6.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, we explore perceptions of leadership and leadership styles in an era of change and innovation, particularly among young leaders in science in Ghana. Within the Science, Technology, Education, and Mathematics (STEM) sector, we describe the experiences of a number of male and female leaders in academic institutions, grassroots non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and business organizations. We highlight the various challenges they face and discuss how they have overcome these challenges. We also explore the different ways in which leadership skills are developed in Ghana and assess their effectiveness. This study aims to provide a detailed description of the STEM transformation currently taking place in Ghana through the eyes of those leading the transformation. By highlighting a number of key challenges and success stories, we hope not only to promote a new African narrative but also to provide some

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recommendations on how to further stimulate the development of science leaders for the future throughout Africa and indeed around the world.

This chapter is structured as follows:

- Section 6.2—“Context: Young Leaders in Science in Ghana”: Short description of economic, demographic, and political context in Ghana. Brief history of the development and status of science in Ghana.
- Section 6.3—“Case Study Data”: We describe how our data were collected.
- Section 6.4—“Perceptions of Hierarchy”: Including the national culture and aspects of organizational culture, notably characteristics of academic institutions, grassroots, and entrepreneurial organizations.
- Section 6.5—“The Need for Change”: A shift towards strategic and people-oriented leadership styles: Expectations of today’s leaders.
- Section 6.6—“Diversity of Leaders”: Gender and age/level of experience
- Section 6.7—“Leaders’ Attributes”: What leaders’ attributes were considered important? Decisiveness, candidness, doing good, honesty/Integrity, and adaptability
- Section 6.8—“The Road to Becoming a Leader: Leadership Development”: Explores determinants for success in how people have become leaders, their role models, and different initiatives for development of leadership skills and how to build confidence.
- Section 6.9—“Conclusions/Discussion”: Lessons learnt and suggestions for further development of young leaders in science in Ghana

## 6.2 CONTEXT: YOUNG LEADERS IN SCIENCE IN GHANA

Overall, in this book we have categorized leaders as young if they are below the age of 35, and senior above that age. However, in this Ghana case study we define leaders below the age of 40 as young. Science leadership positions are often linked to having a PhD, which most people in Ghana typically obtain at a later stage in life, as they often work for a number of years between graduate degrees. Furthermore, the general perception of leaders in Ghana is that leaders up to the age of 40 are young.

### 6.2.1 *Political, Economic, and Demographic Context in Ghana*

Ghana’s first President, Dr Kwame Nkrumah, famously said: “We face neither East, nor West: we face forward.” Indeed, Ghana gained independence in March 1957 and it was the first multi-party democracy in Africa. According

to its Constitution, Ghana is a Republic with an executive presidency and a multi-party political system. The national legislature is the unicameral Parliament, whose 275 members are elected by universal adult suffrage every four years. In 2000, for the first time in Ghana's history, there was a democratic transfer of power. Since then, the President, who is head of state and commander-in-chief of the armed forces, has been elected by universal suffrage for a maximum of two four-year terms (Commonwealth, 2019).

The International Monetary Fund (IMF, 2018) states that Ghana is in many ways a “modern” economy. When Google decided to open a research centre for artificial intelligence in Ghana's capital Accra—the first one in Africa—people were excited but not really surprised. The IMF (2018) further states that over the past two decades, extreme poverty levels have declined by more than two-thirds; life expectancy has increased by 10%; and real per capita income has grown by more than 80%. Ghana had a gross domestic product (GDP) growth of 14% in 2011. Though this fell to around 2.9% in 2014 it has slowly been growing out of that dip, thanks in large part to production from recently discovered offshore oil and gas fields. The country experienced 8.1% growth in 2017 (Dontoh & Van Vuuren, 2018) and these levels of growth are expected to continue over the medium term as oil and gas production is expected to increase. These are remarkable achievements and a testament to Ghana's immense potential (IMF, 2018).

Ghana has a population of 24.6 million, which represents an increase of 30.4% over the 2000 census population of 18.9 million (GSS, 2012). The results of this census show that Ghana has a youthful population, consisting of a large proportion of children under 15 years (38%), and a small proportion of elderly persons (65 years and older—5%). The age structure of the country's population is basically shaped by the effects of high fertility and a decreasing infant mortality rate. The proportion of the population living in urban areas was 55% in 2017, with a growth of 6.8% urbanization over a decade (Statista, 2019).

According to the Ghana Statistical Service (2012), agriculture, including forestry and fishing, remains the largest industrial sector in the country, employing 41.5% of the economically active population aged 15 years and older. The next major industrial activities are wholesale and retail trade (18.9%) and manufacturing (10.8%). In the urbanized Greater Accra region, larger proportions of the economically active population are engaged in wholesale and retail trade (31.6%) and manufacturing (14.8%). Data on employment status indicates that the majority (64.8%) of the economically active population is self-employed, and employees constitute 18.2%, while contributing family workers make up 11.5%. A relatively large proportion of

males (25.3%) compared to females (11.4%) are employees. Also, females are slightly more likely to be self-employed (69.4%) than males (60.0%).

Through the politically tumultuous 1990s and into the early 2000s, young people faced many difficulties, which affected their development into responsible adulthood (Hoetu, 2001). Inadequate access to public services, especially education, was a key challenge. As a result, a considerable number of youth entered the labour market unprepared in terms of education and labour market experience. This phenomenon coupled with limited employment opportunities resulted in high levels of unemployment and underemployment. There were also limited or, in some cases, no opportunities for constructive political engagement, particularly for those without personal connections. At the level of senior high schools, the gross enrolment ratio in 2008 was estimated at only 32.2%, while tertiary enrolment was only 8.6%.

The last decade has seen significant improvements in the access to education with secondary school and tertiary enrolment in 2017 estimated at 56% and 16.6%, respectively (UNESCO, 2018). Secondary school enrolment has been further boosted with the Ghana government's decision to launch a free senior high school programme, which saw a 36% jump in student enrolment over the past year (BFT Online, 2019).

### 6.2.2 *Science in Ghana*

The first government of the Republic of Ghana recognized the importance of education to the sustainable development of the newly independent nation. In 1961, a mere four years after independence, the University College of the Gold Coast and the Kumasi College of Technology were issued with their own charters forming the University of Ghana (UG) and the Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST), respectively. The curricula of these universities featured a significant number of courses in the areas of basic and applied medical sciences and KNUST in addition featured a School of Engineering. Despite this promising start, the years of political instability and economic difficulty that followed the military overthrow of the Nkrumah government severely hampered the advancement of the universities and education sector in general. Thankfully, the political climate in Ghana stabilized around the turn of the century and the country has seen significant economic growth. This has translated to the education sector where there has been significant increase in both public and private sector investment in education.



The major public universities have been expanded and a number of private universities have been set up, providing many more opportunities for higher education.

Non-surprisingly, STEM has been a major focus of this new investment. One of the major contributors to the growth of scientific research activity in Ghana and indeed across the continent has been a revolutionary programme funded by the World Bank. The African Centres of Excellence (ACE) initiative was launched in 2014 and by the end of 2018 has allocated over US\$500 million in loans to African governments for the establishment of 72 scientific research centres within universities across Africa (Nordling, 2018b; World Bank Project Report). This project was revolutionary because not only did it provide funds to build grassroots research infrastructure (as opposed to grant funding targeted to a specific scientific project) but it also engineered a way for African governments to invest in scientific research (the governments are responsible for paying back the loans). Ghana stands out as one of the most successful countries of the ACE initiative, with the second highest number of successful applications—second only to Nigeria (a country with a population six times the size of Ghana). These centres of excellence (which include the West African Centre for Cell Biology of Infectious Pathogens (WACCBIP) ([www.waccbip.org](http://www.waccbip.org)) and the West African Centre for Crop Improvement ([www.wacci.ug.edu.gh](http://www.wacci.ug.edu.gh))) have significantly improved the quality of scientific research capacity available in Ghana. A positive side effect of this revitalization of the public research institutions is that growing numbers of Ghanaian scientists trained and living in the diaspora are returning home (Nordling, 2018b). This is further enriching the research environment in Ghana and it is hoped that this trend will prove to be sustainable in the long run.

Besides public institutions a number of private universities have also begun to promote STEM education in Ghana. The most prominent of these is Ashesi University, founded by Dr Patrick Awuah, a US-trained Ghanaian engineer. The university opened in 2002 and has developed a multidisciplinary curriculum focused on business administration, management information systems, computer science, electrical engineering, and mechanical engineering. The stated vision of the university is “to educate ethical, entrepreneurial leaders in Africa; to cultivate within students, the critical thinking skills, the concern for others, and the courage it will take to transform the continent” ([www.ashesi.edu.gh](http://www.ashesi.edu.gh)). The university has grown significantly over the last decade and now has a total student body

of over 1000; in 2017, it was awarded the World Innovation Summit in Education Prize.

The formal education sector is not the only contributor to scientific innovation and literacy in Ghana. A growing number of non-profit organizations aimed at encouraging young people to get involved in science have been established over the last few years. Mostly led by young Ghanaians, these organizations are involved in a range of activities including promoting the involvement of girls and women in STEM (e.g. Girls Can Code Ghana: [www.girlscancode.org.gh](http://www.girlscancode.org.gh); Levers in Heels: [www.leversinheels.com](http://www.leversinheels.com); STEMbees: [www.stembees.org](http://www.stembees.org)), increasing scientific literacy among the general public (GhanaThink: [www.ghanathink.org](http://www.ghanathink.org); Barcamp Ghana: [www.barcampghana.org](http://www.barcampghana.org); GhScientific: [www.ghscientific.com](http://www.ghscientific.com)), and promoting open science and innovation (Global Lab Network: [www.glabghana.wordpress.com](http://www.glabghana.wordpress.com); Khalmax Robotics Project: [www.khalmaxsoftwaresystems.com](http://www.khalmaxsoftwaresystems.com)). The emergence of these grassroots initiatives is a clear positive indicator that Ghana provides an increasingly conducive environment for science and innovation.

A common thread throughout the STEM transformation currently taking place in Ghana is the role of young leaders. In both the public and private sectors, young leaders are redefining what was previously thought possible and are using science to improve their local communities and indeed the country as a whole.

### 6.3 CASE STUDY DATA

Data for this case study was collected during the first half of 2019. Survey participants were sought among professional networks of leaders working in science: 120 were sent the invitation; 25, or 20%, responded. The online survey was completed by 25 leaders, 9 female/16 male, 68% young/32% senior leaders, with all except four respondents having leadership experience. One-third (8) have more than 6 years' experience and slightly more than one-third (9) have 3–6 years' experience, thus the majority (17) of respondents have more than 3 years' experience in leadership positions.

The survey was followed by in-depth qualitative interviews, which were held with nine leaders (five male/four female, five young/four senior). These science leaders were selected from a range of roles in a diverse set of STEM organizations/companies as is indicated in Table 6.1. The leaders in this chapter consented to be presented with their real names, contrary to other chapters where we have used pseudonyms.

**Table 6.1** Demographic information of the Interviewees (Ghana)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Young/senior</i>	<i>Role</i>
Mrs Lucy Quist	Female	Senior	Engineer and business leader
Mrs Lynda Arthur	Female	Senior	Regional lead pharmaceutical company
Prof. Gordon Awandare	Male	Senior	Associate professor/director research centre
Dr Lydia Mosi	Female	Senior	Head of department, university
Dr Tom Tagoe	Male	Young	Science communicator and lecturer
Mr Gameli Adzaho	Male	Young	Public health specialist and science communicator and influencer
Dr Yaw Bediako	Male	Young	Research fellow
Mr Godwin Anabire	Male	Young	PhD student
Ms Claudia Anyigba	Female	Young	PhD student
Total	Five M, Four F	Four senior, Five young	

**Table 6.2** Coding frequencies by attributes (Ghana)

Code Category (5)	Codes (15)	Number of times coded (144)	In how many different interviews (9)	Attributes of interviewee (Number)				Number of interviewees, by attribute, who mentioned the coded issues two or more times			
				Age		Gender		Age		Gender	
				Youth	Senior	Man	Woman	Youth	Senior	Man	Woman
01-Perceptions of hierarchy	General	6	3	2	1	3	1	2	1	2	1
	Organization Specific	3	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
02- Leadership Style	Strategic Leadership	9	4	2	2	3	1	1	2	2	1
	People Oriented Leadership	14	9	5	4	5	4	1	4	2	3
03_Leader Diversity	Women leaders	6	4	1	3	4	4	2	2	2	2
	Youth	14	7	4	3	3	4	3	1	3	1
04_Leadership Attributes	Candidness	6	4	2	2	3	1	1	1	1	1
	Decisiveness	4	3	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	1
	Integrity	6	4	2	2	1	3	2	1	1	1
	Doing Good	19	8	4	4	4	4	3	1	3	1
	Adaptability	9	6	3	3	3	3	2	1	3	1
05_Leadership Development	Leadership determinants	13	9	5	4	5	4	1	2	2	1
	Role Model	9	6	3	3	2	4	1	1	1	1
	Skills Development	17	9	5	4	5	4	3	2	2	3
	Confidence	9	5	3	2	4	1	1	2	2	1

Five of the interviewees also responded to the survey. Thus overall, this chapter represents the views of a total of 29 (12 female/17 male, 59% young, 41% senior).

Table 6.2 shows the coding scheme used for the case studies (see the Methodology chapter for an explanation) along with the coding frequencies, which are also disaggregated by attributes of age and gender, and number of interviewees who mentioned coded issues two or more times

The following sections (Sects. 6.4, 6.5, 6.6, 6.7, and 6.8) report the findings from both the survey and interview data, organized by the interview coding categories.

## 6.4 PERCEPTIONS OF HIERARCHY

Ghana as a nation encompasses many different ethnolinguistic groups, several of which are represented among our respondents and interviewees. However, in our research we do not distinguish the data between different ethnolinguistic groups. It is also influenced by its colonial past and rapid urbanization. An important aspect of leadership that is influenced by cultural values is the norms and beliefs around hierarchy. In our survey, we recorded both the perceptions of current *practice* and respondents' personal *preferences* towards hierarchy. The leadership cultural context includes the national culture and also aspects of organizational culture, notably characteristics of academic institutions and other grassroots and entrepreneurial organizations in the STEM sector.

The results in Fig. 6.1 are positioned in four quadrants; the respondents in two of these could be considered broadly satisfied (the green quadrants), and the respondents in the remaining two quadrants could be considered broadly dissatisfied (the red quadrants):

Broadly dissatisfied:

- *Lower right quarter*: The largest group of 12 respondents (50%) considers the current practice as very hierarchical and would personally prefer less hierarchy than they currently witness in the society. Another four respondents consider the current practice as quite hierarchical and would personally prefer much less hierarchy.
- *Upper left quarter*: No respondents consider the current practice not very hierarchical and would prefer more hierarchy than currently witnessed in the society.

Broadly satisfied:

- *Lower left quarter*: Five respondents consider the current practice not very hierarchical, and this corresponds mostly with their preference.
- *Upper right quarter*: One respondent considers the current perception on hierarchy as very high, which corresponds with a slightly higher preference.

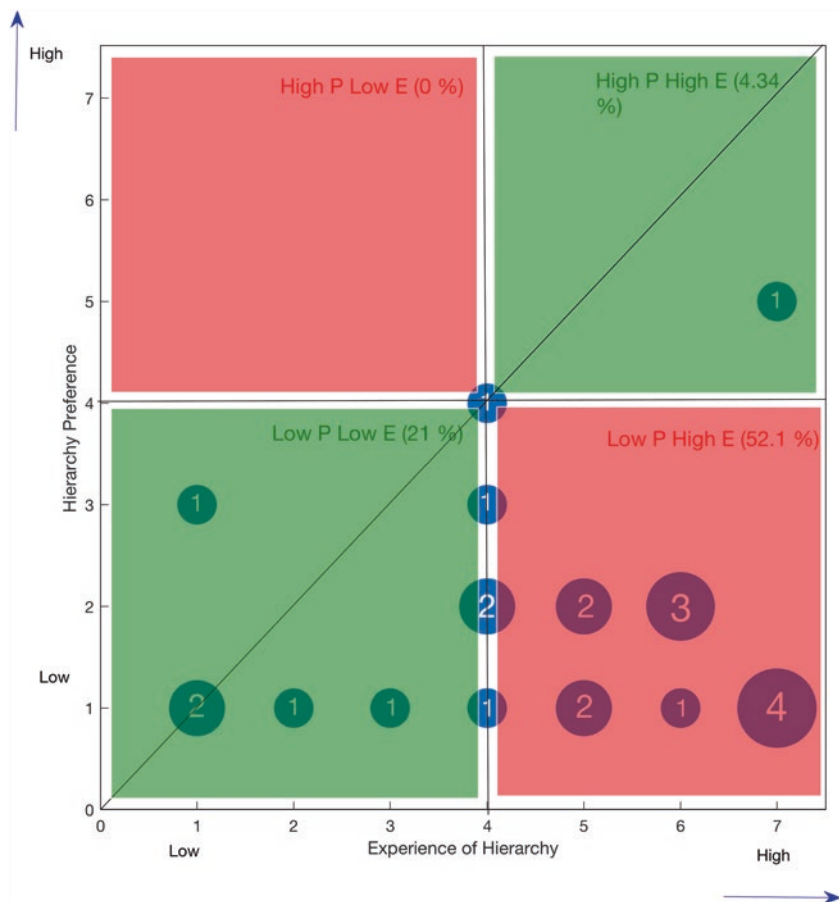


Fig. 6.1 Experiences and preferences towards hierarchy (Ghana)

If we look at this in more detail, the closer a respondent's answer is positioned near the diagonal; the happier this person is as the practice and preference are identical; if far from the diagonal, the level of satisfaction is lower. In this case, three of the respondents are on the diagonal and another two are close to the diagonal—so five in total. Twenty respondents (80%) are placed below and far from the diagonal, and thus prefer a reduced hierarchy, in other words less enactment of power differences, than they currently witness in the society. One respondent is placed above the diagonal, and would thus prefer more enactment than currently witnessed.

### 6.4.1 *Changing Perceptions*

In our survey and interviews, a common thread was how values around hierarchy are changing, with clear examples of this in certain University departments due to young and innovative leaders who make change happen.

*Young male leader, Personal experience: “Change from the top”*

At my department in the university we just got a new head of department and also a new dean. Both are young and like innovative ways to get things done. This has impacted many changes—we have regular department meetings, sometimes students even attend and responsibilities are shared. My head of department has an open-door policy and is very open to suggestions and doing new things. Likewise, the dean is very open and innovative—he came from running a lab in USA. Last year alone, he organized two town hall meetings where all faculty got together to be updated on ongoing projects as well as have questions addressed. **Dr Tom Tagoe, Science Communicator and Lecturer**

Several examples of cultural values impacting on leadership were mentioned by our interviewees:

- We are usually brought up to prioritize getting along with everybody, rather than being effective and competitive. Also people have a tendency to complain, feel helpless, and hope that things will change naturally, instead of taking steps to make a change. (Prof. Gordon Awandare)
- The older generation of academic leaders is more hesitant, not as eager. In my view these leaders are more focused on their own personal growth and own achievements, and as such display a sort of tunnel vision focused on what I need or I want, and not seeing the benefits of reaching out. Thus a bit more single-minded and self-interested approach. If the whole unit grows, it is much better than if only they grow—but they do not see it this way. (Dr Tom Tagoe)
- Respect for older people is important; one has to very circumspect with people in higher positions. In the UK, students were not always very respectful to the lecturers. (Dr Tom Tagoe)

Some of the interviewees also mentioned specific organizational innovations that are contributing to the transformation of science in West Africa, such as the example below:

*Senior male leader, Personal experience: “Machinery for scientific innovations is in place”*

Only nine years ago, I left a promising career in the United States to return to Ghana. Back at the University of Ghana, the Department of Biochemistry, Cell and Molecular Biology (BCMB) I began applying for every grant I could find, hoping to establish a lab that could host lots of students. It took me two years, but then I managed to get two international grants. In 2014 I set up the West African Centre for Cell Biology of Infectious Pathogens (WACCBIP) and appointed four master’s students and one PhD candidate, created a lab, and set up field sites to collect samples. Within only five years, there are currently 45 master’s students, 64 PhD candidates, and 16 postdocs associated with the centre, as well as 40 local faculty and more than 70 regional and international contributing scientists. WACCBIP is doing cutting-edge research and attracting collaborators from around the world. It is my vision that WACCBIP will drive the scientific innovations of the future and help tackle the problems associated with infectious diseases in sub-Saharan Africa. **Prof. Gordon Awandare, Associate Professor/Director Research Centre**

## 6.5 THE NEED FOR CHANGE: LEADERSHIP STYLES

A common theme among the survey respondents and interviewees is the need for or evidence of a change in leadership styles. This relates to both strategic leadership style and people-oriented leadership style.

### 6.5.1 *Strategic Leadership*

Survey respondents (six) indicated the need for more strategic leadership as something their leaders would need to improve, with the need for communicating a clear vision to the team being a common thread, such as: *Speak of the vision more, Giving a clearer picture of objectives. Better com-*

*munication of vision and approaches to attain it, need for clear articulation of vision and direction.* It was also mentioned as the most important quality (five), for example: *Vision, The modern Africa leader must be able to craft a compelling and inspiring vision with which she/he can rally followers.*

Among the interviewees, a shared vision for most young Africa leaders in science and STEM relates to the role of science in Africa and beyond, and what is needed to realize this vision. For example, it is phrased as follows:

*Young male leader, Personal experience: "Science by Africans, for Africans..."*

We need to get African governments to invest more in science, instead of relying on outside funding. African scientists should not be beggars but be able to choose what to work on and who to work with. We need to become stronger and more dynamic, capable of collaborating with other scientists as equals. Carrying out Africa-centred science by Africans, for Africans, while working with others where possible. There are brilliant African scientists living and working abroad. Africa deserves credit for who they are. We need to shift the narrative from undernourished children covered in flies to a dynamic African scientific community that is useful to the world, not only Africa. In order to achieve this, we need to also get scientific literacy in Africa up to a point that local people start to support this and see its value. **Dr Yaw Bediako, Research Fellow**

Survey respondents indicated the need for leaders to achieve results and operate strategically given the numerous constraints posed by the socio-economic context in Ghana. Examples they mentioned included the following:

- *Inefficiency among subordinates and other agencies (especially government agencies)*
- *Lack of adequately trained personnel to fill in vacancies due to lack of mentorship and training*
- *Making up for the huge gap in development across all sectors*



- *In my field availability of resources is the biggest challenge. Funding for research and appropriate infrastructure seriously limits what we can do and creates several other challenges.*

### 6.5.2 *People-Oriented Leadership Styles*

The main challenge mentioned by survey respondents related to people management, with 10 out of 25 respondents referring to this. Specific comments included:

- *Dealing with staff who don't meet deadlines*
- *Consistently motivating my followers to remain focused on the goals*
- *When your followers don't take initiatives and expect you to come up with every idea*
- *Disrespect for my leadership and lack of compliance*
- *An inability to fully entrust duties and responsibilities to those I lead*
- *Communicating authority without being dictatorial*

The same people management challenge was mentioned even more often (14) in respect to how their own leaders could improve their leadership. Specific comments centred on the need to be listened to, the need to be involved in decision-making and an expectation of fairness. We present a few of the comments below:

- *Listen to opinions of subordinates*
- *To be fair to all team members equally*
- *Seek for advice from people with the necessary expertise*
- *Ability to delegate more, be more respectful and listen to my opinions*
- *Lack of equal sanctions, favouritism and nepotism*
- *Involving subordinates in decision-making*
- *Giving subordinates flexibility to work especially in technical areas where they may have more expertise*

Respondents rated how frequently they have experienced Redeker et al.'s (2014) eight leadership styles and indicated the most and least suitable leadership styles to address the challenges that leaders face. Combining these two questions in one figure, with the styles ranked according to their suitability, we see the following pattern emerging (Fig. 6.2).

## Actual Styles Versus Perceived Suitability

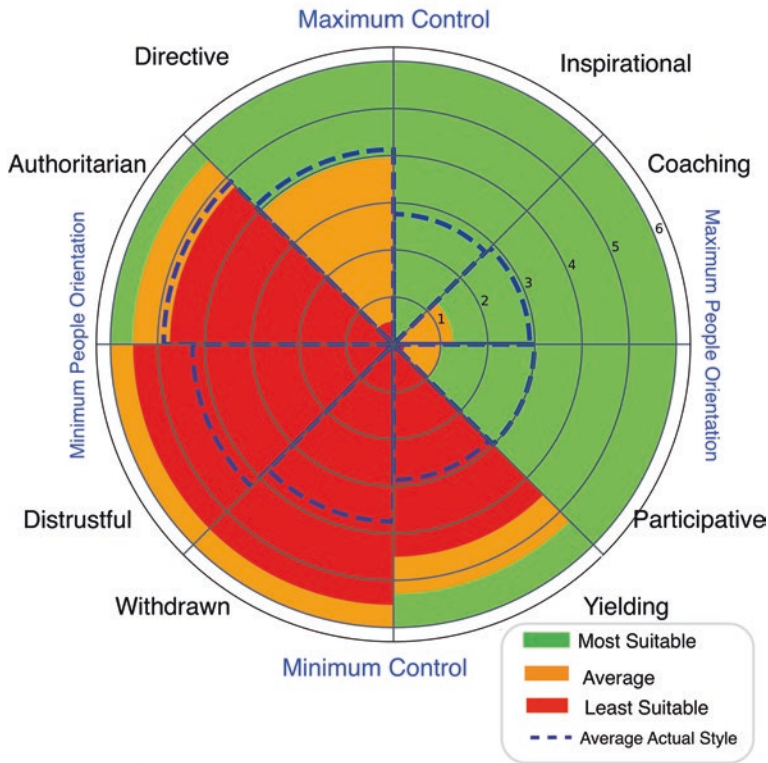


Fig. 6.2 Actual leadership styles versus perceived suitability (Ghana)

What transpires from this graph is that people-oriented styles such as inspirational, coaching, and participative were considered most suitable styles, with Inspirational considered most suitable. However, these are among the four least commonly used styles. In contrast, authoritarian, withdrawn, and distrustful leadership styles were considered least suitable, especially withdrawn and distrustful. However, authoritarian was rated as the most common style, followed by distrustful. Directive style is in the middle—it is relatively common and considered averagely suitable. The yielding style is not very common and considered not suitable.

In terms of control, styles with more control by a leader are clearly favoured compared to the two styles with minimum control: withdrawn

and yielding. Inspirational is considered most suitable as this style has more control but remains people-oriented. Responses thus indicate that instead of the most commonly used leadership styles that are less people-oriented, leaders expressed a preference for a change towards more people-oriented leadership styles. People orientation not only relates to people within their own teams, or organization, or company, but also to people beyond in the wider society.

*Senior female leader, Personal experience: “Good leaders promote growth and development”*

I believe good leaders are those who promote the growth and development of those they are charged to lead. Such growth at times comes at the expense of the leaders own ambitions, but a good leader takes pride and satisfaction from seeing those they lead flourish and develop into leaders themselves. **Dr Lydia Mosi, Head of Department, University**

*Senior female leader, Personal experience: “Empathy is important”*

I have learnt to be more empathetic as a leader. Understanding that my team members have challenges (some personal) that you may not be aware of. To properly connect with your team, you need to “walk in their shoes”. Do not discard your values but understand the challenges that your team members face. Acknowledging your privilege is even more important in the African context. **Mrs Lucy Quist, Engineer and Business Leader**

*Senior female leader, Personal experience: “Setting realistic expectations”*

Often your team may not have had the same level of exposure and international experience as you. It is important that you set realistic expectations. At times, it is challenging when their work ethic and general attitude does not match up to yours. Acceptance of mediocrity and a lack of thoroughness is often a source of frustration. **Mrs Lynda Arthur, Regional Lead Pharmaceutical Company**

*Senior male leader, Personal experience: “Being a nice guy is not enough”*

Working with me—being a nice guy is not enough. So over the last 4–5 years I have seen people come and go, and we have built our “machine” with people who fit. Ultimately it is the mindset—the confidence of young people that will make the difference. **Prof. Gordon Awandare**, Associate Professor/Director Research Centre

All leaders interviewed (nine) indicated the need for a change towards a range of people-oriented leadership styles. It was mentioned more than once by senior (four) and by female leaders (three), who also indicated their own personal challenges with using these styles. We present a few examples below:

A central aspect in people-oriented leadership is the importance of building up trust. This was mentioned many (15) times by survey respondents, both in relation to trust in their own ability as a leader, as well as trusting their followers or team. In addition, we saw that the distrustful leadership style of some leaders is quite common.

## 6.6 LEADERS’ DIVERSITY: GENDER AND AGE

### 6.6.1 Gender

Women leaders indicate that they face constraints regarding their leadership in science that men do not face. All female science leaders we interviewed acknowledged facing gender stereotypes and gender-specific challenges which have not held them back to take up leadership roles but have made their journey more difficult.

*Young female leader, Personal experience: “Sexism is a big problem...”*

I was keen to return to Ghana after my studies, I turned down post-doctoral fellowships in the US and returned home without a job in hand. After a number of setbacks, where I was overlooked for post-doctoral positions (at times for reasons of being a newly married woman with a potential for maternity leave), I was selected for two positions. In my experience, sexism is a big problem. There are very few female head of departments in the college of health sciences—I am the only one. As such one is always in the minority and some older male colleagues prove difficult to work with. **Dr Lydia Mosi**, Head of Department, University

One interviewee indicated the same experience, but indicates that she sees a change in this regard.

*Senior female leader, Personal experience: “Gender inequality is a bigger issue than age...”*

In my experience, gender inequality is a bigger issue than age. In the recent past, women were not always as easily accepted as leaders as male counterparts. However, this is changing rapidly with a number of prominent positions in Ghana filled by women—such as the chief justice, attorney general, electoral commissioner, and CEOs of a number of banks. **Mrs Lynda Arthur**, Regional Lead Pharmaceutical Company

The example below likewise indicates that the combination of being both female and a young leader can result in certain challenges.

*Young female leader, Personal experience: “Opposition from both men and women”*

I am the leader of my church choir. It is somewhat unusual to have a young leader, especially a young female leader. Interestingly, I have had to deal with opposition from both men and women, but for different reasons. The men didn’t like the idea of having a female leader, while the women felt I was too strict and didn’t give them preferential treatment as women. **Ms Claudia Anyigba**, PhD student at University of Ghana

### 6.6.2 Youth

Young leaders were the majority in both our survey and interviews, and their leadership journeys are a specific focus of this case study, since it was commented on often, mostly by young male leaders.

*Young male leader, Personal experience: “Young people need to be empowered”*

As a teacher I experienced the challenges students and youth are facing, especially in science, and this awareness created my urge to foster a change. I believe that empowering young people and giving them the right skills to solve their own problems can create change. **Mr Gameli Adzaho**, Public Health Specialist and Science Communicator and Influencer

Also senior leaders commented on their experiences with being young or how to support young leaders.

*Senior female leader, Personal experience: "Ageism exists"*

As a younger leader it is sometimes difficult to be heard. Bullying is common and older colleagues tend to show contempt towards me. Young African leaders often have to contend with colleagues and superiors who are not necessarily best qualified or placed to be leaders. Such people tend to stand in the way of positive change and can present a great source of frustration. **Dr Lydia Mosi**, Head of Department, University

Giving opportunities to youth is also an important motivator for some of the leaders we interviewed.

*Senior male leader, Personal experience: "Giving a chance to young talent"*

I just felt that people needed to have opportunity here in Ghana, a chance, like the one I have had in the US. A lot of people can succeed if they get a chance, most do not get a chance. There is a lot of talent here, which remains untapped. I wanted to create an environment similar to the one I got when I went abroad. This in a nutshell is: to do research, be happy and motivated to work together and find solutions together. **Prof. Gordon Awandare**, Associate Professor/Director Research Centre

During a recent launch of her book *The Bold New Normal*, Lucy Quist emphasized that there are still people who do not believe in young talent in Africa. As such she states that there is a need for a new narrative, and for young leaders to be bold about change in Africa (Lucy Quist, 2019).

## 6.7 LEADERS' ATTRIBUTES

In the survey responses and interviews, several leaders' attributes were mentioned and considered important. In other words, several qualities or features were regarded as a key characteristic or an inherent part of being

a good leader. The following attributes were mentioned by several survey respondents and interviewees:

*Candidness:* Several interviewees (four) mentioned candidness as an important factor in mentoring others, but that being straightforward in giving feedback is not really the way things are done in Ghana. One leader explains:

*Young male leader, Personal experience: “Be gentle with words in Ghana”*

In Ghana people can be very sensitive, it is very important how you say things—to be gentle with words—and that you show respect at all times. In Ghana, if you disagree with someone in authority you have to be very careful, as people do not separate the task and person, and a disagreement might affect the personal relationship. I feel it is better if one can differentiate ideas from the person. **Dr Tom Tagoe**, Science Communicator and Lecturer

The same leader then went on to explain how he experienced a different approach in the UK, which he had to get used to, but ultimately was of benefit to him:

*Young male leader, Personal experience: “Tough love...”*

In the UK, people can be very blunt, very straightforward. My supervisor in the UK was very beneficial to me. She provided me with a “leader template”. She would be very hands-on: Sit down to discuss with me, reason with me, and coming up with solutions. She was very encouraging, but sometime pushing too far—at least that was how it felt at that time. Now I am grateful for that. I am now copying her example with students and volunteers. The motto is “*You can do more than you are doing now. With the right approach, you can achieve much more*”. At the time, I experienced this as expectant, demanding, tough, and not always reasonable—now I think it helped me a lot. Thus in the UK you could have a very open discussion with your supervisor, even a task-focused fight—but this would not affect the personal relationship. **Dr Tom Tagoe**, Science Communicator and Lecturer

*Decisiveness:* Decisiveness was often mentioned in the survey responses. It was then also linked to having a clear vision, and taking initiatives to make change happen. It was also mentioned by interviewees (three), such as in the below example.

*Senior male leader, Personal experience: “No excuses. just get it done!”*

My motto is: **“No excuses. Just get it done!”** which features on my Skype account and also on my office door. There is a tendency among Africans to complain and to feel helpless. As a consequence they are mostly passive and do not take steps to challenge the status quo or fight for change. Instead, I am fearless and determined to do something about it, to make a change. I was determined to build my own lab and kept applying for grants after I moved back from the US and have succeeded. **Prof. Gordon Awandare**, Associate Professor/Director Research Centre

**Fig. 6.3** Picture of office door





*Doing good:* Survey respondents (five) indicated selflessness as the most important quality of a leader. “Doing good” was the attribute mentioned most often by eight interviewees, both male and female, young and senior. These leaders indicated “doing good” as a central and important motivation to work as a leader in science in Ghana. Many returned to Ghana for this reason after being educated in the UK or USA, turning down job offers or opportunities abroad. We present a few examples below.

*Senior female leader, Personal experience: Community-based health programmes*

My work experience as a community and hospital pharmacist after my relocation to Ghana from the UK exposed me to gaps in health-care delivery. This ignited my interest in development work, particularly neglected tropical diseases and maternal and newborn health. I found a mentor who worked in the area of development and with some guidance and support established a non-profit organization to run community-based public health programmes, build local capacity of healthcare providers and advocate for improved maternal healthcare delivery in Ghana. **Mrs Lynda Arthur**, Regional Lead Pharmaceutical Company

*Senior female leader, Personal experience: “1983 drought changed my life...”*

Crucial year in my leadership journey was 1983 when we returned to Ghana. The country was in the midst of a drought and food was very scarce. There was no bread, no matter how much money you had. A number of people died. Seeing these problems, I was determined even as a young teen that I needed to find a way to make a difference—This stands out as the point I began to develop a true sense of leadership and I was convinced that STEM would be important and any career or business I would pursue needed to have relevance to STEM. **Mrs Lucy Quist**, Engineer and Business Leader

*Integrity.* This value was commented on a lot by the survey respondents. It featured first (nine times) in the most important quality for a leader, and was also often mentioned as the most important challenge facing African leaders. One survey respondent was particularly outspoken on the challenges for Africa's leaders, notably its political leaders: *Well, I think most African (political) leaders do not have the necessary expertise to lead. Most are undisciplined, power drunk and gluttons. They lack moral values such as honesty and truthfulness. So, until African leaders walk the talk, nothing will ever change. African leaders will continue to face insubordination; since what they understand is riots, demonstrations, and protests.*

Interviewees also commented on it. It was mentioned by four interviewees, slightly more women, and it featured as an important characteristic for a good leader, as is indicated in example below, which also describes the importance of respect.

*Young male leader, Personal experience: "Important not to think you are above those you lead"*

Growing up in a slum a lot of people now look up to me. I try to live my life to be an inspiration for others and I make a conscious effort to be someone that people can look up to. A good leader must also be "in the trenches" with his/her team. For example, when I go on fieldwork trips with a driver. I make a point to eat with the driver and other support staff. It is important not to appear to think you are "better" than those you lead. **Mr Godwin Anabire**, PhD student

Another interviewee connected lack of integrity to lack of a vision.

*Senior female leader, Personal experience: "..."*

Corruption is a by-product of a lack of vision and transparency. Vision enables a leader to work towards impact that will outlive him/her. **Mrs Lucy Quist**, Engineer and Business Leader

*Adaptability.* The ability to adapt to and manage change was most often mentioned (12) by survey respondents as a challenge facing leaders in Africa. Some examples of their comments were the following:

- *Getting subordinates to move out of their comfort zone—accept and move with the changing times and think outside the box.*
- *Managing change and be open to innovative ideas and suggestions from subordinates.*
- *Managing the fast changing technological environment.*
- *A thorough understanding of the changing global dynamics with respect to Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) and the nature of the world of work. Also there are challenges with understanding cultural shifts including millennial attitudes and expectations.*
- *Introducing change into a society or community that may be well opposed to it due to pre-established norms and expectations.*

Adaptability was also mentioned often in the interviews (six) and mentioned more than once by young male leaders.

*Young male leader, Personal experience: “Innovation in science education”*

When I became a science teacher in my old high school, I brought innovation into my classroom and my approach. I tried to develop curiosity and critical thinking through my high school chemistry and integrated science classes. Hands-on practical sessions complemented the theory lessons. I further explored avenues to engage students through various roles including form master, club patron (writers and debaters club), and current affairs committee member. Some of the inspiring educational programmes I helped organize include a digital literacy camp, debate competition, and career mentoring sessions. In addition, I was part of a project to introduce mobile learning to students and teachers in my school. A specific focus was my initiative on the constructive use of ICT in Education, involving both the students and also the other teachers. This project was an initiative of the Austrian NGO ICT4D.at. In 2012, I set up Global Lab Ghana Community, aimed at connecting students to access extra educational content and mentors who can provide answers and guidance they may need. Global Lab started as a Facebook group for students and teachers in my school. Interestingly, many more people started joining this group. It was meant for a group of about a 100 people, but more people joined. Today we have a community of over 1000 people, and today we are still growing. **Mr Gameli Adzaho**, Public Health Specialist and Science Communicator and Influencer

## 6.8 THE ROAD TO BECOMING A LEADER: LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

This section explores how people have become leaders, their role models, and different initiatives for development of leadership skills.

### 6.8.1 *Leadership Determinants of Success*

All of the leaders we interviewed indicated that their parents, other family members or their network had played an important role in getting started on a leadership journey in science/STEM.

*Senior female leader, Personal experience: “My journey to become an engineer”*

My parents had a big role to play in shaping who I am today. I learned to dream from my mother and my father (an engineer) taught me to be confident in my own ability. He provided me with practical exposure to engineering—experience that nurtured my curiosity and got me started on a journey towards becoming an engineer myself. **Mrs Lucy Quist**, Engineer and Business Leader

*Senior female leader, Personal experience: “Depending on my network and mentors led to success”*

After completing my master’s degree in Public Health and upon returning to Ghana, I was approached to lead a Gates Foundation and Pharma research initiative seeking to improve access to medicine for non-communicable diseases. This was a challenging assignment, with a steep learning curve; however, it was ultimately successful because I had learnt to depend on a good network of mentors and colleagues. **Mrs Lynda Arthur**, Regional Lead Pharmaceutical Company

A genuine interest in science and medicine also functions as a strong motivator in the leadership journey for young scientists, as we see below.

*Young female leader, Personal experience: "fascinated with cancer research"*

I graduated with a bachelor's degree in Biochemistry. Following my first degree, I took up an internship at a research institute and became fascinated with cancer research. I am attracted to challenging questions and situations and cancer stands out as one of the biggest challenges facing modern science and medicine today. **Ms Claudia Anyigba**, PhD student

### 6.8.2 *Role Models and Mentors*

As some of the previously described comments also indicate, many leaders (six), slightly more women than men, emphasized the importance of role models and mentors in their leadership journey. Below are three examples of how mentorship supported their leadership journeys.

*Senior female leader, Personal experience: "fantastic mentors"*

My development as a leader has been largely facilitated and defined by fantastic mentors. My PhD mentor (an American woman) and my post-doc mentor (an African man) have been instrumental in supporting my growth and development. **Dr Lydia Mosi**, Head of Department, University

The below example shows the impact of having a mentor displaying effective leadership behaviour:

*Young male leader, Personal experience: "my mentor taught me the importance of patience and humility"*

From my first mentor I learned the importance of patience and humility. I saw my mentor patiently deal with lab staff that was being extremely rude and insubordinate. Instead of angrily confronting them, my mentor chose to humbly listen and diffuse the situation. **Mr Godwin Anabire**, PhD student

*Young male leader, Personal experience: “my father and other proud African academics mentored me”*

I benefited from solid academic career guidance, first and foremost from my father, who passed away ten years ago. My father held doctorates in both French literature and theology and set up an institute in Ghana. He had trained abroad before returning to Ghana and turned **down** several lucrative job offers to work abroad in order to contribute to science in Ghana. Through my father and his colleagues and friends, I was exposed to a culture of proudly African academics. This mentorship continued throughout my academic experience abroad. **Dr Yaw Bediako**, Research Fellow

In turn, many of the senior leaders now are role models or mentor young people.

### 6.8.3 *Skills Development*

A whole range of skills development initiatives are available for young leaders in science in Ghana, with the majority of these initiatives focusing on the technical aspects. A particular focus is on skills development through the grassroots movement to engage young people in STEM activities and achieve positive change. Examples are bar-camps (informal scientific literacy sessions at local bars or restaurants), Facebook groups, secondary school outreach programmes, women in STEM initiatives, and many more. Some of these activities simultaneously develop a variety of leadership skills, mostly through practice, taking on responsibilities in project teams.

*Young male leader, Personal experience: “young people need guidance and encouragement”*

My natural inclination is that people learn and discover by themselves. Now I am convinced that a bit more guidance is needed to speed up the learning process and achieve the goals set. Now when I engage with students I try to let them know that they can achieve way more than they know. This I would call an encouraging style. I see you are at 50—my expectation is that you reach 80, but possibly you can exceed that with time, and we are working on this together. **Dr Tom Tagoe**, Science Communicator and Lecturer

Some survey respondents (four) indicated as a key challenge their development as a leader, including the following: *fully asserting myself, acquire the necessary expertise, getting clear direction from above, and lack of support from managers.*

Skills development was commented on by all interviewees and mentioned slightly more often by women and young leaders. Some leaders interviewed argued that leadership is best learned by doing, and also that some aspects of leadership are more innate than learned, as the opinions below indicate.

*Senior female leader, Personal experience: "leadership is learned by practice"*

One needs to practise leadership in order to grow as an effective leader, and so it is important to take leadership opportunities when they present themselves. I took such an opportunity when working at a motor company. I put myself forward for a leadership position even though I was not the most experienced in the team. **Mrs Lucy Quist**, Engineer and Business Leader

*Young male leader, Personal experience: "leadership training only partially effective"*

A lot of what I learned I learned on my own. I have had only occasional leadership training opportunities, such as short workshops or one-day courses. However, I believe that some leadership skills cannot be taught—especially vision and charisma. I believe these are innate, you are born with them. Certain other areas of leadership skills you could benefit from some training. **Dr Yaw Bediako**, Research Fellow

#### 6.8.4 Confidence

Leadership Development requires confidence. Survey respondents also indicated this, stating the need for *independence and respect from bosses*, and being able to *accept constructive criticism*. It was mentioned by five interviewees, predominantly by men.

*Senior male leader, Personal experience: “young people need to have confidence in themselves”*

I try to improve young people’s values and mindset into one of confidence; having confidence in their own abilities and believe they can do great things. They should not accept the status quo, but instead switch their thinking and believe in themselves and be competitive; believe they can be the best, compete with anybody in the world and achieve great things. **Prof. Gordon Awandare**, Associate Professor/Director Research Centre

## 6.9 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

One of the interviewees shared the following insight, which resonates with many of our case study findings:

*Senior female leader, Personal experience: “impact and opportunities”*

The platform or potential for impact of an individual leader is bigger in Africa. There are also many more leadership opportunities than anywhere else in the world, provided you are willing to do the work. **Mrs Lucy Quist, Engineer and Business Leader**

The insights from the leaders in this case study show all of them are willing to take on the leadership challenges and manage the changes required.

*Young male leader, Personal experience: “scientists need to be entrepreneurial and self-motivated”*

To succeed in Africa, you have to be the kind of person who is excited about building something new and is willing to put up with the frustration and difficulties because you want to be part of something bigger than yourself. This is perhaps true for scientists the world over, but Africa’s particular challenges—lack of funding, old-fashioned administrative systems, and poor infrastructure, to name but a few—make it many times harder. In Africa, scientists have to be entrepreneurial and self-motivated to the **point of being almost crazy**. **Dr Yaw Bediako, Research Fellow**



While many challenges do exist in Ghana, the narrative surrounding this country is shifting. In his blog on the 2016 election, Atsu Ayee (2016) describes Ghana as a beacon of democracy and economic development in Africa. In the same vein, Al Jazeera (2012) reported that “Ghana is often described as a beacon of functioning democracy in West Africa. It has had free and fair elections since the end of military rule in 1992, following a referendum that made law its multi-party system.” As conditions have begun to improve, a new generation of young leaders is rising to prominence across many segments of Ghanaian society. The STEM ecosystem in particular is growing rapidly and much of this growth can be credited to the vision, courage, and hard work of young men and women committed to leading their country towards a more prosperous future. It is important, however, not to become complacent. Our survey suggests that significant barriers remain. In addition to the issues relating to gender and age-related hierarchy, financial instability stands out as the major threat to scientific advancement in Ghana. The majority of initiatives (both public and private) are heavily dependent on international sources of funding. Sustainability will depend on a significant increase in local support, both from government and locally based philanthropy (Nordling, 2018c).

In conclusion, though much work remains to be done it is clear that young leaders are beginning to have a significant positive impact: improving health and general quality of life, providing educational and employment opportunities for the youth, and contributing significantly to the growth of Ghana’s economy. The positive impacts are not limited to Ghana and many of these young leaders are committed to making their mark in other parts of Africa and indeed globally. Sixty-two years since independence, the words of Dr Kwame Nkrumah continue to ring true: “We face neither East, nor West: we face forward.” Indeed Ghana’s new generation of STEM leaders is not only facing forward but marching forward. As such insights and experiences from Ghana, as described in this chapter, could serve as an example for the rest of the continent.

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# Leadership and Culture in Corporate Organizations in Nigeria

*Ike Nwankwo, Estelle-Marie Heussen-Montgomery,  
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## 7.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter we explore perceptions of leaders in the private sector in Nigeria. We explore what makes a leader effective, what kinds of behaviour help him/her succeed and be trusted, what challenges they face, and what they need. We especially explore perceptions of “leadership and culture” in corporate organizations. This study aims to be of use for developing young leaders, especially (but not exclusively) for people in Nigeria and Africa more broadly.

“The trouble with Nigeria is simply and squarely a failure of leadership”, reads the first sentence in *The Trouble with Nigeria*, written by

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Chinua Achebe (1984). “The Nigerian problem is the unwillingness or inability of its leaders to rise to the responsibility, to the challenge of personal example which are the hallmarks of true leadership,” he adds on page 1. In our case study we have set out to explore current perspectives on leadership in the private sector of Nigeria.

The structure of the chapter is as follows:

- Section 7.2—“Context”: The Nigerian economy, economic changes over the past decades, demographic and employment trends.
- Section 7.3—“Case Study Data”: We describe how our data were collected.
- Section 7.4—“Perceptions on Hierarchy”: Including the national culture and aspects of organizational culture
- Section 7.5—“The Need for Change”: A shift towards strategic and people-oriented leadership styles and expectations of today’s leaders.
- Section 7.6—“Leaders’ Diversity”: Women and men leaders and youth versus senior leaders
- Section 7.7—“Leaders’ Attributes”: What leaders’ attributes were considered important? In our survey and interviews, the following five attributes emerged: decisiveness, candidness, doing good, honesty/integrity, adaptability.
- Section 7.8—“The Road to Being a Leader”: This section on Leadership Development explores determinants for success in how people have become leaders, their role models and different initiatives for development of leadership skills and how to build confidence.
- Section 7.9—“Conclusions/Discussion”: Lessons learnt and suggestions for further development of leaders in Nigeria

## 7.2 CONTEXT: CHANGES IN NIGERIAN ECONOMY, DEMOGRAPHY, EMPLOYMENT, AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

*Economy:* Nigeria is a middle-income country, and an emerging market, with expanding manufacturing, financial, service, communications, technology, and entertainment sectors. It is ranked as the 30th largest economy in the world in terms of nominal GDP (IMF, 2018). Nigeria is Africa’s largest oil exporter and has the largest natural gas reserves in Africa (World Bank, 2018). The World Bank states that after a decade of over 5% growth, Nigeria’s growth hit negative numbers (−1.62%) in 2016 due to falling oil prices since 2014. Nevertheless, it is expected to grow at 2.8% in 2019. In a sector report, KPMG states that it is the largest economy in

**Table 7.1** Comparison of sectoral contribution to GDP

<i>Sector</i>	<i>1999/2000 (%)</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>Change</i>
Agriculture	30	7%	↓
Oil and mining	40	24%	↓
Manufacturing	4	24%	↑
Wholesale + retail trade, transport and communication	20	30% (+ information)	↑
Govt. services	6	10%	↑
Construction	1	(no data)	
Others	3	5% (education)	↑
Total	100	100%	

Africa; its re-emergent manufacturing sector became the largest on the continent in 2013, and it produces a large proportion of goods and services for the West-African subcontinent (KPMG, 2015).

Table 7.1 shows a comparison of the April 2018 sectoral contribution to GDP (Nigerian Government, 2019) with the sectoral contribution in 1999/2000 (OECD/AfDB, 2002).

These data illustrate the shift in the last 18 years in the economy of Nigeria. Agriculture and mining are sectors contributing less to GDP in 2018 (−39%), whereas manufacturing and information and communication contribute 30% more. In 2013, Fiorini et al. stated that “consumer-facing industries have quietly grown into a significant economic force and are poised to continue growing. Over the last decade, the Nigerian telecommunications and banking industries have experienced rapid expansion, serving pent-up demand and a fast growing middle class” (Fiorini, Hattingh, Maclaren, Russo, & Sun-Basorun, 2013).

*Demography:* The National Population Commission states that Nigeria’s population was 182 million in 2016, with more than half its people under 30 years of age (Worldometers, 2019). As of 2019, the estimated population of the country is over 200 million, ranking seventh in the world. In terms of the average age of a Nigerian citizen the country is relatively young: for both males and females, the median age of the country is 18.4 years (World Population Review, 2019). Much of the economic development is due to, and at the same time causing, a trend of migration from rural areas towards cities, where job opportunities are more plentiful. Nigeria’s rate of urbanization is one of the fastest in the world; between 2007 and 2017 the urban population grew by 8.7%, leading to 49% of the population categorized as urban in 2017 (Statista, 2019). Lagos is a city of an estimated 21 million people.

*Employment:* The Nigerian National Youth Policy in 2019 defined youth as anyone between the age of 18 and 29. According to its National Bureau of Statistics (Nigerian Bureau of Statistics, 2018a, 2018b), a total of 40% of Nigeria's 80 million-strong workforce is "unemployed or underemployed". Nigeria's unemployment rate rose to 23.1% of the workforce by the end of September 2018, up from 18.1% in 2017. However, in the 15–34 age group this is much higher, more than half (52%) work less than a 40-hour week. That means 22.6 million young people are struggling to get by. This figure includes those who are unemployed and seeking work, as well as those who are underemployed (engaged in work for less than 20 hours a week).

*The World Bank (2016) states that GDP growth is fostering the emergence of "two Nigerias":* One in which high and diversified growth provides more job and income opportunities to a small share of the population, and another one in which workers are trapped in low productivity and traditional subsistence activities. As a result, "inequality in terms of income and opportunities has been growing rapidly and has adversely affected poverty reduction." This polarization is also observed geographically, with the report revealing a divide between northern Nigeria, which has low levels of education access and high youth underemployment, and southern Nigeria, where jobs and income opportunities are concentrated. This geographic divide also has sectoral dimensions, with two-thirds of the population in the North-East occupied in agriculture, compared to less than one in five in the South-East. In addition, half of those working in agriculture belong to the poorest 40% of the population compared to only 17% of wage workers.

*Entrepreneurship:* Harry (2017) refers to the most recent Global Entrepreneurship Monitor survey of Nigeria, in which 74% of early-stage entrepreneurs reported that they were opportunity-driven entrepreneurs. In many African countries, like Nigeria and even Kenya, entrepreneurship is fuelled by necessity. Nigeria's economy in particular has been struggling due to lower revenue from the oil industry and lack of economic diversity. As the economy weakened, unemployment escalated. Many of these unemployed persons seek to earn a living through starting an enterprise.

One of our interviewees reflected on the state of the economy and services in Nigeria.

*Senior female leader, Personal experience: "Mesmerized by the mess...."*

I am a firm believer that the private sector can achieve many goals on its own without expecting too much from the government. As a little girl I moved with my parents to the USA, where I grew up. On

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my first trip to Nigeria, I was like an outsider looking in and I was “mesmerized by the mess” in Nigeria. I thought it was unbelievable, and could not understand how people could live in that mess. Especially the appalling quality of health care and clinics shocked me. I thought that this could easily be fixed, and so I started looking at the problem. I asked a lot of questions and noticed that funds are short—partly because they are short, but also because these are illegally diverted. That is when you see health centres without any equipment, without any staff, even though there is some budget for that. However, I concluded this is a too big an elephant to fight. I then joined some organizations that were addressing some of the issues in the health care sector. **Ms Ada**, Medical Entrepreneur

*Women entrepreneurs.* Harry (2017) states that banks are often unwilling to provide loans to women in Nigeria who want to start a business. Oddly, rejection of loan applications in Nigeria occurs 250% more often in firms whose top management is female (rejected 56% of the time) than male (rejected only 16% of the time). Although the rate of female sole ownership in small and medium-sized industries increased by 67.5% between 2010 and 2013, females have lost their presence in main industries (except for education and wholesale/retail) due to many more men gaining positions in employment or beginning businesses. Olarewaju (2019) refers to an estimate that 40% of Nigerian women are entrepreneurs. This fits into a pattern in sub-Saharan Africa, which has the highest female entrepreneurship rate globally. However, according to the World Bank Running a Business Report, Nigeria is one of 115 economies surveyed where women cannot run a business in the same way as men. Although Nigerian women can legally open businesses and sign contracts the same way as men, they are being discriminated against in terms of access to credit and also have less access to education.

Gaye (2018) states that while both male and female entrepreneurs (in Africa) face such constraints as a lack of capital, women are specifically impacted by a number of obstacles, such as discrimination and the dearth of collateral. As a result, female-owned enterprises post monthly profits that are on average 38% lower than those of male-owned enterprises. Three factors account in part for this underperformance: the lack of capital, the choice of business sector, and commercial practices.

The World Bank (2017) reports their findings on effectiveness of different business skills training. This indicates that training focused on mindset proves more effective than traditional business skills in West Africa. “The psychology-based training aims at developing key behaviours associated with a proactive entrepreneurial mindset such as self-starting behaviour, innovation, identifying and exploiting new opportunities, goal-setting, planning and feedback cycles, and overcoming obstacles,” said Michael Frese, professor at the National University of Singapore Business School and Leuphana University who developed the alternative approach of personal initiative training and co-authored the study. “The training was particularly effective for female-owned businesses, who saw their profits increase by 40%, compared to 5% for traditional business training,” added Markus Goldstein, head of the World Bank’s Africa Gender Innovation Lab and co-author of the study. Going forward, the study’s findings make a strong case for the importance of developing an entrepreneurial mindset in addition to learning the business practices of successful entrepreneurs.

Almost a third of our case study’s survey respondents mentioned the above outlined contextual **socio-economic and cultural issues** as the biggest challenges for today’s leaders in Nigeria; for example, they refer to:

- “youth unemployment”
- “responding to the lack of consistency in government policies and prevailing political and economic circumstances, corruption, growing poverty, education”
- “managing global changes that impact Africa, and uncontrolled population growth”
- “indifference of the public to ineffective leadership”
- “weak institutions, lack of capacities and understanding of ethos of leadership”

Beyond the comments above, our case study research provided us with a wealth of perspectives that helped us understand better the tremendous challenges and potential that currently exist in Nigeria.

### 7.3 CASE STUDY DATA

Data for this case study were collected during the second half of 2017 and first quarter of 2018. Survey participants were sought among professional networks of leaders working in corporate organizations. The online survey was completed by 24 leaders, 3 female/21 male, 3 young men/21 senior



men and women, with all except 1 respondent having leadership experience. The majority (21 respondents) had more than six years of experience.

The survey was followed by in-depth qualitative interviews, which were held with ten leaders in corporate organizations (five male/five female, three young/seven senior). These corporate leaders were selected from a range of sectors, including IT, medical, construction, manufacturing, consultancy, and real estate, as indicated in Table 7.2.

None of the interviewees also responded to the survey. Thus overall, this chapter represents the views of a total of 34 leaders (8 female/26 male, 6 young, 28 senior).

Table 7.3 shows the coding scheme used for the case studies (see the Methodology chapter for an explanation), along with the coding

**Table 7.2** Demographic information of the Interviewees (Nigeria)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Young/senior</i>	<i>Sector</i>
Mr Stephen	Male	Senior	IT
Mr Tim	Male	Senior	IT/Project Management
Mr Ian	Male	Senior	Construction
Mr George	Male	Senior	IT
Mrs Olivia	Female	Senior	Construction
Ms Ada	Female	Senior	Medical
Mrs Abby	Female	Senior	Manufacturing
Mrs Bella	Female	Young	Real Estate
Mr Adeniji	Male	Young	Project Management Consultancy
Mrs Dolly	Female	Young	Manufacturing/Consulting
Total	5 M/5 F	7 senior, 3 young	

**Table 7.3** Coding frequencies by attributes (Nigeria)

Code Category (5)	Codes (15)	Number of times coded (188)	In how many different interviews (10)	Attributes of interviewee (Number)				Number of interviewees, by attribute, who mentioned the coded issues two or more times			
				Age		Gender		Age		Gender	
				Youth	Senior	Man	Woman	Youth	Senior	Man	Woman
01-Perceptions of hierarchy	General	23	8	2	6	5	3	1	4	4	1
	Organization Specific	6	3	2	1	1	2	1	1	1	1
02- Leadership Style	Strategic Leadership	8	4	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	2
	People Oriented Leadership	20	9	3	6	5	4	2	5	4	3
03_Leader Diversity	Women leaders	4	4	3	1	0	4	1	0	0	1
	Youth	23	6	4	2	2	4	3	2	2	3
04_Leadership Attributes	Candidness	9	7	4	3	3	4	2	0	1	1
	Decisiveness	9	5	4	1	2	3	2	0	1	1
	Integrity	10	4	2	2	1	3	2	2	1	3
	Doing Good	17	5	4	1	1	4	4	1	1	4
	Adaptability	11	8	3	5	5	3	1	1	1	1
05_Leadership Development	Leadership determinants	14	8	3	5	3	5	4	1	0	5
	Role Model	8	4	2	2	2	2	1	0	1	0
	Skills Development	18	7	4	3	4	3	3	0	1	2
	Confidence	8	3	3	0	1	2	1	0	0	1

frequencies, which are also disaggregated by attributes of age and gender, and number of interviewees who mentioned coded issues two or more times

## 7.4 PERCEPTIONS OF HIERARCHY

The leadership context in Nigeria encompasses many different elements, including the history of colonialism, a rapid urbanization, a large international diaspora, and several large cosmopolitan cities. All of these factors affect the leadership norms and beliefs; the expectations about what leaders should or should not do and what followers should or should not do. These expectations are associated with cultural beliefs and practices, and we will explore this further in this section. Nigeria as a nation encompasses many different ethnolinguistic groups, several of which are represented among our interviewees. However, in our research we do not distinguish the data between different ethnolinguistic groups.

### 7.4.1 *Leadership: Cultural Context*

A leadership challenge often mentioned by survey respondents is **culture (6)**, which included for example: “Cultural biases and prejudices”, “There is a general lack of understanding of leadership, it is often confused for position of authority”, and “Understanding cultural norms and trying to conform, even though these do not add value”.

An important aspect of leadership that is influenced by cultural values is the norms and beliefs around hierarchy. We recorded both the perceptions of current *practice* and respondents’ personal *preference* on hierarchy: with a range of the highest power distance (“obey leaders without question”) to the lowest power distance (“question a leader when in disagreement”).

The data show that in terms of personal preference a large majority, 86%, believe that followers should be able to fully or to some degree question their leaders; that is, they have a low preference for hierarchy. If we combine these data with respondents’ assessment on current practice, we see the gap between preference and experience, with current practice considered more hierarchical than personally preferred by all respondents except one respondent. Below the data ( $n = 22$ ) is presented in a graph (Fig. 7.1).

The results are positioned in four quadrants; the respondents in the two green quadrants could be considered broadly satisfied, and the respondents in the remaining two quadrants could be considered broadly dissatisfied (the red quadrants):

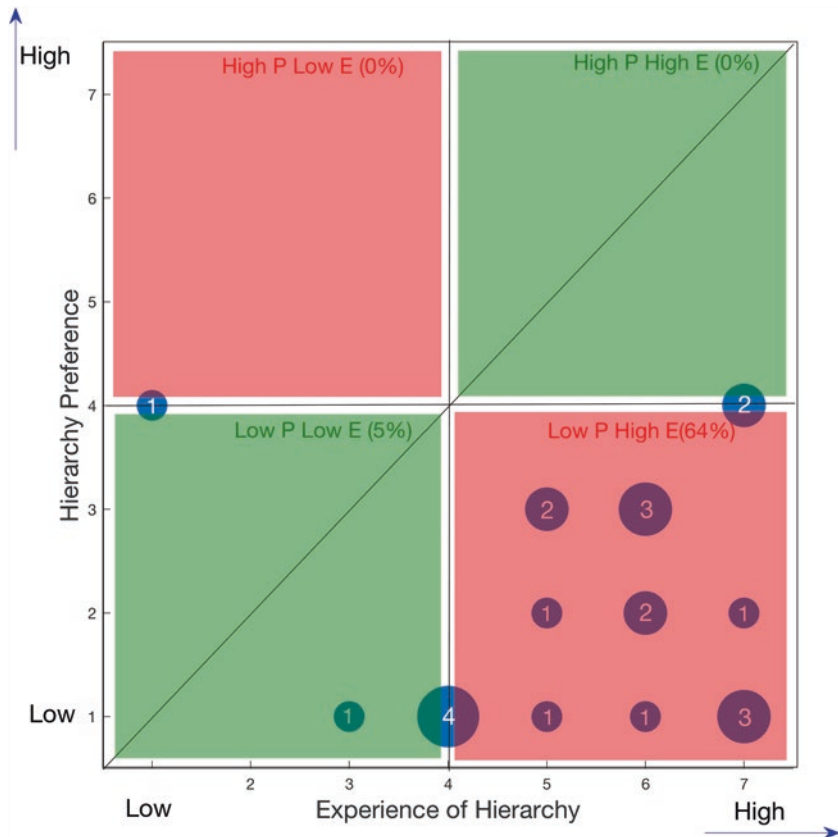


Fig. 7.1 Experiences and preferences towards hierarchy (Nigeria)

Broadly dissatisfied:

- *Lower right quarter:* the largest group of 14 respondents (64%) considers the current practice as very hierarchical, and would personally prefer less hierarchy than they currently witness in the society. Another four respondents consider the current practice as quite hierarchical, and would personally prefer much less hierarchy.
- *Upper left quarter:* one respondent considers the current practice not very hierarchical and would prefer more hierarchy than currently witnessed in the society.

Broadly satisfied:

- *Lower left quarter*: one respondent considers the current practice not very hierarchical, and this corresponds with his/her preference.
- *Upper right quarter*: two respondents consider the current perception on hierarchy as very high, which corresponds with a slightly higher preference.

If we look at this in more detail, the closer a respondent's answer is positioned near the diagonal; the happier this person is as the practice and preference are identical; if far from the diagonal, the level of satisfaction is lower. In this case, none of the respondents is close to the diagonal. Twenty-one respondents (95%) are placed below and far from the diagonal, and thus prefer a reduced hierarchy, in other words less enactment of power differences than they currently witness in the society. One respondent is placed above the diagonal and would thus prefer more enactment than currently witnessed. In our interviews the perception of hierarchy and how it shapes leadership practices was mentioned in eight out of the ten interviews, especially by senior men and women; in fact, senior men mentioned it multiple times.

*Senior female leader, Personal experience: "Image of achievement presumes leadership"*

In Nigeria, if there is a sense of obvious success then the person is considered successful and presumed a leader. "Obvious success" can simply be ability to pay the bill for everyone (e.g. at an outing), or that the person dresses well, drives a decent car, and appears to portray an attitude of "Can do, Have done and Know how to get it done" and perhaps even boasts about it. This thus creates an image of achievement, which creates followers, which then presumes leadership.

Usually there is no substance behind this, as it is a learned response, but the typical definition of leadership being "inspiring others to follow", such an image in Nigeria creates a following and because of various economic factors or even tradition or culture that individual is seen as a leader. **Mrs Olivia**, MD, Construction management company

Another leader commented on the importance of display of authority, while also being flexible in the use of different leadership styles.

*Senior male leader, Personal experience: "Authority is necessary...."*

In most case effective leadership style is authoritative, but this can be for different reasons: authoritative to comply with culture or authoritative to comply with corporateness and is applied dependent on the mindset of the leader or based on those that are being led. **Mr George**, MD for a large IT organization

The following personal leadership experience recounts the impact of culture on hierarchy and adopting a corresponding leadership style that fits the people led and the context, even though it is against the leader's own preference.

*Senior male leader, Personal experience: "So much for being the new type of boss ...."*

After more than a decade working in the UK, I returned to Nigeria about 12 years ago to head up an Information Technology company based in Lagos, Nigeria. I was keen to be the "new type of boss" and to apply a style of leadership that I had learnt to like and understand whilst working in the UK.

I recall my first job in the UK, where I constantly called my manager Mr Jones\* (his surname) or Sir, as that was how I had been accustomed to calling those in higher positions whilst in and working in Nigeria. Mr Jones had at the time constantly stated and reminded me to just call him Paul\* (his first name), which took me a while to get comfortable in doing so, but when I did, I felt more free and open to express myself with my Manager and we had many open, collaborative, and engaging interaction throughout my employment there.

So, back in Nigeria as MD I decided to adopt the same principle of leadership and constantly told my employees to just call me by my first name only, no titles, etc. and that I also operated an open door policy. This was contrary to advice and against the cultural norm, but my perspective was that this was limited to titles like Chief or having letters after or before your name.

Despite that, I did it and it worked great, employees were constantly popping into my office, updating me on work progress and also on occasions their personal related matters and I got to know

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my employees and was able to motivate and encourage them. I felt I had established a collaborative friendly working environment, people were happy, and my leadership style was effective. Things were looking good. However, after about six months I subconsciously noticed a change in pattern of behaviour. Workers were coming to work late, felt free to pop into my office and give me reasons, work was not being done on time again with reasons provided, non-work related matters were being brought to my attention more than those of work, favours/exceptions to work practices, etc. were being asked off me more and more and overall productivity levels had reduced.

On reviewing the situation and following debates with colleagues, I noticed that whilst I had created a collaborative friendly working environment, I had also created an atmosphere where “familiarity bred contempt” and I had perhaps misinterpreted the extent of structure that the cultural norm of how you are called provided that invisible boundary that helped to support leadership. I also observed that different levels of educational understanding, position within company, cultural beliefs, and general exposure impacted how individuals viewed or reacted to the first name basis concept. Many viewed it as disrespectful, others as sign of weakness and some as an opportunity to exploit.

So, I amended my leadership style and gradually and selectively insisted I be referred to as Mr X [my surname] or Sir but explained why to all, in different ways, at different tones, and ways that they could relate to, based on my understanding of their educational awareness, position within company, cultural beliefs, and general exposure. They all agreed and over the following months productivity increased, lateness reduced, and the boundaries had been re-set which created for an even better environment. I had learnt!

As a leader in Nigeria, you should take into context the cultural norms of the people you are leading and adapt this to suit your specific leadership style. Some cultural norms create structure and breaking this then creates chaos and not progress. You do not have to be friendly to be a leader in Nigeria, culture does not necessarily support this; but you do have to be stern or authoritative or be seen to be like that, culture does support this! Mr Stephen, Senior male leader in IT sector

Some interviewees also remarked on differences between organizational culture, for example, the government and private sector, with the government more hierarchical than the private sector.

*Senior male leader, Personal experience: “Leadership is different in government compared to private sector....”*

My professional career started in quasi government agency, where leadership was simply top to bottom and that is what I grew up to learn. However, coming to the private sector, I realized that leadership is not about position but more about disposition. **Mr Tim**, CEO IT/PM Company (Entrepreneur)

Some interviewees question the impact of a national culture and argue that these values can be set and influenced at corporate level. The following perspective by a young female entrepreneur expands on that view:

*Young female leader, Personal experience: “Organizational values define leadership....”*

In my view leadership is organization dependent, more so than influenced by national culture. Big companies that have existed many years are set in their ways, and it is difficult to affect a change in it. For example, in some banks the more senior people are not retiring, in my view mostly out of greed. I think that at a certain age your ideas are no longer very fresh. You see that these companies are struggling to engage young minds. If you compare that to relatively new companies, such as Sahara Group that is working in Energy and Infrastructure, they have included in their core values that they encourage “young minds” who have fresh ideas. They are as a result doing well and growing rapidly. **Mrs Dolly** (Entrepreneur Manufacturing/Consulting)

This shift in leadership values in certain companies was also remarked on by the following senior leader.

*Senior male leader, Personal experience: “Mindset shift is needed ....”*

My view is that leadership in Nigeria and mostly in Africa has been characterized by struggle for power and authority for personal gains not focused on responsibilities and service to the people as against privileges to self. To bring about change, a mindset shift is needed through re-orientation and purposeful leadership by example. This mindset shift has started and can be seen in the leadership style of young companies and start-ups who are beginning to realize that to achieve their goals there needs to be a balance where leadership is more about responsibilities and accountability whilst also respecting tradition and culture. **Mr Tim**, CEO IT/PM Company (Entrepreneur)

Based on the data that has been collected and comments from the interviewees it is clear that an area of future leadership improvement is understanding the dynamics around hierarchy, and find an effective and flexible balance in terms of leadership style and approach. There may not be a single formula that works, however it is clear that a more conscientious approach, a shift in mindset as stated by Mr Tim, is needed.

## 7.5 THE NEED FOR CHANGE: LEADERSHIP STYLES

A common theme among the survey respondents and interviewees is the need for or evidence of a change in leadership styles. This relates to both strategic leadership, as well as people-oriented leadership styles.

### 7.5.1 *Strategic Leadership*

Survey respondents rated the challenges they face as a leader in these times of change. Dealing with resistance and people management were the two most cited challenges.

*Dealing with resistance (9)*: This related to dealing with conflicting opinions, such as:

- “Those I fight for don’t understand why I’m fighting for them; they even go against me for fighting for our common good.”
- “Questioning my leadership simply because I tolerate it, many times it is baseless and argumentative.”



Others remarked the biggest challenge is convincing others of their vision:

- “Articulating vision and getting buy in for this vision”
- “Being able to get the buy-in of all on crucial issues”
- “Inability to get your followers to easily appreciate your point of view”

An important leadership challenge mentioned was attention to **performance management (4)**. For example:

- “Clear goals—and benefits-oriented leadership”
- “Adding value—focus on longer term benefits for all”.
- “Commitment by employees—not putting in their best for the organization”.

As an important quality for a leader, respondents mentioned having a **vision and resilience (5)** “clear vision of objectives, actions to deliver the vision”.

An example of strategic leadership was a young leader acting upon and convincing others of his vision, which he posted on Facebook and was also reported in the *Guardian* beginning of 2018. Chris Junior Anaekwe, 28, was leading a group of local teenagers in cleaning rubbish in Onitsha, a port city in southern Nigeria. Chris, who is a sustainable development goals ambassador, posted on Facebook the following: “It is pertinent for my street boys to be educated on the importance of keeping their environment clean. So today, we decided to clean up the street with me leading the exercise. Even with my swollen arm and the pains I feel, I showed them it is good to always lead by example not by talking, talking, talking...” He further stated: “Let us not wait for the government to clean our gullies for us. It is us that are going to suffer the health damages. Clean-up is a must” (Anaekwe, 2018).

### 7.5.2 *People-Oriented Leadership Styles*

A second leadership challenge mentioned by many survey respondents was **people management (9)**. This related to challenges in communication skills: “listen to followers more” or “Getting followers to ask questions”. It also related to managing performance, such as “Motivating those that I lead”, “Getting my people to focus on results, to be more strategic and maintain a high sense of integrity”, or “The led usually lack passion for success when it is not measured in financial terms”.

## Actual Styles Versus Perceived Suitability

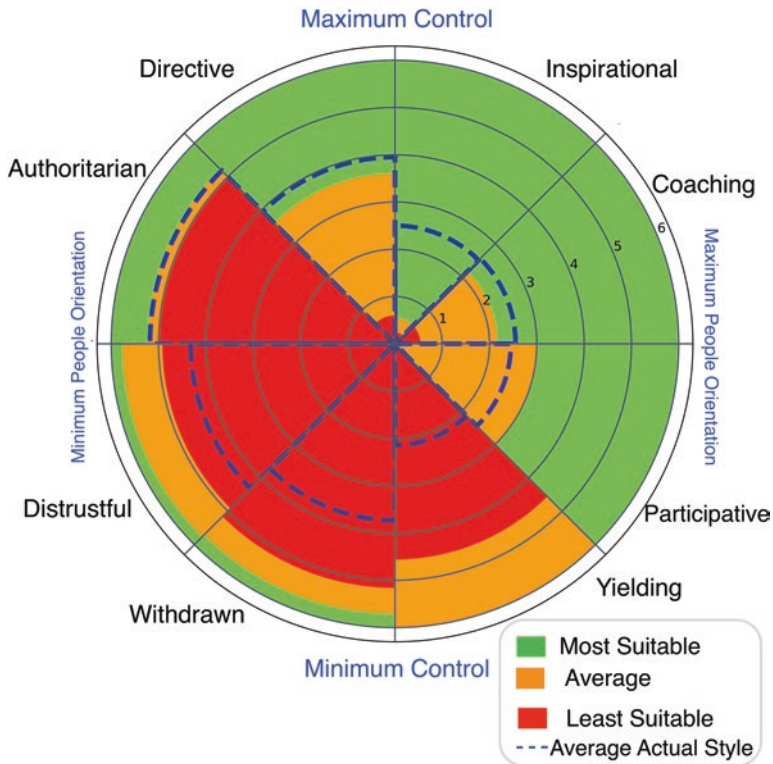


Fig. 7.2 Actual leadership styles versus perceived suitability (Nigeria)

Respondents rated how frequently they have experienced Redeker et al.’s (2014) eight leadership styles and indicated the most and least suitable leadership styles to address the challenges that leaders face. Combining these two questions in one figure, with the styles ranked according to their suitability, we see the following pattern emerging (Fig. 7.2).

What transpires from this graph is that people-oriented styles such as inspirational, participative, and coaching styles are considered most suitable styles, with inspirational and coaching styles considered most suitable. However, these are not very commonly used styles. In contrast, the minimum people orientation styles such as authoritarian, withdrawn, and distrustful are most

common in terms of manifestation while these are considered least suitable, especially withdrawn and distrustful.

Directive style is in the middle—it is relatively common and considered averagely suitable. The yielding style is the least common and considered not suitable. In terms of control, styles with more control by a leader are clearly favoured compared to the two styles with minimum control: withdrawn and yielding. The participative style is considered quite suitable as it has average control, and maximum people orientation.

The picture that emerges is of a period of transition: instead of the most commonly used leadership styles that are less people-oriented, leaders' perspectives are favouring the need or preference for a change towards more people-oriented leadership styles, and less authoritarian and negative control enacted by leaders. People orientation relates not only to people within their own teams, or organization or company, but also to people beyond in the wider society. We present some examples below.

*Senior male leader, Personal experience: "Managing people...."*

As a project manager, I have had to deal more with people, managing various stakeholders of different ages and in different leadership positions to achieve project success. This is not without few cases of failure where focus was on the tasks and not on the people, tradition or culture. **Mr Tim**, CEO IT/PM Company (Entrepreneur)

There were many comments from almost all (nine) interviewees regarding the belief or preference for people-oriented leadership styles. Seven of them mentioned this more than once during the interview, predominantly by senior male and female leaders. We present a few examples below.

*Senior female leader, Personal experience: "Communicating is key; a birthday cake also works"*

As a leader, you often motivate with rewards or gifts. But if you are in a start-up or financially constrained or bound this is a challenge. This might affect what you can give or how you are perceived, especially if you have promised something and they have to wait. My solution is to explain this—to keep communicating. We are currently having a pause in production, while we set up other parts of the business. So temporarily

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they are not working in the factory. But we are still meeting and talking. Also, from their own initiative they formed a junior factory Facebook group with about 40 members and they stay in touch. We also regularly meet for some drinks and snacks, and many come to these events. I organize monthly birthday events—everyone who had their birthdays that month—we celebrate together. I get a cake and we have some drinks. This is really appreciated by them—some are from really poor families and have never had a birthday party before.

I combine these events, and a genuine interest in them and mentoring of them, with very strict rules and discipline. For example, about working times and being on time. If you are late, without good reason you face disciplinary measures: you are locked out or part of your salary is deducted. People can be very wicked, and I am not a fool. **Mrs Abby**, CEO, manufacturing plant

*Senior male leader, Personal experience: “I now carry a hammer on all site inspections!”*

I recall my days working as an architect. I believed that effective leadership was also about educating or mentoring those that you lead, so that they can learn from you and be keen to follow you. It was a principle I maintained throughout and whilst doing onsite inspections at construction sites.

Every time I came to site, people loved following me around because I constantly gave valuable insight on how to do things better, what and where things had been done wrong, and why and then how to correct them there and also what to do to right first time in the future. I spent a lot of time educating labourers/workers at different levels. Most of the labourers/workers had done things the same ways for many years, ways that had been self-taught or handed down from generations and had neither been taught or shown how to do things differently. A participative or collaborative approach to leadership.

I was on this specific construction project and doing an initial inspection and had seen a wall that was not particular straight. I approached the foreman and explained to him that it wasn't straight and after my usual guidance on why and how to correct, he and his

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team seemed to agree and I moved on. A week or so later I returned and the wall had not be properly corrected, this time whilst explaining again to the foreman there was a bit of resistance and he was even trying to convince me that it was OK and can be managed as is, quoting his many years of experience in the job, his age, that this is how things are done in Nigeria etc., amongst many other things to back his position, which a number of workers also began to agree with him. Nevertheless, it was agreed that it would be corrected at my next visit, but it wasn't and following further discussions agreed that in two weeks it would. My collaborative approach to leadership was still effective, irrespective of a culture, age, or perceived experience clash.

However, I contemplated the situation and sensing some resistance, I came prepared for my visit two weeks later. On arrival and having inspected some other areas where the workers were keen and receptive I got to this particular area and the wall had still not been corrected. The foreman began to explain, but I was prepared and had a mallet (hammer) with me and simply smashed the areas of the wall that needed correcting and then moved on, without saying a single thing. I then continued on to other areas for inspection and continued being collaborative and giving guidance and advice, etc. as was required. I did this every time, without speaking to him or taking heed of his pleas (he bore the costs) until the wall was done correctly.

When it was done correctly I praised him for a job well done and asked if he could see the difference and if he had learnt from the experience. Both he and his workers agreed to a great extent. However, I noticed also that all the workers on the site were now more attentive, quality of work at other areas of the site had increased, and this was because no one wanted their work smashed or wanted to redo it. This way I learned that whilst your style may be highly participative, you must be prepared for low collaboration situations and have that "hammer" firstly visible and ready to smash any hindrances to it. I now carry a hammer with me on all site inspections!

**Mr Ian**, Architect and construction project manager

Both these examples suggest that in Nigeria a participative leadership style can only work to an extent, and needs to be combined with strict rules. This also indicates the importance of leaders adapting to their followers.

This view slightly contrasts with Iwowo's (2011) interview findings with young leaders as part of her PhD research in Nigeria. Her findings indicated themes of effective leadership as "approachable", as "carrying others along", and as "listening". In her research, people tended to associate a positively memorable leadership experience with having been led by someone who was easily approached, who listened to others and who was able to carry other group members along. In this case, it might seem that "listening to others" and "carrying people along" is indicative of a more consultative leadership approach in which the views of others are solicited and taken into account. Iwowo's findings are echoed by the views of several young interviewees, such as a female young leader below.

*Young female leader, Personal experience: "I am a supportive leader"*

My leadership style is to carry people along, make everybody feel they have a role to play. I am a supportive leader; I am there for my team members. If somebody makes a mistake, I like them to be open about it and accept their mistakes because I also make mistakes and learn from my mistakes. That is fine, I do not like if people make excuses, if you make a mistake: admit it and move on.

I am not always satisfied with my followers' performance and I do get disappointed sometimes. I try to recruit the best, but some people do not perform as well as you expect and I try not to be sentimental when I have to take some hard decisions, as the effectiveness of my team would help me to keep from micro-managing and makes it easier to delegate. **Mrs Bella** (Entrepreneur Real Estate)

This thus supports the need for a flexible style that combines approachability/supportiveness with control/decisive decision-making when needed. A young male leader expresses his view as follows:

*Young male leader, Personal experience: "Leadership is about influencing others..."*

I thrive on my ability to give to people, to influence them so that they get the desired results. Because I believe leadership is all about influence and we all have it in us to lead. Whatever you do in life, your

(continued)

(continued)

leadership abilities are there—you need to plan and manage your activities to reach your goals. This has reinforced my belief that if you give people the right platform and support, then sit back and see what happens, their achievements will be bigger than your expectations. **Mr Adeniji**, Entrepreneur and consultant on project management

In terms of survey respondents' views on what their own leader could improve in his/her leadership, half of all respondents thought their leader could improve communication, and five indicated the need for more attention to the development of followers.

**Communication (12)**: this related to the communication of long-term strategic intent by their leaders, such as:

- *Being clearer about links between instructions provided and overall objectives*
- *Never really discloses the agenda of his leadership, leading to doubts and trust issues*
- *Be honest and engender trust*

Part of the respondents indicated the need for their leaders to be more open to feedback:

- *Be more tolerant of alternative viewpoints*
- *Listening to the opinions of others*
- *Ability of my leader to integrate my valid opinions to his leadership*

Lastly, some respondents indicated their leader could improve his/her **people development (5)**, such as “Leaders should focus on developing followers and influencing them as against controlling” and “Introduce non-financial reward-based incentives for better performance”. As one of the most important leadership quality, survey respondents mentioned **communication (3)**, including “Political Savvy/Relationship Management, Great listener and empathiser”.

Clearly what is observed in this section is the manifestation of a shift; the change towards a more participatory/approachable leadership within the hierarchy that creates space for inspiring results. However, at times this requires a balancing act by adding a pinch of authoritative approach to get the best results.

## 7.6 LEADERS' DIVERSITY: GENDER AND AGE

### 7.6.1 *Women Leaders*

Among our interviewees half were women, out of which three commented on being a female leader. Overall, women leaders are confident, many are entrepreneurial and not daunted to handle any challenges they may face as women leaders. We present some of their views below.

*Young female leader, Personal experience: "I was warned before investing in 'male' industry...."*

I did research on woodwork and furniture, for which Nigeria used to be the epicentre, but now gets imported. People tried to discourage me, saying that woodwork is an industry with a lot of men, and that I as a woman would struggle. I decided I would focus on quality furniture for children, including cribs, commodes, chairs, etc. I did all the research on safety standards and did product testing so that my products would not be harmful for children. I engaged many other people/guys, with woodwork skills and ideas to join me in this business and explained to them so that they understood the concept and could meet the standards. **Mrs Dolly** (Entrepreneur Manufacturing/Consulting)

Another viewpoint was that women do face challenges, but that this is more so for younger female leaders.

*Senior female leader, Personal experience: "Female leaders face challenges...."*

Some people do not regard women seriously as leaders; they underestimate you or do not believe what you say. It is a challenge because of culture or religion; especially for younger women it can be tough. **Mrs Abby**, CEO, manufacturing plant

### 7.6.2 *Youth*

Several more (six) interviewees referred to age as a factor in how one is being seen as a leader, but that it is also a factor in changing perceptions on leadership and transformation in Nigeria.



*Senior male leader, Personal experience: “Hierarchy and age are intertwined”*

In Nigeria, leadership is primarily based on hierarchy and hierarchy is largely dependent on age. This has come to significantly influence the leadership selection process to the extent that in corporate and other organizations age is a major factor in selection of leadership as the individual/leader is expected to have “paid their dues”. **Mr George**, MD for a large IT organization

Another interviewee gave an example of how age and hierarchy impacted technological innovation at a company.

*Senior male leader, Personal experience: “Older people expect respect...”*

I can recall early in my career when I was a manager responsible for the rollout of technology and telecommunications within a large industrial company in Nigeria. As part of one of my projects I successfully installed a telecom system through the very expansive premises of the plant.

However, I found out that the expected improved communications between the different departments within the plant had not improved and a number of complaints were being received. On investigation it turned out that an elderly cashier in the cash office on one side of the plant refused to use it to communicate with the accounts department on the other side of the plant, because having used it initially he felt greatly disrespected that the young accounts clerk on the other side of the plant would speak to him on the phone instead of making the trek (walk) to his office to see him physically. Cautiously explaining individually and collectively to the young clerk and elderly cashier required finesse and an education/mentoring on the balance between culture and corporateness and collaborative and directive leadership styles. **Mr George**, MD for a large IT organization

*Senior female leader, Personal experience: "Showing respect to seniors...."*

Seniority helps. We have a culture of respect, when you are managing someone who is older than you, you cannot tell them what to do. You try to respect them, be conscious about this, and not punch their egos. You have to differentiate, and not treat them the same as young people. One way to do this is to not call them by their name, but to call them Mr or to address them in respectful manner in our dialect. This makes it smoother. **Mrs Abby**, CEO, manufacturing plant

However, one of the interviewees commented that this perspective may be changing, as he reflected on ongoing changes in society regarding perspectives on leadership and age.

*Senior male leader, Personal experience: "Leadership: from position to responsibilities"*

My understanding or perspective on leaders/leadership in Nigeria and any impact on culture or tradition is quite clear as there is a huge lack of understanding of what leadership is in Nigeria. Leadership is largely viewed from the hierarchical perspective, where position is equated with leadership. The African culture also plays a major role in how leadership is perceived; naturally leadership is given to elders. However, more and younger Africans are realizing that leadership is about responsibilities and this paradigm shift can be seen in the leadership style of young companies and start-ups. **Mr Tim**, CEO, IT/PM Company (Entrepreneur)

Young leaders we interviewed are confident that young leaders can make a difference, such as a young female leader explained.

*Young female leader, Personal experience: “Organizational values define leadership....”*

Among the youth, there are a few of us in leadership positions; however, this will need more efforts, we must be determined to insist on doing things right, and we need to stand for something. I believe my generation can make Nigeria great again. **Mrs Bella** (Entrepreneur Real Estate)

Many of the leaders we interviewed are engaged in setting up initiatives for youth development and youth leadership. These leaders, each in their own way, are striving to transform Africa. For example, a young leader explained the following:

*Young male leader, Personal experience: “Youth be Inspired...”*

I started to map out what was happening in terms of youth leadership, youth engagement for community and personal development, social inclusion for the youth. So, I started Youth Be Inspired Initiative (YBII). I got other people on-board and we started community-based projects and organized workshops. During this time, the Adolescent Reproductive Health (ARH) and HIV/AIDS project I was part of during my National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) days was seriously struggling. We took the project up, partnered with NYSC to sustain the project and invite more organizations to also join. We also trained 500 NYS Corp’s members on soft skills, choices, and leadership. We conducted a youth dialogue on the theme “Youth Entrepreneurship and Employability: The Key to Sustainable Development”.

In my view, in Nigeria, young people are not afforded the platform to show and demonstrate what they can do. Instead they have to fight the system—so much is stacked against them, there are so many problems, including poverty, lack of infrastructure, and lack of good quality education. But I see there is some movement—there are more people like me, and together we are raising the next generation of leaders. But it is not hopeless, no. Many people are taking initiatives. The saying “Necessity is the mother of innovation” applies here. I myself I am training and raising more people like me. **Mr Adeniji**, Entrepreneur and consultant on project management

*Young female leader, Personal experience: "It is not all about me ...."*

The young generation of leaders is sometimes affected by a sense of entitlement, but I believe it is not all about "me". I think it is important that as young leaders we should constantly think of what we can bring to the table, what we can give, how we can support and how we can do things differently. **Mrs Bella** (Entrepreneur Real Estate)

Senior leaders also showed concern and support for young leaders in Nigeria. One female entrepreneur had the following view and advice:

*Senior female leader, Personal experience: "My advice: Stay in your lane!"*

Internet is a game changer; it is amazingly powerful in terms of accessing information, though one has to be careful what to believe. Young leaders use YouTube and Instagram a lot, also for marketing their businesses. My advice to young people is "Know what your talent is, what your strength is, and then stay in your lane, meaning work on that talent, grow in that lane. Also, surround yourself with people you can learn from, not with people who are also struggling like yourself. Do not worship money like some corrupt leaders. Invest based on moral and ethics. And go for it! Only you can fulfil your dreams." **Ms Ada**, Medical Entrepreneur

Another indicated how her factory supports young people, by going beyond the technical skills training required for their job.

*Senior female leader, Personal experience: "We encourage youth to develop...."*

At our factory, we employ many youth. We also motivate and encourage them to go back to school to finish their school or go for higher education. If necessary we support them with school fees. We train them for their job, skills they need for the job. But we go beyond this; we also train them to become more aware of themselves. **Mrs Abby**, CEO, manufacturing plant

Following the thread of the paradigm shift that interviewees mention is needed for the next set of leaders, they were able to capture the essence of the difficulty in accepting leadership from the youth and from females in positions of authority. The dynamics of transitioning from one type of leadership approach to another is further complicated by cultural contexts that question or look down on women and youth in positions of professional authority. The challenges a young accomplished woman faces as she moves further up the management chain in a corporation or attempts to broaden the scope of her enterprise appear quite daunting. Shifts may need to take place towards optimum leadership styles but boxes may need to be shattered to seamlessly encompass female and young leaders within that paradigm shift.

### 7.7 LEADERS' ATTRIBUTES

In the survey responses and interviews several leaders' attributes were mentioned and considered important. In other words, several qualities or features were regarded as a key characteristic or an inherent part of being a good leader. The following attributes were mentioned by several interviewees:

(a) *Candidness:*

An important quality mentioned by one of the survey respondents was being "forthright" and this was mentioned by seven of our interviewees. One interviewee commented on the lack of training and experience of young people in being candid.

*Young male leader, Personal experience: "How do you learn to be vocal?"*

In university, the lecturers behave as some kind of lords or semi-gods. As a student you cannot dispute them or engage them without dire consequences. So, for 5–7 years you are conditioned to not dispute, not voice ideas, so how can you then suddenly in the workplace be a vocal, innovative person? Young people also do not know how to engage with mentors, as you do not talk openly to your elders. **Mr Adeniji**, Entrepreneur and consultant on project management

(b) *Decisiveness:*

Decisiveness is considered a key attribute, mostly mentioned by young leaders. A young leader explained this as follows:

*Young male leader, Personal experience: "How do you make choices and decisions?"*

What is important is the issue of decisions; I do not make decisions for the volunteers in my organization. When there are issues and decisions to be made, I look at it with them together, and then let them decide. What I also did was to respect them and this has increased their confidence. And they have surprised me; they have gone beyond my wildest dreams and expectations. I always tell people "I am the product of choices I made yesterday. How do you make your choices?" **Mr Adeniji**, Entrepreneur and consultant on project management

The same urge to take control, to take initiative was voiced by a young female leader, who was working as an intern in a company.

*Young female leader, Personal experience: "I decided to speak up..."*

I worked as an intern at a consultancy firm. After half a year, I felt I had been in the shadows for too long. I had many ideas for improvement, and the next management meeting I thought I would speak up. I thought "what is the worst that can happen?" They could say NO to my idea. So, I spoke, and presented my ideas, and everybody was impressed. Someone even asked "what is your name?", which after six months baffled me but it was maybe not a surprise since I kept such a low profile. So, I learned the lesson, that as a subordinate you need to create a spark yourself. Things went very well after that. I was soon given my own account to manage, and then my career sky-rocketed. Soon I was promoted and was as associate consultant at the same level as my earlier boss. **Mrs Dolly** (Entrepreneur Manufacturing/Consulting)

(c) *Doing good:*

In the same spirit as Chris Junior Anaekwe mentioned above, in August 2018 a team of five teenage girls from Nigeria won the Silicon Valley’s 2018 Technovation Challenge. Codenamed “Save A Soul”, the group of five developed the “FD Detector” (Fake-Drugs Detector), an app to help fight fake drugs. By scanning the barcode on drugs, FD Detector can determine the genuineness of a drug. The team built an app that they hope can stem the sale of counterfeit drugs. As such their aim is to “save souls”, which was inspired by the death of one of their brothers due to taking counterfeit drugs (Technext.ng, 2019).

Likewise, in our interviews, it was mostly young leaders (four out of five) choosing to use their skills to “Do-Good”. They explained this as follows:

*Young female leader, Personal experience: “My passion for helping others...”*

During my study I discovered a passion for helping others, after I had joined several humanitarian charitable organizations. I noticed I like to teach and like to help others, this work made me “bloom”.  
**Mrs Dolly** (Entrepreneur Manufacturing/Consulting)

*Young male leader, Personal experience: “Taking action towards a better future”*

I joined a coalition—the Nigerian Youth Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Network. We formed alliances and look for cooperation in order to encourage and engage young people in taking action towards a better future for all. I also became a member of the United Nations Association Nigeria (UNAN), and a member of their youth wing. The UNAN is the recognized civil society arm of the United Nations, which is poised to mobilize, motivate, and educate the entire civil society of Nigeria to the realization of the SDGs. A few weeks ago I did a youth programme on the radio, initiating a conversation with young people on a project Nigerian Youth SDGs Network is working on. **Mr Adeniji**, Entrepreneur and consultant on project management

*Senior female leader, Personal experience: “We need to do something good...”*

We need to do something good—we as Nigerians living abroad need to bring back dignity/sanity to that country, and to our own regions. I meet many young people who are also fed up. They show leadership, they take the bull by the horns and start enterprises, many of them are very talented and brilliant. One young female leader started a mini-farm, another started a clothing store. However, not all are like that, as other young leaders only want to go after the money. **Ms Ada**, Medical Entrepreneur

(d) *Integrity:*

Survey respondents indicated the most important quality for a leader in Africa, with by far the most often mentioned quality is **honesty/integrity (10)**: “Integrity, strong moral and personal values”.

Integrity, and the link to leadership, was also mentioned in detail and emphasized by four interviewees.

*Senior female leader, Personal experience: “The greed for money is destroying everything”*

Over the past decades Nigeria has been in political turmoil, the rich have become richer and the poor get poorer. The private sector is trying to do their business. There is a lot of greed, also in the pharmaceutical sector, with business often in cahoots with the government. As a result, Nigeria has become a dumping ground for rejected, or outright poisonous stuff, like mosquito coils laced with cancerous chemicals, that is flooding the market. Medicines may be counterfeit or have little active ingredients. In my view the greed for money is destroying everything. **Ms Ada**, Medical Entrepreneur

Other interviewees indicated that integrity is one of the most important attributes of a leader.



*Senior female leader, Personal experience: “Leadership is about integrity”*

Leadership is about integrity. I need to be able to respect an individual, I need the individual’s integrity to be obvious and for their experience and knowledge to be evident before I can truly consider that person as a leader, irrespective of their corporate position or their culture. In Nigeria, whilst culture or tradition play a role in leadership the fundamental principle must first apply—does your presumed leader have integrity? I cannot truly say that I have come across a leader that meets my definition of a true leader, but I have seen signs of leadership in various “leaders”. **Mrs Olivia**, MD Construction management company

The following interviewee describes his experience of patronage systems, and how this may affect governance issues.

*Senior male leader, Personal experience: “...”*

There is a culture of “patronage” in Nigeria; selection into a leadership role is a form of patronage and the beneficiary is expected to owe “loyalty” to the benefactor, that is, patron, and not to the institution. This of course can lead to conflict of loyalty/interest and other governance issues ultimately impacting the quality and level of leadership that can be provided. **Mr George**, MD for a large IT organization

One survey respondent remarked the following on political leadership, linking this to patronage and integrity: “Most of African leaders are ‘rulers’ not leaders, especially here in West Africa, especially related to so-called democracy. We have a leader in my state in Nigeria, he doesn’t pay salaries in time—he accumulates five to six months of arrears before he will pay for two months—that is leadership in Africa. Most of the local leaders are the errand runners of the governors, senator, House of Representatives, etc. In my state in Nigeria the state house of assembly member removed the chairman of the local government because this chairman was not paying kick-back to him from the allocation giving to him from federal gov-

ernment. Normally, the governor will cut certain per cent, the members will also cut from the allocation—this is how the system of leadership at local level works.”

*Senior male leader, Personal experience: “I needed to show ‘gratitude’....”*

When my appointment in a large company was confirmed and I was due to receive some standard corporate benefits as a result, I was advised by my more experienced peers/leaders to go and see the Head of Administration (at home). This is the cultural norm, being an expression of “gratitude” and acknowledgment (patronage). This can be misinterpreted!

As a leader I needed to cautiously manage the balance and expectations to ensure it does not compromise my integrity as a leader, the integrity of my boss, that is, my leader, and the integrity of the organization, noting also the culture of patronage and personal loyalties and that by doing so I am deepening its practice. Behaviour, respect, environmental understandings, and choice of words are critical to getting the balance right. This is a key skill required for leadership in Nigeria. **Mr George**, MD for a large IT organization

Our findings thus indicate the importance of the attribute of integrity, and how this is interlinked with, and sometimes hampered by, respect and managing relations, including showing gratitude. It is also directly linked to values around governance, notably the attribute is threatened by certain patronage and loyalty systems, and requires deft handling and balancing skills.

(e) *Adaptability:*

The most often mentioned challenge by half of all survey respondents is **innovation/managing change** (12 times). For example:

- “Managing and adapting to change, a paradigm shift—from directive/authoritative to leading/influencer”
- “Innovation, managing change, softer issues that include mindset change towards a strong ethic of work”

- “Managing the change that is being driven by youth and technology”
- “The leadership style does not usually encourage innovation. Most times leaders prefer the usual practice than embracing change. Even when change is being introduced, very poor change management procedure detracts from the initiative.”

Many young leaders mention the need for change—which they call a paradigm shift, or a transformation, and themselves actively striving towards this, but also setting up initiatives to engage more young people towards this.

*Young female leader, Personal experience: “Young leaders to create a paradigm shift....”*

I am currently working with a team to develop an initiative in my neighbourhood in Lagos that would be termed Young LIVES. My aim is to equip youth at the grassroots levels to become leaders with innovative vocational, entrepreneurial, and social skills. Ultimately my goal is creating a crop of new leaders that can help create a paradigm shift. This will contribute to affecting a change, a transformation in our leaders. We should not wait for the current leaders to step in or change—the youth has to transform early on in their lives: this would give us a bigger hope for our country. I think this is a good place to start. **Mrs Dolly** (Entrepreneur Manufacturing/Consulting)

The ingredients of this often described “Paradigm Shift” has begun to emerge in this section with interviewees focusing on aspects of what doing well needs to look like (candidness, decisiveness, integrity, and adaptability) whilst at the same time doing good. The mixture of doing well and doing good as a simultaneous objective resonates deeply with the interviewees. They seemingly suggest that given the grave economic disparity, excellent leaders need to look contemplatively at success such that mechanisms/approaches that are aimed at success can also promote poverty reduction.

## 7.8 THE ROAD TO BECOMING A LEADER: LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

This section explores how people have become leaders, their role models, and different initiatives for the development of leadership skills.

### 7.8.1 *Determinants of Success*

Many of our respondents and interviewees have had the opportunity to go to school and to university. Some of them were born or grew up in the diaspora, in the UK or USA, and many were schooled and had their first work experiences in the West. Some then decided to return to Nigeria or to travel back and forth for business. One interviewee commented on how a year of volunteering changed his perspective.

*Young male leader, Personal experience: "Volunteering was an eye-opener"*

I am a graduate of Computer Science, and hold an Executive Masters Certificate in Project Management. I was 21 years old when I left school. I then did a year of volunteering through the National Youth Service Corps. I was posted to a different state other than where I grew up, and I joined a CDS (community development service) group that focuses on HIV/AIDS and Adolescents and Reproductive Health (ARH). This period was an eye-opener for me. I was able to see things differently, by engaging with different communities. Also, this made me understand the degree of suffering and problems these people faced. I also came to the realization of how comfortable my life had been, and then I began to see life from their perspective—with their lenses. **Mr Adeniji**, Entrepreneur and consultant on project management

### 7.8.2 *Role Models and Mentors*

Several interviewees (four) mentioned that they have been influenced by people in their surroundings, or family, and that this has shaped their ideas of leadership and also their passions.

*Young male leader, Personal experience: “My dad set an example”*

My dad was always helping and caring for other people, feeding several families—that has been an important example for me growing up. Now for myself, it gives me so much joy if I can make others successful. I cannot really explain it. I sometime wonder why I behave this way. Maybe I was just meant to be like this. I believe each person has to find their purpose, the reason why you are on earth. Each one has to find that thing, and then commit to it. **Mr Adeniji**, Entrepreneur and consultant on project management

The same interviewee then reflected on the shortage of role models and mentors in Nigeria.

*Young male leader, Personal experience: “We need more role models, and more mentors”*

In Nigeria we have both a serious lack of role models and a lack of mentors for youth. The latter, the lack of mentors is more of a problem. A role model can be someone you follow at a distance, you can read about someone’s life and that can provide you with a role model. However, a mentor needs to engage with you, so needs to be close.

Some role models in our country are not good at sharing their story—they only show their success, but do not share the story of how they got to the place where they are now, the problems on the way, and how they dealt with those. In terms of role models, many in Nigeria have no idea of what their father or mother is doing work-wise, they do not go to the office and it is not talked about in the home. It is not like the US or Europe where children are more aware of what their parents do as a job—and this serves as an example.

We also have a shortage of mentors. What many youth are lacking is a level of self-awareness and self-esteem: mentors could help in that development. It is difficult: if you do not understand yourself, how do you move forward? There are not enough efforts in this field. **Mr Adeniji**, Entrepreneur and consultant on project management

Another of the interviewees mentioned an example of a situation in which his boss displayed great leadership, which was somehow against his expectations and a very powerful lesson for him.

*Senior male leader, Personal experience: "Surprise.... my boss displayed great leadership!"*

I once recall a situation where I had spent endless days and sleepless nights to put together a presentation for a concept I had for improvements in the company I was working for then. I presented this to my Manager at the time and he praised me for it and the insight. Whilst this was done innocently, others more experienced warned earlier and continued to inform me that my manager would use it to elevate himself and that I had made a mistake in doing so and should have found a way to get it to senior management directly.

I felt this even more so when I was invited to a senior management meeting which was surprising in itself and even more so when I saw my concept listed as the first agenda topic to be presented by my Manager and even contemplated not attending the meeting. At the meeting my manager started the presentation by saying "This concept being presented today is not my idea, but the idea of one of my team members" and mentioned my name, asked me to stand and backed it up by fully supporting the concept, etc. I almost wept!

That was pure leadership to me and was contrary to the views of many. I have learnt to understand the profound impact such leadership approaches have and that it is not about you but about others and by doing so the others will look up to you! Mr Tim, CEO, IT/PM Company (Entrepreneur)

Others have commented on how they have assumed the role of (informal) mentor to those they lead.

*Senior male leader, Personal experience: “Positively educating those I lead....”*

I find myself as a leader in a position with those I lead and note different expectations or misinterpretation of the culture [of patronage] and having been in similar position in the past towards my own leaders I have taken great pride in positively educating in a friendly/collaborative manner and without prejudice those who have misinterpreted the principles of the culture, many of who continue to thank me for the advice /guideline. **Mr George**, MD for a large IT organization

The interviewees have thus indicated the importance of having role models or mentors in the process of developing as a leader. Many have in turn taken the role of mentor to support other young leaders in their development.

### 7.8.3 Skills Development

Seven out of ten interviewees mentioned having benefited from leadership skills development, and/or being involved in developing skills of other leaders. Young leaders have benefited from leadership skills or entrepreneurial skills development programmes organized, for example, by the World Bank, or the YALI programme, which is described below.

*Young male leader, Personal experience: “I am not alone on my journey ...”*

I benefited from being a member of YALI programme. The Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) was launched by former President Obama in 2010 to support young African leaders as they spur growth and prosperity, strengthen democratic governance, and enhance peace and security across sub-Saharan Africa. What was of greatest benefit to me from my participation in YALI is the fact that I understand I am not alone on this journey of changing the narrative. There are similar people who use different approaches, different platforms, but are striving for the same things. This was a comfort for me because till that time I was mostly self-motivated and sometimes faced a lot of struggles. But the journey is lighter if people are with you. This helps, especially in moments that you feel down. **Mr Adeniji**, Entrepreneur and consultant on project management

One of the young female leaders explained the impact of doing internships, which she first did in the UK, and is still much less common in Nigeria.

*Young female leader, Personal experience: "The power of internships...."*

What I liked best of my Masters programme in the UK, was the practical exposure, especially during internships of two to three months. This helped me a lot with the academic work, and also exposed me to what the workplace is like. Nowadays 2–3 months practical internships which are work-based are slowly becoming more common in Nigeria. This is a great way to get into the system.  
**Mrs Dolly** (Entrepreneur Manufacturing/Consulting)

Several interviewees indicate that they see supporting and creating other leaders as a key responsibility for a leader.

*Young female leader, Personal experience: "I am a mentor, and open-minded...."*

I am a mentor for Tony Elumelu Foundation and the VC4A Make-IT Mentor Driven Capital Program and also recently appointed a Regional Impact Coordinator for the Youth Assembly organized by Friend Ambassadors Foundation, USA. I try to be open-minded and make no rash decisions, I take what everyone is saying and try not to be biased but objective. I did not particularly learn this leadership style from anywhere; I think I derived this from my empathetic nature, and when I am in situations I imagine what it is like being in the other's person's shoes/position. That basically influences my reactions.  
**Mrs Bella** (Entrepreneur Real Estate)



*Senior female leader, Personal experience: “Leaders create other leaders”*

I believe that a leader is only a leader if they create other leaders and by that I mean other smart people/other leaders! If you are not doing this then you are simply just a boss. Is there a difference in Nigeria between the perception of a boss and a leader? I would perhaps say no as dependent on perception or literacy they can both be seen as the same. A leader should put more into others than themselves, should let others shine, should compassionately supervise, mentor, train, impact others, and should really have no need to be compelled to motivate or persuade.

Leadership should not be competitive and as a true leader they will still follow you, many years after, they will always defer to you, you don’t need followers, they will just follow, and that is leadership. A leader is appreciative, rewarding, acknowledging, and keen to develop others. **Mrs Olivia**, MD Construction management company

#### 7.8.4 *Confidence*

Several young leaders commented on the fact that they learned by themselves, or are fast learners. This gave them the confidence to take initiatives and change direction, start enterprises, and initiate community development projects.

*Young female leader, Personal experience: “We have more than the sky as our limit....”*

My advice to young leaders is to think about what service you can provide, how you can achieve the ultimate goal of empowering others, and lead a transformation, how you can empower others in a way that they can impact the next person. There are so many opportunities: we have more than the sky as our limit! **Mrs Dolly** (Entrepreneur Manufacturing/Consulting)

Not surprisingly, one could draw a direct link between leadership attributes and Leadership Development as presented by the interviewees. Poverty reduction in this section would suggest not only breaking the cycle of poverty through opportunity but also “training up” those that are given an opportunity. For the paradigm shift to work it would appear that “the shift” is only sustainable when it is cascaded through mentorship and proper guidance at all levels which builds confidence, enables empowerment, and creates a sense of communal service.

## 7.9 CONCLUSIONS/DISCUSSION

The case study research and interviews have provided us with a wealth of perspectives that help us understand better the tremendous challenges and potential that currently exist in Nigeria. For instance, the concept of hierarchy is considered very important in the context of leadership in Nigeria, but perspectives on this are changing. We found that 95% of our survey respondents prefer a reduced hierarchy, in other words less enactment of power differences, than they currently witness in the society. One of the interviewees mentioned the need of finding the right balance between “modern” governance leadership guidelines and traditional cultural beliefs and traditions.

*Senior male leader, Personal experience: “acculturation of corporate governance...”*

Overall, there has to be a strengthening and acculturation of corporate governance and leadership in Nigerian institutions. This is important as certain governance/leadership expectations are alien to our culture and therefore cannot be taken as understood by the leaders and more especially the led.

Leaders and the led should very clearly know and appreciate the limits of the power and authority in a professional work environment based on clear governance leadership guidelines that would not lead to abuse of office by the leadership with the acquiescence of the led or be in direct conflict with traditional or cultural beliefs or traditions. A good leader needs to understand this and apply the appropriate leadership style that enforces the balance. **Mr George**, MD for a large IT organization

Instead of the most commonly used leadership styles, such as authoritarian and distrustful, leaders' perspectives are favouring a change towards more people-oriented leadership styles, and less hierarchy and control enacted by leaders. Therefore, future leaders need to be able to be flexible and find a balance regarding the use of hierarchy in leadership style and approach. There may not be a single formula that works, however it is clear that a more conscientious approach, a shift in mindset as stated in Sect. (7.4) by Mr Tim, is needed. However, even if leaders are ready for this "shift", reality suggests that those they lead may need more guidance and directives along this process. Thus, as illustrated by the interviewees, there is a balancing act between participatory/approachable leadership within the hierarchy that creates space for inspiring results. At the same time, leaders indicate the importance of having a vision as a leader—which sets the direction and also involved taking control of this direction.

Additional to the complexities associated with a paradigm shift, our interviewees were able to capture the essence of the difficulty in accepting leadership from the youth and from females in positions of authority. Shifts may thus not only need to take place towards optimum leadership styles, but within this change female and young leaders would need to be given space and respect as well.

The attributes identified regarding what doing well needs to look like are candidness, decisiveness, integrity, and adaptability, whilst at the same time doing good was emphasized. The mixture of doing well and doing good as a simultaneous objective resonates deeply with the interviewees.

We can conclude that leaders in the private sector view their role as much broader than conducting their business and making a profit. Many feel responsible to address Nigeria's socio-economic challenges by providing employment, developing young leaders, and supporting community development. The need for leaders who honour the value of integrity is also considered very important.

Young leaders in our case study emerged as entrepreneurial and daring, as well as convinced of the need for "doing good". By "taking the bull by the horns", these young leaders are set on a path to shift the paradigm and transform the society. Interviewees also provided insight into how breaking the cycle of poverty through opportunity needs also the "training up" of those that are given an opportunity. For the paradigm shift to work sustainably, it needs to be supported through mentorship and proper guidance at all levels which builds confidence, enables empowerment, and creates a sense of communal service.

As such, this case study is a story of hope, of an optimistic view of the future in which these leaders will make a difference, not only for themselves, but particularly in their wider environment. This is an opposing view to the one voiced by Achebe in 1984, as we have documented personal experiences of leaders who take their responsibility and set a personal example.

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# Bridging the Generation Gap: Perceptions of Leadership by Senior and Young Leaders in Tanzania

*Mwatima Juma and Eva Jordans*

## 8.1 INTRODUCTION

Numerous publications have explored the characteristics of good leadership. In this chapter we explore the perceptions of senior and young people of the following: what makes a leader effective, what kinds of behaviour help him/her succeed and be trusted, what challenges do they face, and what do they need to develop as a leader? The study aims to be of use for developing young leaders for the future, especially (but not exclusively) for people in Tanzania and Africa.

The chapter is structured as follows:

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- Section 8.2—“Context”: Youth in Tanzania: We describe the current demographic situation in Tanzania and the implications for young people in terms of employment and opportunities.
- Section 8.3—“Case Study Data”: We describe how our data were collected.

Sections 8.4, 8.5, 8.6, 8.7, and 8.8 report our case study findings.

- Section 8.4—“Perceptions of Hierarchy”: We explore the perspectives of senior and young leaders on different roles and responsibilities and their expectations of leaders in a period of change.
- Section 8.5—“The Need for Change in Leadership Style”: A shift towards people-oriented leadership styles: expectations of today’s leaders.
- Section 8.6—“Leaders’ Diversity: Leadership Across Generations”: We explore the constraints and challenges identified by senior leaders and young leaders and identify solutions and suggestions to address these challenges.
- Section 8.7—“Gender and Leadership”: We describe leaders’ diversity from a gender perspective.
- Section 8.8—“Leader’s Attributes”: What leaders’ attributes were considered important? In our survey and interviews the following five attributes emerged: decisiveness, candidness, doing good, honesty/integrity, adaptability.
- Section 8.9—“The Road to Becoming a Leader”: We explore how people have become leaders, their role models and different initiatives for the development of leadership skills, and describe some of their development needs such as the need for mentoring of young people
- Section 8.10—“Conclusions/Discussion”: Lessons learned and suggestions for further development of young leaders in Tanzania.

## 8.2 CONTEXT: YOUTH IN TANZANIA

The Tanzanian population and housing census of 2012 reports that the proportion of youth (*vijana* in Swahili) in the total population is 79% (using the official definition of youth as all people under 35 years), with 35% of these between 15 and 35 years of age (NBS, 2015). The same census indicates that 67% of the working population is below 35 years of age. The implication is that senior people increasingly manage mostly young staff and also that many young people are holding or entering into leadership positions. The United Nations Association Tanzania indicates that “Tanzania, like much of the continent, is experiencing a youth bulge and if the right policies are in place, can convert on demographic dividends in the coming decades” (UNA, 2018).

There are currently 900,000 young people entering the job market in Tanzania every year, with only 4% successfully completing secondary level education (Mo Ibrahim Foundation, 2012). This figure is expected to rise. Yet only 50,000–60,000 new jobs are expected to be created in the formal sector each year (Government of Tanzania, 2014).

According to Haji (2015), high barriers to entry into formal jobs and a large informal economy lead to self-employment as the only—or most viable—option for most young Tanzanians. The youth employment landscape is also characterized by high levels of informality and vulnerability in self-employment, particularly in urban areas. The vast majority of businesses are owned by “reluctant entrepreneurs” (Banerjee & Duflo, 2011)—those confined to very small operations (generally self-employed) with little specialization, operating just a few hours per day or week in the margins of the economy. They have no choice, as wage employment is not an option, and they have to operate their own businesses to survive.

Most prefer wage employment over self-employment, even if this is based on on-the-spot payment, providing quick cash income but no security, such as porters or motorcycle taxi drivers. The probability of finding steady wage employment is minimal; therefore they tend to become self-employed by default. In fact, this is the case for most self-employed youth, who cite a lack of success in finding salaried work as the main reason for self-employment (Bridges, Louise, Alessio, & Trudy, 2013).

*Young Leader’s personal experience: A graduate makes farming her business*  
 Nowadays I am a businesswoman. I completed my college education two years ago and was looking for a job in the city. However, there was no good work available at all. I then decided to move back to my parent’s village in Mwanza region. I managed to get some loan and rented a plot of land. I am now growing paddy, and because I follow all good agricultural practices, it is quite profitable—I earn more than I would have earned if I had stayed in the city. I employ one man as agricultural labourer, and plan to expand my business next year if I can get more land. **Rosa, a young farmer**

The National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty II (known as MKUKUTA II) recognizes the importance of youth in growth and development, with a focus on employment (United Republic of Tanzania, 2010).

School enrolment has been increasing since the early 2000s. Primary education enrolment stood at 80% by 2014, and the secondary school enrolment rate was 24.4% in 2008 (UNESCO, 2018). Yet, young Tanzanians face



several barriers to a successful transition into the labour market. Haji (2015) characterize the Tanzanian youth perspective as follows: “Education is the main weapon needed by all young people as long as it is quality education of the right kind to enable young people to access employment opportunities.”

The World Bank (2014) indicates that improvements in basic education are necessary to improve the chances of productive employment opportunities for the youth. However, beyond the cognitive skills typically acquired through formal education, many youth also lack the behavioural, or “soft skills”, such as communicating effectively and getting along with others, that are also required in the workplace. The World Bank report further states that behavioural skills rank almost as high as numeracy among the most highly sought skills by employers.

Haji (2015) states that there is a diverse range of national programmes and donor and civil society interventions that attempt to respond to Tanzania’s youth employment challenge. However, there is a lack of evidence for the success of many of these programmes and a lack of information on whether there have been efforts to scale them. With each initiative having a slightly different agenda, many efforts are duplicative and could benefit from better coordination with other interventions, particularly those that target the same sector.

The National Youth Development Policy, reviewed and amended in 2007, calls on the government to provide avenues for youth participation in national decision-making (United Republic of Tanzania, 2007). However, anecdotal evidence from a focus group of Tanzanian youth suggests cultural barriers to productive employment opportunities (Tamasha, 2015). For example, the youth comment that they are not considered important members of society, and hence are not given opportunities to participate in the governance and development of their communities. Further, they are perceived as a source of free labour by their families and elders and often are not empowered to access or acquire land or resources for independent production opportunities.

### 8.3 CASE STUDY DATA

Our case study findings are based on data from an online survey and in-depth interviews. Survey respondents were sought among professional networks of agricultural and development specialists, both in government and in the private sector. A total of 179 network members were sent the invitation; 38 (4 female, 34 male), or 21%, responded. Of those who responded, 79% had more than six years of leadership experience, indicating that the majority were senior leaders. The survey was followed up by

**Table 8.1** Demographic information of the interviewees (Tanzania)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Young/senior</i>	<i>Position/role</i>
Simon Kabiwe	Male	Senior	University professor
Mugis Riziki	Male	Young	Government official
John Nolari	Male	Senior	Government leader
Khamis Ali	Male	Senior	Director in government
Haji Mkenda	Male	Young	Vice-secretary of a cooperative
Lucia Mchomvu	Female	Young	Company intern
Mathias Nangai	Male	Senior	Company director
Rita Msemakweli	Female	Young	University director
Eliza Mcha	Female	Young	University lecturer
Rose	Female	Young	Farmer
Mwanaidi Saidi	Female	Senior	International development leader

**Table 8.2** Coding frequencies by attributes (Tanzania)

Code Category (5)	Codes (15)	Number of times coded (134)	In how many different interviews (11)	Attributes of interviewee (Number)				Number of interviewees, by attribute, who mentioned the coded issues two or more times				
				Age		Gender		Age		Gender		
				Youth	Senior	Man	Woman	Youth	Senior	Man	Woman	
01-Perceptions of hierarchy	General	12	8	3	5	6	2		1	1	1	1
	Organization Specific	5	3	3	0	1	2	2				
	Strategic Leadership	3	2	1	1	2	0		1		1	
02- Leadership Style	People Oriented Leadership	20	8	4	4	5	3	3	4	4	3	
	Women leaders	4	2	2	0	0	2	1				1
03_Leader Diversity	Youth	16	9	4	5	6	3	2	3	5		
	Candidness	5	3	2	1	3	0	1	1	2		
04_Leadership Attributes	Decisiveness	5	5	2	3	2	3					
	Integrity	5	4	2	2	3	1		1	1		
	Doing Good	4	3	2	1	2	1	1		1		
	Adaptability	5	5	3	2	4	1					
	Leadership determinants	13	10	6	4	5	5	2	1	2	1	
05_Leadership Development	Role Model	7	7	3	4	5	2					
	Skills Development	15	9	5	4	5	4	2	4	4	2	
	Confidence	15	10	5	5	6	4	1	2	2	1	

in-depth qualitative interviews, which were held with 11 leaders (6 male, 5 female; 6 youth, 5 senior). None of the leaders interviewed participated in the online survey. Overall, this case study thus covers the views of 49 different leaders (40 male, 9 female; 35 senior, 14 youth). Additional information was collected from the Internet and social media platforms.

Information on the interviewees is shown in Table 8.1

Table 8.2 shows the coding scheme used for the case studies (see the Methodology chapter for an explanation) along with the coding frequencies, which are also disaggregated by attributes of age and gender, and number of interviewees who mentioned coded issues two or more times.

The following sections (Sects. 8.4, 8.5, 8.6, 8.7, and 8.8) report the findings from both the survey and interview data, organized by the interview coding categories.

## 8.4 PERCEPTIONS OF HIERARCHY

We now turn to perceptions of leadership and hierarchy, and more specifically to perceptions of different roles and responsibilities, and the expectations of leaders in an era of change. Tanzania as a nation encompasses different ethnolinguistic groups, several of which are represented among our interviewees. However, in our research we do not distinguish the data between different ethnolinguistic groups.

An important concept that is influenced by culture is the norms and value around hierarchy. This topic is at the centre of many on- and off-line discussions in Tanzania, with for example many lively social media discussions on leadership. Sending out the link to our leadership-survey on the first of June 2017 resulted in some very quick responses, 12 of 38 responses were almost immediate. One respondent reacted: “Yes, this is exactly what we need right now! Where can I buy the book?”

We recorded both respondents’ experiences and their personal *preferences* towards hierarchy. The data show that in terms of personal preference the majority believe that followers should be able to fully, or at least to some degree, question their leaders; that is, they have a preference for low hierarchy. If we combine these data with respondents’ assessments of their actual experience, we see the gap between preference and experience, with their experience, for the majority, more hierarchical than personally preferred. The data ( $N = 38$ ) is presented in Fig. 8.1.

The results are positioned in four quadrants; the respondents in two of these could be considered broadly satisfied (the green quadrants), and the respondents in the remaining two quadrants could be considered broadly dissatisfied (the red quadrants).

### *Broadly dissatisfied:*

- *Lower right quadrant:* The largest group of 21 respondents (55%) considers the current practice as quite or very hierarchical and would personally prefer less hierarchy than they currently witness in society.
- *Upper left quadrant:* one respondent considers the current practice not very hierarchical and would prefer more hierarchy than currently witnessed in society.
- One respondent considers the current practice average (falls on the experience half-way point) but prefers low hierarchy and could thus also be considered broadly dissatisfied.

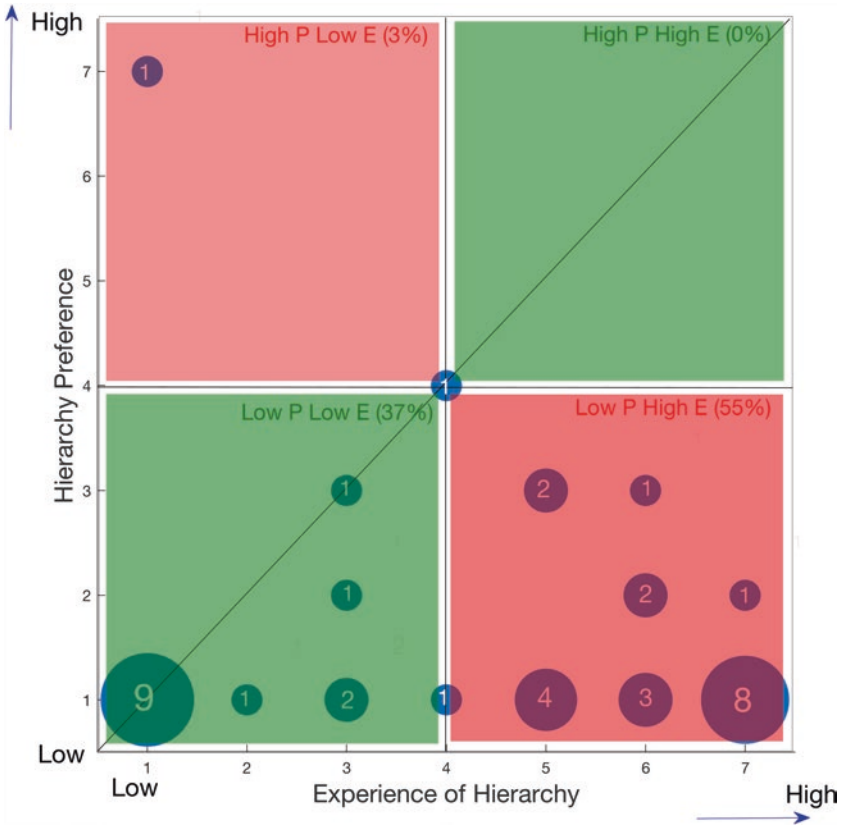


Fig. 8.1 Experiences and preferences towards hierarchy (Tanzania)

*Broadly satisfied:*

- *Lower left quadrant:* 14 respondents (37%) consider the current practice not very hierarchical, and this corresponds with their preference.
- *Upper right quadrant:* No respondents.

Right in the middle, there is one respondent who considers the current practice of hierarchy as average (4), which is the same as the preference.

If we look at this in more detail, the closer a respondent's answer is placed near the diagonal, the more satisfied this person is, as the practice and preference are almost identical; if far from the diagonal, the level of

satisfaction is lower. In this case, 11 respondents (28%) responses are on the diagonal, mostly (10) in the lower left quadrant. A further two respondents are close to the diagonal, (one space removed). Thus, these respondents (a total of 13, or 34%) are more or less satisfied. However, the majority, (25 or 66%) of respondents, is placed further from the diagonal, with all except one preferring less hierarchy, in other words less enactment of power differences than they currently experience in their society. The following experience illustrates the frustration and emotional distress caused if the hierarchical attitude of a leader is mismatched with a person's preference.

*Senior leader's personal experience: Inferno*

During my career I have had mostly supportive leaders, with whom I had good relationships. Except for four years I had a leader who was negative and obstructive. This period I remember as *an inferno*, in which I was blocked and belittled and could not do my job. She made my life very difficult, disagreed with everything I wanted to do, and spoke publicly very bad about me. None of my attempts to make it work succeeded, and I felt completely undermined. It got so bad that if any of my team members wanted to achieve something, it had to be presented to my boss as something that I was against! Trying to understand why she was behaving like that, I think one reason was that I was older and appointed on my merit and education, while my boss was appointed on her connections. She lacked the skills and experience, and as a result felt possibly inferior and maybe even threatened by me. Maybe also jealous. I could not resolve it and thus applied for a job somewhere else. This negative experience taught me a lot of how NOT to be a leader. **Mwanaidi Saidi**, senior leader international development

The following story is shared widely in Tanzania, which is a variation on the Aesop fable of Lion and Fox (DaBoss, 2013):

*The Old Lion and the Tortoise.*

An old Lion could no longer go hunting and was hiding in a cave and was asking others' help to bring him food. A tortoise was cautious and was watching closely. He saw animal paw prints going inside, but none of the

footprints was pointing outwards. Standing at a safe distance from the cave, he inquired politely after the Lion's health. The Lion replied that he was very ill indeed, and asked the tortoise to bring him food. But the tortoise thanked the Lion very kindly for the invitation. "I should be glad to do as you ask", he added, "but I have noticed that there are many footprints leading into your cave and none coming out. Please tell me, how do your visitors find their way out again?"

The moral of the story is that many followers just follow, but that it would be better if they were to evaluate and think critically about their leader's behaviour.

On social media a picture from Zambia (see <https://www.lusakatimes.com/2017/03/21/minister-katambos-kneeling-picture-goes-viral/>) was trending in Tanzania in March 2017 (Lusaka Times, 2017). Zambia's Livestock and Fisheries Minister, Michael Katambo, was seen kneeling before President Edgar Lungu. Someone on social media wrote: "Africa will not progress if Africans don't stop treating their leaders like gods." In Tanzania kneeling is considered too extreme by the majority of participants in the online discussion of this picture. One comment was as follows: "Africa is the continent of darkness, a continent with curse and misfortune, where there are no leaders—only rulers." This picture is considered shameful for both the Minister and the President. Others point out cultural differences. Even in some areas of Tanzania, kneeling has been common. For example in some rural areas, women are supposed to kneel before their husband when they are providing food or when greeting someone (e.g. Mwanza and Shinyanga regions).

The impact of culture on perceptions of leadership was often referred to in the interviews, mostly by senior men.

*Senior leader's personal experience: We are running a dual system*

In Tanzania we are running a dual system: many young people have got a Western education, but are working in the African context. In my view it is not possible to merge them, there is a discrepancy—we have to pick the best elements of each. I sometimes compare this with being a cow in a human body—the mind/perspective does not fit the context. **Simon Kabiwe**, University professor

Among the 38 survey respondents, many indicated that vision and people orientation are the most important qualities of a leader (17). Specific qualities mentioned included:

- To listen and allow others expressing their opinion, while working as a team
- Visionary leaders with motivational skills and persuasion
- Caring for people
- The ability to inspire and empower those that we lead
- Inclusiveness leadership that allows democracy to grow
- Inspirational leader
- Change manager

Survey respondents also indicated personality issues (16) and leadership style (12) as the two major causes for people to lose respect for a leader. Display of an (inappropriate) authoritarian attitude and abuse of power were mentioned multiple times:

- *Personality issues*: arrogance; behaving as though they cannot go wrong; someone who does not accept ideas; disrespect on the part of the leader; being selfish and self/centred
- *Leadership style*: authoritarian; not listening and engaging staff; not involving followers; dictatorial behaviours; toxic leader, abusive, inappropriate use of power

## 8.5 THE NEED FOR CHANGE IN LEADERSHIP STYLE

The picture that emerges from this case study is of a period of transition: both young and senior leaders' perspectives are favouring the need for a change towards more people-oriented leadership styles, and less hierarchy and control enacted by leaders. Respondents and interviewees shared the following personal perspectives on this change, which are at times at odds with those of others around them:

- I expect from my leader to accept change. Be less of a boss and more of a leader.
- My biggest challenge is when leaders that report to me, both male and female, easily adopt the authoritarian leadership style in reflection of what the society has come to accept.

- I want to avoid a climate of fear, I do not like hierarchy, instead I want to create a climate of trust and no tensions (something I learned from a senior colleague).
- I can be directive and very serious on critical issues, while laissez-faire on other issues.
- People find it strange that I, as a Director, am driving the car myself instead of having a driver. I do not think that this lowers my standing. I really dislike hierarchy anyway.

*Young leader's personal experience: "Changes are happening"*

I am in my early 30s and after studying in the US have returned to Tanzania. Currently, I am in my first job in a government institution. In my experience, perspectives on leadership are changing. Before you could not approach your boss, but now there is a lot of trust of junior staff. In my current job, my first boss retired, and my new boss is very engaging. When my boss was new, he invited the young staff and told us "let us sit down and discuss". I have been lucky and been able to set up some initiatives on my own. In the 80s or 90s in my institution, the boss would be this unapproachable mythical figure, but now they want to engage.

However, my current boss started initially with a micro-management approach, he wanted to check all details of my work, even go through all vouchers I had to account for. But I told him: "In this way we are not going to get anything done, we are not able to move this ship forward, let me take care of my work." He accepted this, but maybe 5 to 10 years ago I could not tell this to him.

We are changing much faster than people think. We need to give space to the youth. At the same time, older people get disappointed in young people, for example, young men in politics. So, I also see a backlash from senior people, they think the young have an erratic approach. However, I believe it is a different way of thinking—so we have a generation gap here. **Mugis Riziki**, young government official

Analyses of our survey data showed that respondents wanted their own leaders to improve most on people management and communication (16), personal values/attitude (14). In terms of people management and communication, leaders could improve on listening to followers, allowing



others with different opinions to be heard, allowing others to make mistakes and challenge them to do better, and providing clear instructions to subordinates. In terms of personal values/attitude, key issues leaders could improve included transparency, good governance, control of corruption, being proactive, being fair and honest, being honest with our resources, being more sensitive to the feelings of staff, and practising what he wants his/her followers to adopt.

The experience with, or need for, different leadership styles, based on Redeker, de Vries, Rouckhout, Vermeren, and De Fruyt (2014) eight leadership styles, was expressed in different ways.

Styles seen as negative, mentioned as major causes of losing respect:

- Behaving as though they cannot go wrong, autocratic leadership (authoritarian style)
- Mistrust and disrespect on the part of a leader (distrustful style)
- Withdrawn, not being focused and slow decision maker, cowardice (withdrawn style)

Styles that would be good, mentioned as expectations of leaders, or ways to improve:

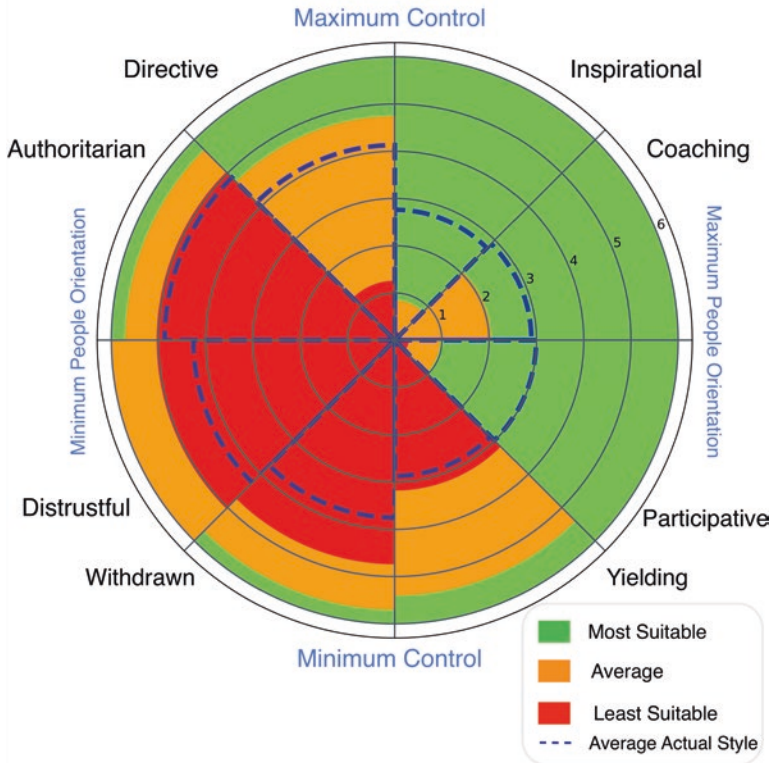
- My leader needs to listen more and get advice prior to taking major decisions, expand freedom of speech, and allow others with different opinions to be heard (participative style).
- My leader needs to allow others to make mistakes and challenge them to do better (coaching style).
- My leader needs to give clear instructions to subordinates (directive style).

Styles most appreciated, and most important qualities:

- To be visionary, inspirational, and a good change manager (inspirational style)
- Being people centred, being caring for people, love for people (participative style)

Respondents rated how frequently they have experienced these eight leadership styles and indicated the most and least suitable leadership styles for addressing the challenges that leaders face. Combining these two

## Actual Styles Versus Perceived Suitability



**Fig. 8.2** Actual leadership styles versus perceived suitability (Tanzania)

questions in one figure, with the styles ranked according to their suitability, we see the following pattern emerging (Fig. 8.2).

Least common styles such as people-oriented inspirational, participative, and coaching styles are considered most suitable styles. The style most common in terms of manifestation, authoritarian, as well as the quite common withdrawn and distrustful styles, are considered least suitable.

The directive style is in the middle—it is relatively common and considered averagely suitable. The yielding style is not very common, nor considered very suitable. An example of directive style is presented below.

*Senior leader's personal experience: "What he wants"*

I have a nickname in Swahili "alitakalo"—which means—*what he wants [happens]*. For example, I had a night watchman in the office and gave him the duty to water the plants at night. At first, the watchman refused as it was not his job. But I reasoned with him: that as a watchman he was not very busy—and at night the water pressure is good. Then he accepted the job. **John Nolari**, senior government leader

The need for people-oriented leadership was mentioned multiple (20) times in interviews by eight leaders, both young and senior leaders and men and women, with seven of them mentioning this more than once during the interview. However, not everyone is yet convinced or has the skills to implement such a different style in practice. Challenges caused by this ongoing transition were among the most frequently mentioned leadership challenges, commented on by more than half of the survey respondents (21, or 55%), and applied to both followers' behaviour as well as the lack of skills of a leader. Some examples of how they expressed this challenge are the following:

- staff are not working of their own free will, they require close supervision;
- blind following from subordinates;
- people have a high degree of laxity completing assigned tasks, this requires constant monitoring, lack of honesty, and poor understanding of the followers about the position and role of their leader;
- being able to motivate your staff without using money; and
- team members do not take into consideration that I as a leader can be wrong sometimes.

## 8.6 LEADERS' DIVERSITY: LEADERSHIP ACROSS GENERATIONS

Here we explore the constraints and challenges identified by senior leaders and young leaders, along with the solutions they suggested for addressing these issues. We also look at the impact of gender differences on leadership.

### 8.6.1 *Senior Leaders' Perspectives*

Our interviews with senior leaders revealed a strong emphasis on values, such as honesty and respect. In addition, they mentioned the need for qualities such as discipline, hard work, and ambition.

A number of senior leaders reported being greatly influenced by leadership values portrayed by Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, Prime Minister and President of Tanzania from 1961 to 1984. These values can be described as the need for unity and the ability to decide who should be a leader: someone who knows how to lead people, with a good character, who takes responsibility, who will meet the expectations of the people instead of following their personal interests, and who is not corrupt. Some senior leaders interviewed were aware of the failure to live up to those values today.

*Senior leader's personal experience: "We let it go"*

Most important quality is honesty and you need to listen to people, you cannot be a dictator. Nowadays, young leaders can be stubborn, and portray as if they know it all, have no honesty and do not perceive the values and culture. I am blaming myself and my generation. We let it go, we lost focus; we were not a good role model for young people. As the older generation we lost grip. For example, in my office I was supervising the work of 24 Regional Offices. Every Friday afternoon Regional managers were expected to call me to report on the achievements and challenges of the week. They would have to have a very good reason not to call. Nowadays, often the leader does not care, and then we see things fall apart. We lose good young leaders if we do not hold their hands. **John Nolari**, a senior government leader

Others tried to live up to the image of a good leader but were also critical of the younger generation.

*Senior leader's personal experience: "Still learning"*

In terms of developing my leadership style, most defining have been the role models in my first job, both my boss and his colleague, who demonstrated effective leadership. In addition, I have read a range of

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management books, which theories I have tried to put into practice. For example, I learned that you should not underrate anybody, everybody has potential as long as you can see this and steer them in the right direction. There is still a lot to improve in my leadership, especially to delegate more of my responsibilities and prepare for my succession. I find that it is quite a challenge to decide who to delegate to and what result this may have, and letting go of some of my responsibilities.

I observe that some young people expect success, money, and a good life immediately, or automatically, after finishing their degree. In my own generation you waited for people to praise you. Instead I believe success can only come if young people are led well, given good examples, supported well and of course by hard work. **Khamis Ali**, a senior director in government

### 8.6.2 *Young Leaders' Perspectives*

Young leaders' perception of hierarchy is that they express the explicit need to be consulted and trusted by their leader, and a need for flexibility towards them. They also want to enact change and feel that with their education and IT skills they can make a difference.

*Young leader's personal experience: "Young people need trust, to be consulted and praise"*

I have just graduated from University of Dar es Salaam with an MA in Education. I am one of the few young people in my area to have a higher education. My dream is to set up an organization to help other young people access higher education. For now I live with my parents in my village, and I applied and work as vice-secretary of a cooperative. I do not yet get an income, so I do this work as a volunteer.

I would like to see my boss behave differently. Most irritating thing for me is the issue of distrust due to the older people's mindset. They always think you cannot trust young people, the idea that we "vijana—youth" are not trustworthy is common with existing

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leaders. Also my boss thinks this way—he does not trust me 100% to leave me to do everything. Also there is a notion we are liars, he wants to follow up and make enquiries, to find out everything is OK. Because of my age he asks a lot of questions. What annoys me is that leaders are not participatory, they are not listening to the advice I give. My view is: two heads are better than one. Instead most leaders put more emphasis on giving you advice, but not recognizing that you have also some advice that you can provide. I try to provide suggestions, but his acceptance is not the same as mine. My advice will help the efficiency of what we do, but he does not want to hear that. What I like is leaders with open communication and that they give feedback to me. Praise, as young people we need to praise our leaders when they achieve results, but it should also be the other way—we also need praise. Then everybody will be proud and it will be teamwork. **Haji Mkenda**, a young vice-secretary of a cooperative

Abella Paul Bateyunga was chosen as a Young African Leadership Initiative (YALI) fellow in 2014. In 2015, she, at 29, founded Tanzania Bora (in Kiswahili, “bora” means better) to give young Tanzanians a voice, a sense of belonging, and a connection to other youth who want to change their country for the better. “Inspire leadership” is one of their core values, explained as “we lead by example through action and results; we are fully responsible for building a generation of young leaders” (Tanzania Bora, 2018). Abella describes her vision of engaging youth as partners in development in a blog for USAID (Bateyunga, 2017): “Youth bring three key tools to the development field: Innovative ideas, a ‘wicked’ broad knowledge of how to mobilize networks via media (especially new media) and record numbers of youth in Tanzania and around the world. We aren’t the hope of tomorrow, we are changing things today.”

### 8.6.3 *Childhood Generation Gap*

On social media there has been a lively discussion (in Tanzania, but also in the region such as for example in Malawi) on vast differences in childhoods between one generation and the next. In these discussions the generations

are termed “Child A and Child B”. Child A is of the older generation, now in his/her 40s or 50s and has had a tough childhood in a village in relative poverty, was able to attend school but had to walk a long distance there, often barefoot, and often experienced corporal punishment. After many struggles and a difficult life, Child A now has a steady job and income, often owns a car and lives in a city. Child A is the father or mother of Child B. Child B is in his/her 20s or 30s and has always lived in relative luxury, attended school but was often dropped off at school by car, and has been given everything he/she wants. The Child A parent wants to protect and care for the child as well as possible so that the child does not experience the same hardship that they themselves experienced. This is also referred to as “helicopter parents”, who are hovering over their child. Examples are that some parents write Child B’s CV and application letters when they look for a job or give Child B a house and a car when they marry.

*Senior leader’s personal experience: The “mean” mother*

Some Child A parents are struggling to teach their Child B the necessity of building up certain endurance in an environment where doing so is considered mean. For example, high government official never used his office vehicle to send his kids to school. His wife and friends were translating that as him being mean. To him it is the car is mine for my work and not available for others.

In my own case when we refused to buy mobile phones for our kids, in secondary school they kept saying “Mam, in our class it is the number of those that don’t have phone that is counted and we are only 3 out of a class of 40”. But we said: okay, wait until you get your own money and then you can buy it. When my kids went to study in US and started working at weekend jobs, the first thing they bought was a phone and they were very proud of their own achievement. Now as adults they do appreciate the lessons taught them through Child A’s stubbornness.

Child A sees it is his/her obligation to protect Child B so that he/she doesn’t go through what Child A went through in growing up. The failure of Child A is to recognize that hardship was a necessary step for maturing with a sense of responsibility. Instead, Child A sees it as an unnecessary burden which should not be allowed to happen to any child. **Mwanaidi Saidi**, senior leader international development

There is thus a rapid growth in wealth and security from the last to this generation. However, the effect is that Child B does not realize what it takes to become successful; instead, s/he feels entitled to a world of comforts and luxury. Young people, Children B, are as a consequence seen by the older generation as not serious, spoilt, and not able to achieve on their own.

However, there might also be a positive side. Studying the impact of poverty on confidence levels, Fell and Hewstone (2015) found that those experiencing poverty are significantly less confident in their own ability to succeed, which (often) becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy. Their review shows that growing up with economic privilege and a sense of entitlement, derived from the achievement of parents, does seem to lead to greater confidence.

#### *8.6.3.1 Generation Y/Millennials*

The above discussion echoes the perception of generation Y or Millennials in Western countries, the generation born from the early 1980s to the early 2000s. Though the common traits of this generation are disputed among researchers, millennials have on the one hand generally been characterized as lazy, narcissistic (Generation Me), and prone to jump from job to job. Millennials also crave feedback and recognition from their bosses and are seen to have unrealistic expectations of working life. They have also been described in positive ways. They are generally regarded as being more liberal and open-minded. Other positive adjectives used to describe them include confident, self-expressive, upbeat, and receptive to new ideas and ways of living.

#### *8.6.3.2 Dot.com Generation*

In Africa, the younger generation is also often termed the “dot.com” generation, as they are very experienced information and communications technology users. Prensky (2001) coined the concept of “digital natives” because this generation are “native speakers of the digital language of computers, video games and the internet”. Venter (2017), an educational psychologist and lecturer at Unisa, South Africa, believes members of Generation Y are digital natives because they have grown up experiencing digital technology and have known it all their lives. This generation’s older members use a combination of face-to-face communication and computer-mediated communication, while its younger members use mainly electronic and digital technologies for interpersonal communication.



#### 8.6.4 *Generation Clashes*

Between the generations there are differences in perceptions. Underlying these differences are traditional cultural norms of respect for your elders, which may appear to some seniors to be under threat or being challenged. Among the older generation, not everyone is ready to accept change. Some survey respondents (6) commented on this with regard to their own leaders, for example:

- My leader is not ready to innovate and believes things are difficult to change.
- Lack of change is a constraint faced by my leader. We are in an Information Age—most of African leaders are still in the Industrial Age with a “One solution fits all” mentality, leaders need to accept being challenged by followers.
- Some leaders do not accept challenges and hence do not allow competent people to be near them as they fear that they may outperform them.

On the other hand, young people with an education may start to think very highly of themselves and can become arrogant and disrespectful towards the senior generation or their family members. As such, they go against traditional cultural norms. This gives rise to the belief that they are bound to fail, because the people who are to promote them are the senior people. In the workplace it can also hamper their chances of being promoted. The perception of being arrogant spreads very quickly and works against them as they need to be hand-picked or mentored by the senior generation. There seems to be a fine line between giving room and opportunity to young people, but at the same time a fear among senior people that young people may not acknowledge that they may not yet know everything and still need to learn.

The different perspectives of the generations were clearly demonstrated by the following case. A female intern who studied abroad for her BSc was doing a one-year internship with a Tanzanian company before continuing with her Master's studies abroad. At a point when the working relationship was under threat by several conflicts, interviews with her and the Director of the company shed light on the reasons for the strained relationship.

*Young leader's personal experience: "Steep learning curve"*

When I joined for my internship my first impression of the office was that it was very organized. Settling in was hard in the beginning, even on my first day a big issue was raised that I was not dressed properly. My boss was harsh at first, maybe especially because I was new. However, at times he is also kind and shows empathy as well. He is a perfectionist and he always complains to everyone that we do not do things right, that we do not meet his high standards. He wants you to understand something even without his explanation. Initially, I used to fear him as he entered, he removed my confidence. The boss may see potential in me; I am not sure as he is limited in giving compliments.

I need to learn and get experience operating within such a hierarchy. I perceive this as a good experience; this internship has developed my skills on dealing with a difficult situation. I also see how my young colleagues deal with this, so I believe now that I am also able. It is a good company, and I am learning a lot. I see it as a challenge and opportunity to build my experience.

For me, being a good leader is to understand people you are leading and what to expect both ways. Working with people is balancing relationships, not to be seen favouring. If only my boss and I could have sit together, and talked about it, we could have resolved many issues and he could have learned more things. The older generation is more black and white, while now there are so many shades, such as dress code, greeting code. My young generation has a need to be allowed to be flexible. **Lucia Mchomvu**, female intern

*Senior leader's personal experience: "High standards"*

I consider that the quality of education is going down. I myself was trained in Kenya, by American mentors—they were very tough with me! The young people nowadays just use the computer. I have to stop them, and tell them: "Do not immediately use a computer, try to think from your head first." I do not think highly of the qualities of the "[dot.com](#)" generation.

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I like to delegate work, but when I come back in the office, I often notice nothing has happened. I then make hell for people who do not do what I ask or tell them to do, I am shouting at them and tell them very directly what I think. I hold very high professional standards. **Mathias Nangai**, company director and intern's boss

Her director commented on this as follows:

Though intentions on both sides were constructive and both wanted to make the internship really work, different expectations regarding the work rules and communication practices of a leader and an intern contributed to initial distrust. Nevertheless, some form of cooperation or level of tolerance emerged, albeit not considered optimal by either party.

## 8.7 GENDER AND LEADERSHIP

More and more young leaders are taking up senior roles, such as, for example, the current Minister for Livestock, Luhaga Joelson Mpina, who is in his early 40s. However, although there are some young female leaders, they are far fewer in number. Although the interviews did not specifically probe gender issues, two interviewees commented as follows on leading as a woman.

*Young female leader's personal experience—Able and hand-picked*

I was selected for my director's post. If I would have to be appointed based on the usual voting system, I would not have been elected. But my boss hand-picked me because he had seen me working, and had seen me achieve results, so I was appointed in that way. Now I am in a decision-making position. At times this can be challenging, because most of the time you are working with men, and they have a tendency to make women defend their position more vigorously than the male colleagues.

I believe young women leaders need to be equally qualified and capable as men, but they can benefit from some special mentoring and coaching. We need to build their capacity, build up the confidence and then they can perform. I myself benefited from an African Leadership programme for women, which also gave me international experience. **Rita Msemakweli**, female director in a university

*Young leader's personal experience: The reluctant leader*

I was working part-time in a university, next to running a business with my husband. Besides teaching I was also responsible for coordinating and planning the faculty's curriculum. Anonymous voting twice led to my name coming first to be proposed as dean of the faculty. Though people thus thought me suitable for that role, I myself was doubtful about this and fearing this management role. As dean, you would have to manage people, confront them if they are not doing what they are supposed to do. You would quickly get into conflicts and political situations. We then moved to another city and I had to quit my job, so I did not have to assume that role. Maybe with full support at higher levels I could have done this, but I am not very confident about that. I am thus glad I did not have to try. **Eliza Mcha**, young female university lecturer

In terms of differences in leadership between men and women, both personal experiences recounted above indicate that it is more challenging for women to enter into leadership positions. Based on merit, they are often hand-picked and promoted. Building up women's confidence is crucial, as they may have even fewer role models than men (which our interview data seems to suggest). Being willing to learn and to question oneself is an important trait for all leaders. One of the (female) survey respondents indicated that that can be a challenge for male leaders: "Mostly men tend to think they know it all."

## 8.8 LEADERS' ATTRIBUTES

In the survey responses and interviews several leaders' attributes were mentioned and considered important. In other words, several qualities or features were regarded as a key characteristic or an inherent part of being a good leader. Below we describe the most frequently mentioned attributes:

- *Candidness*: Mentioned by three interviewees, mostly by young men
- *Decisiveness*: Mentioned by five interviewees, mostly by senior women
- *Doing good*: Mentioned by four interviewees, mostly by young men
- *Integrity*: Mentioned by three interviewees, mostly by young men
- *Adaptability*: Mentioned by five interviewees, mostly by young men

These attributes are discussed on the basis of some survey findings and personal experiences.

*Candidness:* Survey respondents and interviewees indicated their need for giving and receiving feedback, with especially young people expecting constructive feedback from their leader. In terms of what they expect from their colleagues, eight survey respondents indicated openness and feedback:

- Being open to speak up and express what is on your mind
- Constructive upward feedback
- Let others be aware of their problems
- Help and correction if I do something wrong
- Support and advice

*Young leader's personal experience: Need to call a spade a spade*

I have to learn to call a spade a spade—my weakness is that I am too sympathetic; I need to learn to be more confrontational and direct and give honest feedback for really important issues. But I am also scared of endangering the livelihood of the person, their salary, if they would lose their job. **Mugis Riziki**, a young government official

In order for effective workplace learning to take place, constructive feedback is very beneficial, although one respondent indicated that “it is a challenge being transparent to mention weaknesses of others, given the cultural setting”. Nevertheless, in some of the leaders’ personal experiences we saw examples of feedback being given, including to the boss.

*Decisiveness:* Decisiveness seems to be connected to age, as it was mostly referred to by senior interviewees, most of them women, who reflected on important decisions they took that influenced their careers. The below view implies that there may be unwritten cultural rules regarding making decisions.

*Senior leader's personal experience: Cultural perception of young people's decision-making power*

African understanding of the word power—perception of rules, unwritten rules—not given instruction, it is implicit, and this traps young people. Use of power is related to age differences. Young people are reluctant to make decisions, as it is considered not appropriate. **Simon Kabiwe**, university professor

*Doing good:* This was mentioned in the context of the need for a leader to work on social responsibility in terms of impacting a change for disadvantaged groups in society. Doing good was highlighted by a few interviewees, mostly young men.

*Young leader's personal experience: Raising awareness on importance of education*

I started an organization, ELIMISHA NAMTUMBO, which aims to raise awareness on the importance of education and tries to reduce school dropout rates, which can be as high as 50%. We wrote a project proposal for awareness sessions with children and parents in the Namtumbo communities. The District Executive council have accepted to run these awareness activities, which we have now started in some schools. I have teamed up with other graduates from different universities who were born in our community and I am the chief organizer. **Haji Mkenda**, vice-secretary of a cooperative

*Integrity:* This leadership attribute was mentioned often in the survey. Among the 38 survey respondents, many indicated that integrity was the most important quality of a leader (15). Specific qualities mentioned included:

- Honesty
- Integrity and respect for the rule of law
- A leader that acts fairly, judges rightly, and seeks to do only that which is good to his people
- Corruption free, Africa has a pandemic of corruption at all levels, a leader free from this will succeed greatly.

This was also an important cause of losing respect for a leader with ten respondents citing lack of integrity, such as corruption and unethical behaviour.

- Corruption (governance issues)
- Dishonest and unethical behaviour
- Not keeping to rules and regulations of the organization

*Senior leader's personal experience: Integrity is most important*

I am very structured and disciplined, I never used the office car, neither did my staff for private purposes, I always kept my work separate from my private life. If you are in a leadership position, people expect you to behave in a certain way or make changes, such as drive the newest car. I never changed my behaviour on basis of others' expectations. I always drove my old car, even when I was the DG.  
**John Nolari**, a senior government leader.

*Adaptability:* This is mostly commented on by young leaders, mostly men, who reflect that being flexible and adapting to circumstances in the workplace is beneficial and necessary in order to enhance their skills. One young man reflects on how he feels when his boss is shouting at him.

*Young leader's personal experience: I put up with it because i learn a lot*

I do not really like it, but then I sit back and reflect and consider this can be helpful. I will go for a Master's programme in Japan, but when I return I would like to come back to work for this firm. John, colleague of **Lucia Mchomvu**, intern

## 8.9 THE ROAD TO BECOMING A LEADER

This section explores how people have become leaders, their role models, and different initiatives for development of their leadership skills, their development needs, and the type of support they typically receive.

### 8.9.1 Leadership Determinants

All interviewees explained how they had become a leader, and what factors contributed to this. Several factors that influence being or becoming a leader were mentioned: such as leadership roles experiences at school or university, influence of parents, and being recognized by people above in the organization. A few reflections of leaders are presented below.

*Senior leaders' personal experience: Leader throughout my life*

I have been in leadership roles as soon as I started school. In class 5 of my boarding school, I was made responsible for the store where food was stored, a very responsible job. From that moment at every level, every job I was elected into leadership roles. I have tried to find out why people choose me, but the answer was never very clear as they said "it is the way you behave". However, people explained to me why they did not choose others "he/she is not serious", "he/she is biased", and "he/she is taking us for granted". So by deduction, I think they considered me serious, un-biased, and not taking them for granted.

I think young leaders can be groomed, but they need some qualities, such as being able to make neutral judgements, stay focused, and wanting to do things perfect (have ambition). I have some people seen imitating me in the hope of being a good leader. **John Nolari**, senior government leader

*Senior leader's personal experience—Mentoring shaped my career*

I am the seventh child at home, and from a very young age I gave advice to others, including to my parents and older siblings. My father took me very seriously, spent a lot of time explaining me things and teaching me different activities at our farm. This motivated me to choose a career in agricultural development, including completing a PhD in the UK. Over the course of my career, I have been mostly inspired by my bosses who have been supporting me to grow and learn, such as in my first job as Deputy Coordinator of Zanzibar project. As a result as a leader my style has also always been to be as friendly as possible, and I take feedback very easily. I am a hands-off leader, who gives responsibility to team members and let them get on with the job. I can be tough as well, especially if someone does not honour agreements. **Mwanaidi Saidi**, senior leader

These personal accounts illustrate that being encouraged, given responsibility, and trust from an early age in the family and in the first jobs is crucial for confidence building and inspiration of young people to aspire to leadership roles.



*Senior leader's personal experience: No shortcuts!*

My advice for young people is that there is no shortcut to success. In my first job, my boss encouraged me to sit down, think, and develop a proposal. In this way I was stimulated to take initiative and responsibility early in my career. My boss acted as a mentor, who encouraged and, almost more important, trusted me. Though the first programme effort failed, I continued to develop these initiatives over years working in various programmes, ultimately leading to successes, recognition, and promotion to my current Director post. I thus think that it is crucial for their well-being that all my staff members have a responsibility, in the same way as I was given responsibility early in my career. **Khamis Ali**, senior director in government

### 8.9.2 *Leadership Skills Development*

Very few of the people interviewed had participated in formal Leadership Development programmes. Formalized or institutionalized training or mentoring is available to only a small number of people, mostly in the context of international development programmes or sponsored by large companies. There are some initiatives by youth-led organizations or specific mentoring programmes, as described below.

In 2014, a partnership was formed in Tanzania to send young Tanzanians a clear message “Kijana Jijiri!”—“Youth, employ yourself!”. The aim of the Kijana Jijiri programme is to support young Tanzanians to start or grow their own business, thus tackling youth unemployment and triggering sustainable economic development in Tanzania (Kijana Jijiri, 2018). In its first year, the total number of successful mentoring relationships established through the programme was 130, 48 new businesses were created and 144 existing businesses were further developed. Ruth Chiza, one of the young entrepreneurs supported by Kijana Jijiri explains: “I had a difficult situation with the Revenue Authority Officers. They really scared me in the first place and I knew this was the end of my entrepreneurial journey; without the advice and proper guidance from my mentor, I would have closed my business.” Young entrepreneurs are now on their path to success, walking alongside their mentors and truly valuing their support in every matter related to their business development.

Leadership Development thus mainly takes place through informal mentoring and through learning on the job by getting specific assignments or projects to learn. The majority of young people depend on “luck” to find someone to mentor them informally, for example in their family or at work. The culture is that mentoring takes place in an understated almost “undercover” manner, described as follows:

*Senior leader’s personal experience—“Undercover mentoring”*

I am not telling you that I do this for your own good, you will realize that you were mentored when we are done. I’ll provide feedback when it is needed, in a very informal manner. When it is finished you realize I was training you. You will appreciate this at the end.

**Mwanaidi Saidi**, senior leader international development

In other words, the young people being mentored may not even be conscious of it.

Perceptions of how best to nurture and guide children is also shifting. Parents of senior generations did most of the guiding themselves, with storytelling an important way of passing on lessons and norms. Nowadays, most parents are very busy and also believe children learn most of what they need at school. However, increasingly parents realize that school does not provide all that a child needs to learn. Parents, and the wider family, have an important role in guiding and mentoring their children.

Willingness to help others is also affected by how confident and job-secure one feels. This is illustrated by the following experience from a senior leader.

*Senior leader’s personal experience: Not everyone keen on developing others*

When I started working we had an old driver and the story goes that he was very mean, he refused to teach others, and he would even go to witchcraft to protect his car. During those days being a driver was a very big asset that one would need to protect. This would be more for those who are insecure of their positions or who have gotten there by other means than their competence. **Mwanaidi Saidi**, senior leader international development

*Senior leader's personal experience: The value of a good boss*

I have always had good bosses, who listened to my advice, gave me space, and took me seriously. For example, some people went to my boss to complain about my behaviour—I had been, in their view, too critical to foreign donors. When I heard about this, I wrote a note to my boss explaining my viewpoint. My boss actually agreed with me, but to resolve the situation I was sent abroad with a scholarship. When I returned, I continued to work with this boss without problems.

As a leader, giving space and delegating is to me an important principle—I do this, but follow up closely. If not satisfied with the performance I take the job away. **Khamis Ali**, a senior director in government

**8.9.3 Role Models**

Many leaders interviewed mentioned that they copied their own leader's behaviour when they started in their first leadership roles. As such, having a role model, or an inspiring example of someone whom a young leader can aspire to, was considered an important aspect of how they developed as a leader by seven interviewees, predominantly senior men. This suggests that younger leaders and female leaders have benefited less from having role models.

*Young leader's personal experience: Mentoring and role models*

Most young people lack mentoring in their families, and also do not have role models. I was lucky to have a few uncles that were my role models, I looked up to them as an example—so you want to become like them and do not compromise for less. It is necessary that young people have a mentor, are given guidance—young people cannot do it on their own. For example, I am now trying to mentor my own younger brother.

Within the office, people trust me and they like me more than the boss. If they have an issue, they bring it to me, as I am trusted by both sides (my boss and my colleagues). Even though I am the youngest in the office, elderly colleagues look up to me, they tell me they are afraid to talk to the boss, so they ask me to do this on their behalf, even some of them are grandmothers! But I think it is all in their mind. **Mugis Riziki**, a young government official

The media also provides young people with role models. An example is the TV show of Malkia wa Nguvu (Strong Queen) through Clouds Media Group. This programme portrays people who have achieved something special. “Malkia”, or Queens, are proposed and over a period of time people are allowed to vote. A recent episode pictured an inspirational icon, Mrs Maria Kamm, a former head mistress in a girls’ boarding school who has mentored many girls in shaping their own future. Mrs Kamm commonly called “Mama Kamm” is from a generation where the highest class for girls in secondary schools was Form II. That was 1954. She was one of the first two women who graduated with a degree in the USA during colonial times. She believes that she is an instrument to support girls to achieve their dreams. She came back to Tanzania and was head teacher in several schools. She considers students as her children and believes that girls especially need support to build their confidence.

The main impact is that young people, by watching these shows, learn that they have value, get inspired to do something different, and believe they can have an impact. This links to building up confidence, which was considered an essential part of Leadership Development by 10 out of 11 interviewees (both young and senior, and men and women).

## 8.10 CONCLUSIONS/DISCUSSION

In terms of perspectives on leadership, we noticed clear differences between senior leaders and young leaders. To some extent, everyone appears to think everyone else is wrong, but not just wrong but wrong-minded as well. Nevertheless, the generation gap may not be as wide as it seems: perspectives of both senior and young leaders on how to be a good leader show some similarities and both groups acknowledge that perspectives are changing. In this Tanzanian case study, the majority of respondents would prefer a reduced hierarchy; in other words, less enactment of power differences than they currently witness in their society.

Some generation gaps were identified in the type of values that are considered important. Senior leaders place a strong emphasis on values such as honesty, respect, discipline, hard work, and ambition. Young leaders also emphasize the values of honesty and ambition, but they indicate the need for much more flexibility and adaptability, getting responsibilities, mutual respect between a leader and a follower, and the need for candidness, feedback, and trust from their senior leaders.

The majority of respondents identify a need for change in leadership styles. The survey results, backed up by our interviews, indicate a shift in perceptions of effective leadership. Typically, the most common authoritarian/control focused leadership styles are considered least suitable, whereas less common people-oriented leadership styles based on the concepts of participation and consultation are considered best. Although this change is happening, not everyone is ready yet to embrace it fully in terms of ability to use different people-oriented leadership styles, or as followers to be more open and willing to take initiatives. Traditional cultural norms of respecting your elders influence perceptions of leadership of both senior and younger generations. These norms are slowly shifting, and thus determine how much room for changing leadership styles young leaders feel they have. The senior generation is faced with embracing and supporting these changes, striking a balance between preserving some guidance and mentoring, while supporting more flexibility and consultation.

There seems to be a fine line between giving room and opportunity to young people, while at the same time recognizing a fear among senior people that young people may not acknowledge that they do not know everything yet and still to need to learn. Very few leaders have access to formal leadership skill development. Instead, leaders benefit from having more informal ways of developing their skills. Most senior leaders interviewed commented that in developing as a leader they benefited most from having had a good role model and from being given responsibilities.

Young leaders also indicated the benefit of role models, with media portrayals of young role models being of great benefit. They also stressed their need for mentoring in preparing for leadership roles, and guidance once they start running a business or, what is increasingly less common, have a job. They also need trust and opportunities to learn by doing, through being assigned responsibilities and receiving constructive feedback.

Young people cannot start a career and develop their leadership skills on their own. Consolidated formal and informal support is needed to ensure that the great number of young people entering the workforce in Tanzania each year can be successful in their jobs, or increasingly as entrepreneurs, given the limited formal jobs available.

In this era of change, the need is felt for changes in leadership styles. Thus, senior leaders as role models or mentors will only be able to guide young people part of the way. Young leaders will at the same time need to be daring and innovative, so that they can become effective and entrepreneurial leaders.

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# Changing Leadership Perceptions: Leaders in the Private Sector in Kenya

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## 9.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on leadership in Kenya and explores changing perceptions of leadership and leadership styles, particularly among business leaders in the private sector in Kenya. The growth of women in political leadership in Kenya has increased in leaps and bounds, with 29% more women running for office in the 2017 elections (this led to the highest number of seats held by women in the government in the country's history at 9% of elected seats). On the other hand, female leadership in the private sector remains stagnant with only four females as CEOs in 62 listed companies on the Nairobi Securities Exchange (NSE, 2018). The chapter considers the differences in

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perceptions within this sector between male and female leaders, as well as young and senior leaders. It further describes different ways in which leadership skills can and are being developed and assesses their effectiveness. The study aims to be helpful for developing young business leaders for the future, especially (but not exclusively) for people in Kenya and Africa.

The chapter is structured as follows:

- Section 9.2—“Context: Leadership in Private Sector in Kenya”: Status of private sector (number, growth, and type of business), growth of private sector since 2000, the support they get and constraints they face, women and youth leaders.
- Section 9.3—“Case Study Data”: We describe how our data were collected.

Sections 9.4, 9.5, 9.6, 9.7 and 9.8 report our case study findings:

- Section 9.4—“Perceptions of Hierarchy”: It includes the national culture and aspects of organizational culture, notably differences between private sector and government structures.
- Section 9.5—“The Need for Change”: It shows a shift towards strategic and people-oriented leadership styles: expectations of today’s leaders.
- Section 9.6—“Leaders Diversity”: includes women leaders and youth.
- Section 9.7—“Leaders’ Attributes”: What leaders’ attributes were considered important? In our survey and interviews the following five attributes emerged: decisiveness, candidness, doing good, honesty/integrity, and adaptability.
- Section 9.8—“The Road to Becoming a Leader: Leadership Development”: It explores determinants for success in how people have become leaders, their role models, and different initiatives for development of leadership skills and how to build confidence.
- Section 9.9—“Conclusions/Discussion”: It includes lessons learnt and suggestions for further development of business leaders and leadership in Kenya.

## 9.2 CONTEXT: BUSINESS LEADERS IN KENYA

### 9.2.1 *Private Sector Development*

The African Development Bank (ADB) states that the private sector in Kenya is vibrant and in good health (ADB, 2018). The report describes the Kenyan economy as remaining resilient due to its diversity; services contributed the highest proportion to gross domestic product (GDP) growth. This is

expected to continue as the country remains the leading regional hub for information and communication technology (ICT), financial, and transportation services. Recent investment in rail and road and planned investment in a second runway at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport are potential growth drivers. Macroeconomic stability continues, with most fundamentals projected to remain healthy. The business-enabling environment has improved as well; Kenya moved up 12 places to a ranking of 80 in the World Bank's 2018 Doing Business report. GDP growth has been steady—on average 5.1% per year over the last decade and 5.7% in 2018 (World Bank, 2018). The ADB states that the economy is projected to rebound further to a GDP growth of 6.2% in 2019. The ADB further reported that the private sector is well developed and large by sub-Saharan and regional standards and that it plays the leading part in the Kenyan economy. The private sector is noticeably split into two parts: a formal, large business sector which is relatively healthy and productive and a massive, informal small business sector that is poorly understood and supported, yet which employs almost nine out of ten workers. Links between the formal and informal sectors are very weak (ADB, 2013). The ADB further states that agriculture, manufacturing, trade, tourism, transport and communication, and financial services account for over 80% of the private sector's contribution to total GDP. Agriculture remains the most important sector in terms of contribution to private sector GDP and employment, though the importance of agriculture in terms of its contribution to GDP is declining relative to other sectors, while that of manufacturing remains relatively stagnant. Growth in the private sector is increasingly driven by trade, transport, ICT, and financial services.

The ADB report concludes that Kenya is a promising place to do business, with growing markets and good opportunities. Importantly, there is a widespread consensus amongst Kenyans, including government officials, that the private sector is important and will be the main driver of growth and employment, rather than the state. From the early 1990s, Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPs) consisting of loans provided by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB) to countries that experienced economic crises were implemented to reduce the borrowing country's fiscal imbalances in the short and medium term or in order to adjust the economy to long-term growth (Lensink, 1996). As a result of these SAPs, the role of government and people's reliance on it was greatly reduced, which might have fostered the acceptance of private sector-led growth. Positively, the ADB states that the business climate has improved over the last decade; frustratingly it is the same recurrent challenges that prevent the private sector from reaching its full potential: political uncertainty, corruption, infrastructural deficits, and an untapped informal sector.

The World Bank states that Kenya has the potential to be one of Africa's success stories from its growing youthful population, a dynamic private sector, highly skilled workforce, improved infrastructure, a new constitution, and its pivotal role in East Africa (World Bank, 2018). The World Bank report argues that addressing the challenges of poverty, inequality, governance, the skills gap between market requirements and the education curriculum, climate change, low investment, and low firm productivity to achieve rapid, sustained growth rates that will transform lives of ordinary citizens will be a major goal for Kenya.

### 9.2.2 *Female Business Leaders*

A study by International Finance Cooperation (IFC, 2006) states that women-owned businesses are making a significant contribution to the Kenyan economy. Their businesses account for about half (48%) of all micro-, small-, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), which contribute around 20% to Kenya's GDP.

Kenya's new constitution, passed in 2010, provides a framework for addressing gender equality. It seeks to remedy the traditional exclusion of women and promote their full involvement in every aspect of growth and development (USAID, 2018). Kenya's 2010 constitution has made a number of positive changes for women, particularly in the economic realm. Of the six indicators measured by the World Bank (2011), Kenya is making strides in three very important areas: women's access to institutions, access to justice, and ability to control and use property. Political parties are required to respect and promote gender equality. Customary and traditional laws that contradict the new legislation, some of which cement gender inequality, are now considered invalid.

A provision in the constitution (Government of Kenya, 2010) stipulates that not more than two-thirds of members of elective public bodies shall be of the same gender (Article 27, clauses 6 and 8). This provision has further been captured in the Capital Market Authority code: 2.1.5 "Diversity applies to academic qualifications, technical expertise, relevant industry knowledge, experience, nationality, age, race and gender". However, like all legislation, implementation of these laws has proven less easy. In terms of elective politics this has been a constant struggle for women, where in spite of the 2010 Constitution's two-thirds gender provision, it has yet to be attempted—let alone accomplished.

### 9.2.3 *Youth in Business and Leadership*

A literature review on youth employment in Kenya (DFID, 2017) notes that while annual GDP growth of more than 5% has been regularly recorded, Kenya's youth (ages 15–24) unemployment rate has shown little to no positive development and is estimated at 26% (ILO, 2018). In addition, underemployment appears to be a rampant phenomenon for young Kenyans. The danger of a “lost generation” is running high in Kenya; and most countries in Africa record significantly lower youth unemployment rates than this relatively strong economy. The British Council's report on youth employment in Kenya states “although GDP growth in both Kenya and Sub-Saharan Africa” (SSA) has been significant since 2000 and Kenya's youth employment rate is now 42% higher than in 2000, the youth employment rate for overall SSA has decreased by 9% (British Council, 2017).

Though these figures are cause for concern, a recent survey of youth, found young people across all countries were more optimistic than adults, with more than nine in ten teenagers in Kenya, Mexico, China, Nigeria, and India reporting feeling positive about their future, though there was widespread dissatisfaction with politicians (Gates Foundation, 2018). A survey conducted among 7000 youth in Kenya Tanzania and Rwanda by Awiti and Scott (2016) found that the youth are entrepreneurial, with the majority (50–65%) aspiring to start their own business, rather than pursue traditional careers in law, teaching, medicine, or engineering. The study revealed that while youth were concerned about unemployment, they were willing to be part of the solution through a strong orientation to entrepreneurship—the desire and willingness to create and run their own business. Awiti and Scott (2016) concluded that overall, East African youth are positive and optimistic and are confident that the future will bring more prosperity, with more jobs, better access to health and education. They state that these strongly held values and the spirit of enterprise, along with impressive GDP growth, must be leveraged to address the challenge of unemployment, especially among university-educated youth.

## 9.3 CASE STUDY DATA

Data for this case study was collected during 2018. Survey participants were sought among professional networks of business leaders working in the private sector: 45 were sent the invitation; 30, or 67%, did respond. The link to our leadership survey resulted in some very quick responses. It was noted that women were quicker and more eager to respond than men. In order to have more men respond took effort and reminders. The online survey was completed by 30 leaders, 25 females/5 males, 15 young/15

senior, with all except one respondent having leadership experience. Half (15) have more than six years’ experience and slightly less than half (11) have from three to six years of experience; thus the majority (26) of respondents have more than three years’ experience in leadership positions.

The survey was followed by in-depth qualitative interviews, which were held with 12 leaders (7 male/5 female, 6 young/6 senior). These business leaders were selected from a range of business sectors, including construction, hospitality, ICT, research, education, and retail, as is indicated in Table 9.1.

Three of the interviewees also responded to the survey. Thus, overall, this chapter represents the views of a total of 39 leaders (30 female/9 male; 19 young and 20 senior).

Table 9.2 shows the coding scheme used for the case studies (see the Methodology chapter for an explanation) along with the coding frequen-

**Table 9.1** Demographic information of the interviewees (Kenya)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Young/senior</i>	<i>Sector</i>
Mr Safari	M	Young	Education
Percival Omuronji	M	Young	ICT
Dawn Atak	F	Senior	ICT
George Wandera	M	Senior	Construction
Capo	M	Senior	Retail/media
Henry	M	Young	ICT
Brenda Wanjuki	F	Young	Research
Binti	F	Young	Hospitality
Judy Wambui	F	Senior	Retail
Sifa	F	Senior	Finance
Maina Muiruri	M	Young	ICT
Kaimenyi Mwangi	M	Senior	Construction/hospitality

**Table 9.2** Coding frequencies by attributes (Kenya)

Code Category (5)	Codes (15)	Number of times coded (197)	In how many different interviews (12)	Attributes of interviewee (Number)						Number of interviewees, by attribute, who mentioned the coded issues two or more times			
				Age		Gender		Age		Gender			
				Youth	Senior	Man	Woman	Youth	Senior	Man	Woman		
01-Perceptions of hierarchy	General	19	7	3	4	4	3	3	3	4	2		
	Organization Specific	4	3	0	3	2	1		1		1		
02- Leadership Style	Strategic Leadership	10	4	1	3	3	1	1	1	2			
	People Oriented Leadership	18	11	6	5	6	5	3	2	2	3		
03_Leader Diversity	Women leaders	25	8	3	5	4	4	2	5	3	4		
	Youth	18	8	5	3	4	4	3	2	3	2		
04_Leadership Attributes	Candidness	7	6	3	3	3	3	1		1			
	Decisiveness	5	4	0	4	1	3		1		1		
	Integrity	7	5	1	4	2	3	1	1	1			
	Doing Good	9	5	4	1	3	2	3		3			
	Adaptability	7	3	0	3	1	2	2	2	1	1		
05_Leadership Development	Leadership determinants	28	12	6	6	7	5	2	5	3	4		
	Role Model	7	6	4	2	5	1	1		1			
	Skills Development	15	8	3	5	5	3	1	3	3	1		
	Confidence	18	7	4	3	3	4	3	3	4	2		

cies, which are also disaggregated by attributes of age and gender, and the number of interviewees who mentioned coded issues two or more times

The following sections (Sects. 9.4, 9.5, 9.6, 9.7 and 9.8) report the findings from both the survey and interview data, organized by the interview coding categories.

#### 9.4 PERCEPTIONS OF HIERARCHY

The leadership context in Kenya encompasses many different elements, including the history of colonialism, rural-urban as well as international migration, and multilingual cosmopolitan cities. All of these factors affect the leadership norms and beliefs; the expectations about what leaders should or should not do and what followers should or should not do. These expectations are associated with cultural beliefs and practices, and we will explore this further in this section. Kenya as a nation encompasses different ethnolinguistic groups, several of which are represented among our interviewees. However, in our research we do not distinguish the data between different ethnolinguistic groups.

An important aspect of leadership that is influenced by cultural values is the norms and beliefs around hierarchy. In our survey, we recorded both the perceptions of current *practice* and respondents' personal *preferences* towards hierarchy (Fig. 9.1).

The results are positioned in four quadrants; the respondents in two of these could be considered broadly satisfied (the green quadrants) and the respondents in the remaining two quadrants could be considered broadly dissatisfied (the red quadrants):

Broadly dissatisfied:

- *Lower right quadrant*: The largest group of 14 respondents (47%) considers the current practice as quite or very hierarchical and would personally prefer less hierarchy than they currently witness in the society.
- *Upper left quadrant*: No respondents. In other words, none of the respondents considers the current practice to be very hierarchical, while also preferring more hierarchy than currently witnessed in the society.
- There are nine respondents (30%) who consider the current practice average, but would prefer a lower hierarchy, and so these could likely be also termed broadly dissatisfied.

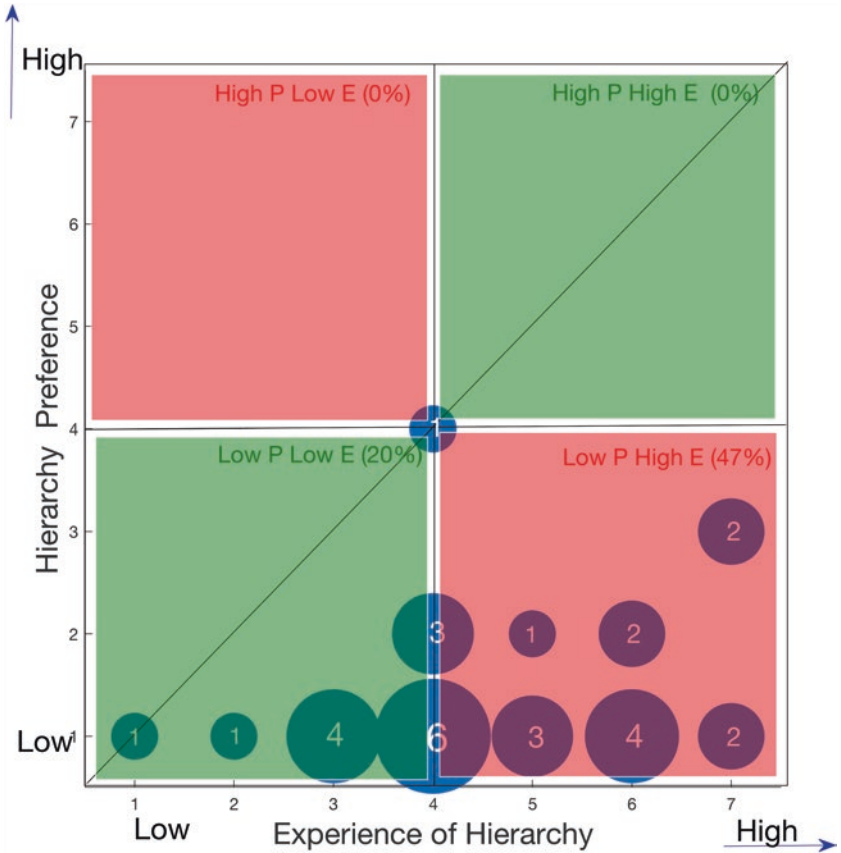


Fig. 9.1 Experiences and preferences towards hierarchy (Kenya)

Broadly satisfied:

- *Lower left quadrant*: Six respondents (20%) consider the current practice not very hierarchical and this corresponds with their preference.
- *Upper right quadrant*: No respondents. In other words, none of the responses both prefers and experiences high levels of hierarchy.

Right in the middle, there is one respondent who considers the current practice of hierarchy as average highly (four), (slightly) high, which is the same as the preference.

If we look at this in more detail, the closer a respondent's answer is positioned near the diagonal, the more satisfied this person is, as the practice and preference are close; if the answer is far from the diagonal, the level of satisfaction is much lower. In this case, two respondents' responses are on the diagonal, one in the lower left quadrant and one in the middle. One further respondent is close to the diagonal (one space removed). Thus these respondents (a total of three, or 10%) are more or less satisfied. This indicates that the majority (27 or 90%) of respondents are positioned further from the diagonal, with all preferring lower hierarchy, in other words less enactment of power differences than they currently experience in their society.

General perceptions on hierarchy were mentioned by seven interviewees, slightly more often by men. For example, one of the young interviewees expanded on this as follows:

*Junior male leader, Personal experience: "Leaders want to be worshipped and often lack reason or logic"*

Problems of leadership in Kenya—over time the colonial structure determined what we think leaders and leadership should look like. This is passed through school where the teacher is boss and king, their word is right and must always be listened to. This is replicated in government positions such as the chief. Or through class structures where in the village, for example, the person who is rich and has a car has to be worshipped. Another problem I see is leaders that lack reason or logic—that is when there is no factual or logical evidence in agendas of leaders. Religion a big supporter of this kind of leadership. All you have to do is reference God, tradition, development, "world class", or "move with times" to convince others of an unreasonable agenda. I fear this kind of leadership is getting worse.  
Mr Safari, young male leader in Education sector

The experience described below indicates that the preferences and behaviour around hierarchy are complex and also intertwined with cultural norms on communication and feedback.



*Senior female leader's view on influence of culture*

My experience is that many staff do not want to be accountable and much prefer to be directed than to think for themselves. There is a lot of fear of repercussions for their actions even when encouraged to do make decisions and assured that genuine mistakes (as opposed to dereliction of duty) in the course of doing business will not be punished. Therefore, developing a leadership mentality of themselves first, of one's team is key and a real challenge as it takes a lot of coaching, mentoring and an open (!) frank culture which is “un-African”! It is not “African culture” to freely give open critique and feedback. Being a consensus people because we are a “community people” as opposed to the Western “Individualistic” people, one finds that being “in harmony”, “at peace”, together, etc. is more important. So, people work to please one another or the boss. (Anonymous survey respondent)

One of the young male interviewees recounted an experience of a friend: “*A friend of mine was talking with people in his company. He was not very clear on what they wanted him to do. So he asked for clarification, but then they took offence—as if he was bothering them.*” He also shared the following experience on dealing as a leader with feedback in the workplace.

*Junior male leader, Personal experience: “In giving feedback, getting the balance right is very hard”*

As a mid-level manager you can encourage your subordinates to speak freely to you, you will have to try this—and not be defensive if they come up with criticism, over time they will realize that it is possible.

Giving feedback upwards to your higher management is trickier—you need to be very careful, for example, present information in a written form so that it cannot be misinterpreted and show that your intention is good and constructive. You have to be careful to prove that you are not out to get at anyone, you have to figure out the best time and place for your feedback. With practice you can learn this. However, it can be tricky—especially with a leader who wants the rest of the world to kowtow to them and deferring to them as a leader. In that case you have to go around this, massage their ego but not be a sycophant/flatterer—getting this balance right is very hard. Percival Omuronji, junior male leader, ICT sector

Specific organizational characteristics also affect perception of hierarchy. Three senior interviewees detailed their experiences, with one senior female leader mentioning the issue several times. For example, the importance and impact of social and family relationships in the workplace is detailed below.

*Senior female business leader, Personal experience: "staff were loyal to others or had godfathers"*

I was thrust into a leadership role in an institution where staff members were loyal to other people or had godfathers. It was an institution that because of whom you knew or was related to, a staff member could be more powerful than a director, even a messenger. I had to make them work as a team. It was the most difficult time of my professional life. Dawn Atak, senior female leader, ICT sector

Some of our interviewees had worked both in private companies and government institutions and as such were able to comment on the differences in leadership style between private and public organizations, as indicated below.

*Senior female leader, Personal experience: "Investing in growing next set of leaders"*

I saw the potential of juniors and moulded them to show their potential. Not shining too brightly is a habit in government and is based on protocol and a hierarchical system, such that no one should show ability to do something above their position. Being a CEO, I came from the private sector, so I don't care about protocol. Inside we are a team and all have a role and potential, even the messenger. So, I invested in growing the next set of leaders. I learned that some people are not interested in staying because no one will listen to them. I developed a policy where if you think there is something you can do and do well and your line manager won't listen, you find a way to let me know and I will deal with it with wisdom. I also learned to see the weakest link. I was not a typical governing CEO. In other words, I did not just go to my office. Rather I walked around and went to everyone's department unannounced. I was able to solve departmental problems locally. Dawn Atak, senior female leader, ICT sector

Leaders working in these complex institutional environments have to be flexible and adapt to the environment of the institution they are working for, while at the same time finding ways to change it. This was particularly obvious for leaders moving from private organizations to government ones. The senior female leader abovementioned continued:

*Senior female leader, Personal experience: “not a typical governing CEO”*

I have worked in academia, private sector, and government. My style changed as a leader when working for government. Before government I was a consultative leader, I liked to make everyone feel that they are contributing to decisions even if I would ultimately make the decision. Where I can't make a decision I would find the people who can to consult with to solve the problem. But in this government job I found sometimes one needed to have dictatorial tendencies. Authoritative was key. I tried to be consultative but because of protocol no one would give their opinions. I had to make decisions.  
Dawn Atak, senior female leader, ICT sector

Our study predominantly focused on leaders in the private sector. However, they reflected on experiences of leading in government institutions. They concluded that within public institutions hierarchy and protocol were more important than in the private sector, which is considered more result-oriented.

*Senior male leader, Personal experience: “the end goal is the difference between private and public entities”*

The difference between private business and public entities is the end goal. In a private business it is to make money; in a public entity it is social benefit. When running my own practice it is about profit. You choose by business sense. When you are funded, as in a public entity, you focus on value addition to end user—the common man.  
George Wandera, senior male leader, Construction sector

## 9.5 THE NEED FOR CHANGE: LEADERSHIP STYLES

A common theme among the survey respondents and interviewees is the need for or evidence of a change in leadership styles. This relates to both strategic leadership, as well as people-oriented leadership styles.

### 9.5.1 *Strategic Leadership*

Several of the survey responses and interviewees indicated the importance of and their experiences with strategic leadership. Strategic leadership is defined by Hitt, Ireland, and Hoskisson (2001) as “the ability to anticipate, envision, maintain flexibility, and empower others to create strategic change as necessary”. In our study, it is also referred to as the importance of having a vision and being able to convince others of this. It also often links to flexibility and managing the necessary changes. As such, it is reflected below in the section on the leadership attribute “adaptability”.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, strategic leadership was mentioned mostly by senior leaders, mostly male leaders, and one female and one young leader. The young leader understood strategic thinking to be a result of the combination of knowledge and relationships. He commented as follows: “*I like to work with people to get results and drive agendas. I am a strategic and critical thinker. I like to build relationships. I am a risk taker. I am always seeking to know how to do things. I consider Knowing to be freedom.*” Below we present a few experiences of senior leaders.

*Senior male business leader, Personal experience: “Focus on what you need to do”*

When running a business and deciding what you want to do, having taken into consideration all risks, including social risks, you just focus on what do you need to do to achieve your objectives. Deliver what your objectives are and figure out the way to appease guys you rub the wrong way in the process. This is not always easy. For example, in media, the current business model is not sustainable in the long term and not looking for new income streams will put the whole business at risk. Changing that culture to achieve a sustainable business model was painstaking and difficult and I never quite resolved it

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but I started the process. I got maligned by those who disagreed with me in the industry. In addition, the political environment in the country was not the most conducive making the attempted change in the organization difficult. I however believe I did the right thing in bringing this serious commercial issue at the fore of the organization and taking it on. Capo, senior male business leader, Retail and media sector

Senior leaders argued that you have to look at the long term even if it means implementing change that is not easily accepted in the short term. It also involves putting the business or institution in a broad contextual framework where trends become visible, including the political context. At times strategic thinking in the private sector entails supporting or making policy to regulate your future business. This is especially true in areas such as Information Technology (IT) where technology is rapidly changing and producing new policy frontiers.

*Senior female business leader, Personal experience: "Initiative and organization led to influence on policy"*

I was working on ICT policies and decided to set up a steering task force to push for a review, amendment of the ICT policy in Kenya. It was my idea to set up this with a group of like-minded friends in the industry and initial meetings were out of my office. We also developed KICTANET (Kenya ICT Kenya Action Network) to advocate for these issues. Civil society push got recognition of the government. We were invited to meetings and ultimately contributed to the new ICT policy. Dawn Atak, senior female leader, ICT sector

Often strategic thinking is structurally separated in the form of boards. This can be successful when the strategic plans are known and supported by the board as well as the management and staff.

*Senior male business leader, Personal experience: "Separate strategy and operations"*

I am a team player. I love organizations with a clear separation between strategy and operations. Day to day running is work of management. Strategy is work of a board. I insisted that our industry association must have a strategic plan, to know where will be in the next five years and evaluated it annually on progress to be made and realignments. But it had to be a strategic plan that has sought ownership from stakeholders, not just from the board but from management, to get buy in on how to make it more sustainable. George Wandera, senior male business leader, Construction sector

An aspect of leadership identified by our respondents was their experience and ability to take initiative to introduce strategic thinking and leadership in their organizations.

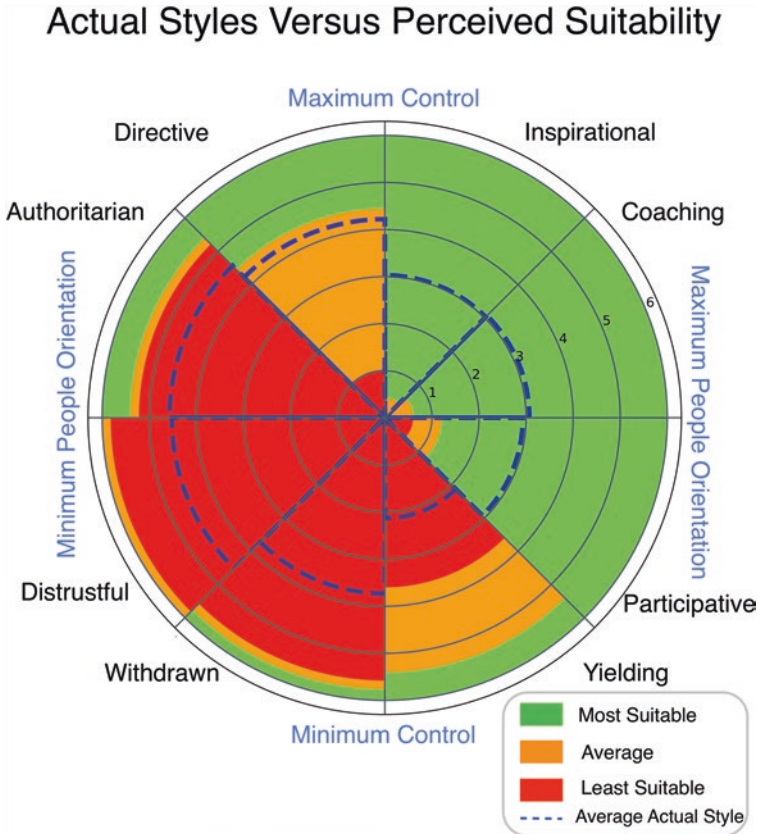
### *9.5.2 A Shift Towards People-Oriented Leadership Styles: Expectations of Today's Leaders*

In response to the survey question that asked about the challenges faced as a leader, 18 out of the 30 responses were about people management issues, including the following:

- *Difficulties of getting staff fully engaged in the organization*
- *My challenge is when my followers sometimes cast doubt on my style*
- *The expectation that as a leader, I am not expected to freely mingle with those perceived to be junior*
- *Getting people to take ownership and be accountable for their decisions*

Another question in the survey asked respondents to rate how frequently they have experienced eight different leadership styles and to indicate the most suitable and least suitable leadership styles for addressing the challenges that leaders face. Combining these two questions in one figure we see the following pattern emerging (Fig. 9.2).

The leadership styles that were considered the most suitable (inspirational, participative, and coaching) were not commonly used (shown by the blue dotted line). These are also the most people-oriented leadership



**Fig. 9.2** Actual leadership styles versus perceived suitability (Kenya)

styles. In contrast, the leadership styles considered the least suitable (authoritarian, withdrawn, and distrustful) are actually the most common. These styles are also the least people-oriented.

Directive leadership style is in the middle—it is relatively common and considered fairly suitable. The yielding style is the least common and is considered not very suitable.

In terms of control, leadership styles with more control by a leader (inspirational, coaching, and directive) are clearly favoured in comparison to the styles with minimum control (distrustful, withdrawn, and yielding) both in terms of preference and use. The participative style is considered quite suitable as it has medium control and maximum people orientation.

The issue of leadership style, people's perceptions of this, and their own approach was the issue mentioned very often in the interviews, with 18 codings from 11 out of the 12 interviews (with a balance of male/female and young/senior interviewees), and often addressed in quite some detail, especially by young leaders.

Interviewees felt that young adults respond better to participatory leadership styles. They also recognized that there are problems of trust and information in authoritarian styles of leadership. The effective functioning of teams was important to a number of respondents. They felt that there is something to be learnt from subordinates about how their team is functioning, which they see as key to getting things done. Rather than the most commonly used leadership styles, which are less people-oriented, both senior and young leaders favoured a change towards more people-oriented leadership styles, with less hierarchy and control enacted by leaders.

Below, a number of personal experiences are presented that illustrate this clearly.

*Junior male leader, Personal experience: "Delegation motivates young people to do better"*

I am not afraid to delegate as long people around me are empowered, it makes young adults feel more confident and trusted. Actually, my experience is that it motivates people to do better, they want to prove their worth, improvement and learning is continuous. Henry, young male leader, ICT sector

Participants talked about the building of teams and of trust as an effective way of getting work done.

*Junior female leader, Personal experience: "Friendliness as a management style"*

As a leader sometimes it's very hard to understand what is happening in the team, that is, the secrets or issues they can't share with you in the open. My strategy is to include friendliness in my management style but at a controllable level, that way I am able to learn more from some team members about the things they won't be comfortable to raise with the top management. Brenda Wanjuki, young female leader, Research sector



The same interviewee also believes strongly in using a coaching or participative leadership style, with minimal control and with delegating and giving responsibilities to team members.

*Junior female leader, Personal experience: “No need to micro-manage”*

I had a very good role model at my first company. What I learned from her was to give people opportunities to prove themselves, not to micro-manage and that delegation is always key. While I was working under her she would give me tasks and set timelines, this allowed me to plan myself and deliver within the timeline given because I could supervise myself and set internal timelines. I learnt a lot of skills from her including working under no or very little supervision, project management, data collection and analysis, team leadership, among many more. I admired her way of managing and found it very effective; unlike micromanaging which is not as effective. I implement the approaches I learned from her now with the different teams I am assigned per project. I set the targets and trust the team to deliver. I believe this shows respect to the team and proves you believe in what they are capable of and they are able to deliver. Brenda Wanjuki, young female leader, Research sector

Another junior female leader echoed this sentiment fully.

*Junior female leader, Personal experience: “As a leader, I give freedom”*

I am not authoritarian. I do not give instructions. My leadership is somehow open. I give the team freedom and have an open mind—as long as they meet standards. I do not give “point to point” instructions. I think this is the best way, I learned this during my training in college—so long as there are set of standards to be met, people can perform and become creative. I have myself experienced both this more free and open style and a more authoritarian way of leading—for me—I prefer to be left free, so that I am more innovative. If only specific instructions are given, people do not tend to think wider and they feel enslaved. Binti, young female leader, Hospitality sector

As this young female leader points out, there is a preference for giving people freedom and the perception that this builds and encourages creativity, both of which are seen in a positive light. However, as she acknowledges below, this does not always work for everyone. This form of leadership works best where the people being led are self-driven, able to meet deadlines, and don't need supervision. The leaders have to adapt to the structure, culture, and team members they work with and attempt to lead accordingly. The young leader continues:

*Junior female leader, Personal experience: "As a leader, I give freedom"*

Sometimes, people you lead are too relaxed, and they find it difficult to meet deadlines, no one is watching or following it up frequently. If that happens, my first reaction is to have a short meeting with them and remind them what could be the problem, how can we solve this together. So the open leadership style does not apply to everybody, depends on the people you work with—some need more guidance. This is also my advice to other young leaders. I recommend to give your team members freedom, but you need to monitor, and you cannot use this style with everyone. Binti, young female leader, Hospitality sector

This is also the experience and perspective of senior leaders—as indicated by the following examples.

*Senior female leader, Personal experience: "People-based leadership"*

I have a people-based leadership style. All inclusive. So, for example, if I am the leader of a group and we need to do something, I will tell the group what we should do, but I am open to hearing if they agree. This is the way I want to do it, but do they have a better way? In addition, I do not have to be the one doing it, it is open to all and I won't take your glory. I acknowledge who played the role that made us achieve the thing we achieved. Judy Wambui, a senior female leader, Retail sector

This senior female leader highlights the importance acknowledging other's work and of showing respect. Along with giving people freedom to be innovative and creative, participants indicated that acknowledgement and respect for team members' ability as well as the ability to amass the necessary resources to get the work done were vital ingredients of leaders. One leader (survey respondent) saw this as an investment in the right people.

*Senior female leader: "Need for people focus"*

My leaders need to be more involved and in touch with operations; working harder to develop a culture of openness and people-centred instead of results-oriented and spending maximum time possible to ensure the right people are hired. Too often companies do not spend enough time, resources, and tools to ensure that the right people are coming into the organization. There's not enough "people" focus. (Anonymous survey respondent)

The, at times strongly felt, personal preference for less control and more people orientation could be explained partly as a reaction to the more common opposite approaches in Kenya that are considered less effective. So, in order to be effective and achieve results, people-oriented leadership is considered important. It may also be partly due to the growing number of highly educated, professional staff, also in the business environment, who respond better to leaders encouraging their participation and delegating tasks. Other reasons could be the diversity of leaders: youth/gender—as discussed below. It also transpired that leaders often have to experiment, learn, and implement this relatively uncommon leadership behaviour as only a few leaders have had role models displaying these types of leadership styles.

## 9.6 LEADERS' DIVERSITY: GENDER AND AGE

### 9.6.1 *Women Leaders*

In this case study several specific gender issues related to leadership were mentioned. Although the survey did not specifically probe gender issues, because of the large number of female respondents, some specific comments on leading as a woman were provided:

- *To some extent, I experience resistance and negative attitude just for being a woman. Some men are open to say they don't like working with women leaders or even women.*
- *My leader could improve by providing a level playing ground for both men and women leaders and appreciate people for their capabilities and not gender.*
- *I need from my colleagues to jointly work as a team recognizing each other's strengths irrespective of gender and no battle of power which is very common from men colleagues.*
- *Most important challenge is that Africa is a more patriarchal society, in which women leaders often have to work double to prove their worth to many organizations/bosses.*
- *The challenge is the reality of women at the workplace and maximizing/supporting their potential in top leadership level.*

Women were concerned that there was not a level playing field and they had to work twice as hard while not being supported. In addition, they felt that men feel they need to compete with women when on a team that includes women. They felt that this was detrimental to teamwork. In addition, several leaders interviewed (8 out of 12), 4 men and 4 women, indicated that they witness a difference between male and female leadership. Slightly more senior leaders and women mentioned the issues twice or more. Overall, women leaders are perceived to be better at people management, that is to say people-oriented leadership styles. However, women leaders also face several specific obstacles.

One of our interviewees works as a governance auditor, trains directors of boards on governance matters, and conducts governance audits for listed companies, parastatals, schools, and pension schemes. She comments on her observations of gender issues in leadership.

*Senior female leader, Personal experience: "Women in boards make a difference (that counts!)"*

Sifa has observed that in terms of the Champion Awards of Corporate governance (by the Institute of Certified Secretaries)—these have been won the last five years by firms run by women or with women on their boards and 50% in management teams. She explains this as follows: "I think this is because if there is a need for changes in terms of governance, men can get stuck at the vision or

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the idea, whereas women make sure it gets implemented. Furthermore, women have better social skills, more empathy to make changes work. Nowadays, for business to thrive you need service differentiation and personalized customer service; it is no longer about the product. For this you need a feminine approach. The same social skills—listening and empathy—work well with staff—female managers are able to appreciate staff as individuals and emphasize with what is going on in their lives—this makes staff motivated and as a result they outperform their targets. Staff appreciates it if leaders look at them as a people and not machines. This also helps to retain staff longer. Nowadays staff want flexible working hours and if you allow them time to manage their personal life, they value the employer and will give their loyalty to the employer.” Sifa, a senior female leader, Finance sector

To this senior female leader, women are better at turning visions into practice, especially if implementing change. This is because she sees women as being more flexible and able to recognize that a new business environment needs many of the skills that female leaders bring to the table, including empathy, inspiration, ability to listen, motivation practicality, personalization, social skills, and teamwork. The abovementioned senior female leader continued:

*Senior female leader, Personal experience: “Women in boards make a difference (that counts!)”—continued*

It seems as if these social skills are inherent for women. However, I believe that it can also be learned and some men are also good at it. Generally in my opinion, women are nurturers, are able to empathize more, and are less restrained in expressing emotions compared to men. Kenyan management culture so far has not been noticing the importance of this, or of more broadly, people management skills. However, this is changing, as the business environment is becoming more competitive. Increasingly, companies now train their management staff in soft skills, as a way of building capacity to having more all-round managers. Sifa, a senior female leader, Finance sector

The above is further substantiated by research carried out by the Kenya Institute of Management (2017), which showed that there is a significant difference in financial performance measured by revenues assets and Return on Equity (ROE) amongst companies that have at least 33% representation of one minority gender compared to those that are not. It further shows a positive correlation between share price performance and women representation in the boardroom. This study also documents that women's representation on the boards of 52 listed companies is increasing: 21% in 2017, up from 18% in 2015 and 12% in 2012. However, of 52 companies, only 12 had complied with the one-third gender rule.

Several interviewees indicated that this change is accompanied by some resistance from men, but in some cases also from women. Some examples of gender discrimination were given by female interviewees, such as the following.

*Senior female leader, Personal experience: "Change is not easy...."*

When I was appointed to a Task Force we were 2 women and 11 men. I contributed in a discussion and one man said I was lucky I was part of one-third reserved for women; in other words he considered me an unqualified person only in place because of affirmative action. I was upset but restrained myself. One day I asked for everyone to introduce themselves and tell about their background. I explained when and at what age I got my PhD and what my work had been. When it came to the man who had told me I was lucky, he declined to introduce himself properly. I was always treated differently after that. Dawn Atak, senior female leader, ICT sector

This senior leader also remarked on the different attitudes held by young male and female leaders she has mentored.

*Senior female leader, Personal experience: "Let's meet half way"*

I mentor both young men and women. I find I have to spend more time with male millennials—they need more help as they feel more entitled, but are less driven and less capable, seem to think that because they are men it will be OK for them. Dawn Atak, senior female CEO, ICT sector

*Junior female leader, Personal experience: “There is a constant need to prove myself”*

I am very patient—this is my key skill. So I can sit out and survive the first negative reaction. I then wait for the chance/moment to display my knowledge and skills. For example, in a remote area in Kilifi (on the coast) I was facilitating training for head teachers on digitizing information from Kenyan schools to be sent to the Ministry of Education. Before the training started some of the head teachers were very quick to brush me off just because I am young and a woman. After the training the mostly very senior participants (both men and women) called me “teacher” simply because I had been able to prove myself and shift their perception of me.

In urban areas this seems less of a problem. However, also in urban areas men feel they need to be led by men, that a woman cannot do my job. They will not say this openly but will indicate this afterwards. So, I feel the need to constantly, always, prove myself and show that I have something to bring to the table. While on the other hand I feel the respect is automatically given to my male counterparts even if we are in the same position. Brenda Wanjuki, junior female leader, Research sector

The women respondents took specific actions to combat persistent prejudice through performance, qualifications, and perseverance in making themselves visible and acknowledged. Many of the institutions they worked in had no structures in place to ameliorate the problems of gender discrimination, even though these same institutions had placed women in leadership positions. Men, on the other hand, are assumed to be leaders and are respected; they don’t have to try. Even if they are less qualified, men feel entitled to judge a woman’s qualifications and suitability for a job. Because of this men are more able to take up opportunities, they are more likely to be offered free rides and more doors are opened for them. This is particularly important because the way most leaders we interviewed became leaders was through being recognized and given opportunities and responsibilities by someone above them in a position of power. The junior female leader continues:

*Junior female leader, Personal experience: "There is a constant need to prove myself"*

Male colleagues often grab opportunities or they are easily given to them, citing issue of availability or for long-term projects the risk of pregnancy for women. I had one male colleague with the same skills and at the same level as me. An opportunity came up and my male boss prioritized him instead of me. I asked "why? I can do this!" My boss said that it was easier for him to do the job than for me, which was not true and he never gave any reasonable explanation to explain this. Brenda Wanjuki, junior female leader, Research sector

Women leaders also sometimes face sexual harassment in the workplace. The same interviewee recounts a challenging experience with her boss.

*Junior female leader, Personal experience: "Facing issues with male ego"*

As my leadership grew I faced a lot of issues with the male ego in my own company. I faced issues with male colleagues and especially my male boss. He was interested in a relationship with me. But I did not give in to him. So he made sure to punish me for this to a point I almost lost my job. When I turned him down, he started to try and prove that I am incompetent and am not doing my job well as his assistant. He started assigning other people in the team to roles that I should be doing, even when I had nothing to do, so I can just be idle. When I confronted him about this, it became such a big issue that it had to be raised with the managing director. After the meeting it was determined that he was just trying to sexually harass me and after that I had to switch to a different department. As time went by after this incident, I started hearing other female colleagues in the team say how he did the same thing to them. He started saying I had promised him a relationship and that he would in turn give me a promotion. This is very bad—especially as it is your word against his word and it ends up demoralizing the affected party. Brenda Wanjuki, junior female leader, Research sector



In the case of this junior female leader, there were not sufficient structures in place to deal with his problem of gender discrimination and harassment in the workplace. Cultural attitudes towards harassment problems need to be less hidden and specific structures for whistle-blowers are necessary for a more equitable workplace. This junior female leader points out that her case was not an isolated incident.

*Junior female leader, Personal experience: "Facing issues with male ego"*

This happens a lot; I hear a lot of stories like this from friends, often people end up blaming women for this. Men are seen to be entitled to this, as if it is their nature and women are supposed to control them. What would really help is if women spoke out more! If, for example, in a company where 100 women work and 10 women experience this it would help if the first one had spoken about it, so that the second and third would not face this alone. At the same time, I understand why women do not speak out. They fear losing their job, or promotions, and also people tend not to believe women a lot—sometimes you are even labelled as a “home-breaker” if the guy is married. In my case I had to speak out because it had gotten to the final straw, which is I almost lost my job so it was either I say the truth or I will be labelled as incompetent and end up being fired. Brenda Wanjuki, junior female leader, Research sector

However, not everyone is convinced that women leaders have specific qualities or workplace problems. In our interviews, some of the men expressed doubts, as the following male interviewees explain.

*Young male leader, Personal experience: "not so sure about differences"*

In my view, there are no big differences between male and female leaders. It is true that women are better listeners, and that may work well in a leadership positions. However, if we look at female political leaders we see mixed types—some are very good, but some are very bad. Percival Omuronji, junior male leader, ICT sector

*Senior male leader, Personal experience: "Competence is what counts"*

I struggle with the idea that women were not promoted because of gender. I worked with many very competent women in the organizations that I worked for and they got to their positions because they were competent and this was visibly demonstrated. Capo, senior male CEO, Retail and media sector

Both the male leaders above base their argument on the value of competence and that this is the main thing recognized in promotions. Specifically, they argue that if you are competent you will be recognized. In contrast, what female leaders point out is the double work they have to do to have their competence seen or recognized because of cultural and institutional bias, which already sees men as competent by gender, with less or no further proof necessary. Overall, it seems that women leaders are increasingly common, their leadership styles and skills more and more in demand, and they are mostly having a positive influence on the organizations where they work. At the same time, they still face several challenges in being accepted, respected, recognized, and progressing in their career.

### 9.6.2 *Youth*

Given the large number of youths in the workplace, people tend to enter into management positions relatively young. The Kenya Institute of Management study found that generally, female board members tend to be younger (average 52.1 year) than male board members (average 56.8 year). Also, in Kenya, the average age of both men and women board member is about five years lower than the global average age (which for women is 57.8 years and for men is 61.2 years).

Our case study shows that young leaders are eager to lead, and to lead well, with all in favour of adopting more people-oriented styles, as was shown in section 4. They also want to "do good" (we will explore this further in section 7). A young leader explains as follows:

*Young male leader, Personal experience: “Leaders should delay gratification”*

In my view good leadership is based on sacrifice and delayed gratification. Leaders should not expect results and pleasure now, but work hard and expect results later. In that sense the example of our political leaders is not good; they tend to think short term because otherwise the next political leader will benefit from their work. A leader should not be selfish, should not be doing this for themselves, but should be sacrificing for others. A leader should think about the next generation, not for gains today. Also try to improve the lives of those around you; we see such a big gap in wealth. African leaders could learn a lot from Asia, especially the values of honour and virtue, and the Greeks—stoicism would be interesting. Maina Muiruri, young male leader, ICT sector

This young male leader understood leadership as something that can change society even if not discernible in politics. In this way, anyone can contribute to transformation. This needs forward-thinking, broad social thinking, and strategic planning. In our survey and interviews we also got various insights into people’s views on young leaders and millennials in the workplace, from both senior and slightly more young interviewees. Some people clearly value the skills and mindset of young people, and of people-oriented leadership, as the following example illustrates.

*Senior male leader, Personal experience: “I need a young manager”*

Right now I am looking for a manager for my hotel, and I have specified in the ad that this person needs to be maximum 35 years old—I need a young person who is willing to learn to be different, and daring and also does not come with ideas around hierarchy that a manager is more powerful and “bosses” people around. I want the manager to lead the team, give people room to innovate, take initiative and learn. Only in that way we can grow and excel the business. Kaimenyi Mwangi, senior leader, Construction/hospitality sector

Like in other countries in the world, the different behaviour of millennials in the workplace is noticed and by some leaders considered an issue. Both senior and young leaders commented on this, and also on how they deal with it. Below, the first two experiences are from senior leaders who see both the plusses and minuses.

*Senior female leader, Personal experience: "Let's meet half way"*

Many CEOs are struggling with millennials in the workplace. I like to say let's meet each other half way. It is difficult trying to shape a generation that has their mindset on how they should work. Either we build them up or give up on them. They are the bosses of the future so I feel we don't have a choice. I tell other managers don't expect them to be loyal to a job. When they are there with you, use them productively. Look at their strengths like IT savvy. Women millennials are stronger, so driven, so dynamic but often they don't have a care in the world. I find I have to slow them down and explain, for instance, how they should not quit a job because they say they are not growing when they have only been in a position for six months. I ask them what more can they do in the role they have. Many are doing too much; trying to save the world, or want to be like me overnight. Dawn Atak, senior female CEO

Young people are dealing with a rapidly changing world both demographically and economically. They are searching for ways that they can sustain the future.

*Respondent's view of young leaders (senior female leader): "Plusses and minuses"*

From the people in my team I need a mind and voice that is present and unafraid. I find the younger generation, while courageous, intelligent, creative, and quick are apt to lack in detail and therefore depth. There is a reluctance to delve in and understand issues opting for quick un-researched solutions. (Anonymous survey respondent)

In the next example, a young leader reacts to criticism from senior people of his generation, maintaining that youth have a different starting point and view on life as compared to the older generation. On the one hand he critiques the idea that the youth have to be patient, arguing that the opportunities that existed for past generations are not present today, especially the upward mobility that accompanied political independence. On the other hand, he advises young people not to expect things to work out immediately.

*Young male leader, Personal experience: "We grow up in a time with many uncertainties"*

I do not agree with the criticism of senior people that the young need to be more patient. We grow up in a time with many uncertainties, and frequent, quick changes; automation of roles and lay-offs are common. We often need to make short-term decisions. The strategies of before to achieve success do not work for us. In a sense the world is burning, and the older generation is not really there for us or providing us with many resources or opportunities. When they were young the colonial power had just left, and this provided them with many opportunities and resources. This is not the same for us. My advice to young people is to not expect everything to work out immediately, but try to achieve your goal step by step. Maina Muiruri, young male leader, ICT sector

In some cases, the combination of being young and female can pose specific challenges and requires careful handling, as the experience below describes. Again the young female leader deals with the problem by demonstrating competence, confidence in her own work, and humility in the form of willingness to listen and to ask questions.

*Young female leader, Personal experience: "not easy to lead team members that are older than me"*

Currently, as a field research manager I am leading a team of enumerators, some of them are senior in age. Not all of them feel like they need to respect me. Some feel like "I can do what she is doing, plus I am older than her so I should be leading her not the other way around". So they try to throw me in my game or embarrass me by asking questions I cannot answer. My patience helps me. I answer

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their questions if I can; if not, I say I will refer and get back with feedback. If it continues, I have 1:1 with the particular enumerator, not a confrontation but more like a discussion to address his/her concerns. For instance, I would ask “Is the reason why you’ve been having a lot of questions because you didn’t understand the training, do you need me to retrain on particular topics?” This allows me to be able to understand and differentiate whether their questions are genuine or they just have a vendetta against me.

Thus being a young leader requires patience and excellent communication skills. Especially because young leaders are expected to have a lot of experience which sometimes is not the case. I mean, we can’t all know everything and there is always something new to learn, but the people you lead expect you to know it all. You just have to manage expectations and engage them on a mature level. If I am challenged, it’s easier to strike back with facts and information, than just an arrogant look of youthful confidence because that doesn’t help at all. Brenda Wanjuki, junior female leader, Research sector

## 9.7 LEADERS’ ATTRIBUTES

In the survey responses and interviews several leaders’ attributes were mentioned and considered important. In other words, several qualities or features were regarded as a key characteristic or an inherent part of being a good leader. The following attributes were mentioned by several interviewees:

1. *Candidness*: Mentioned by six interviewees, balanced in age and gender
2. *Decisiveness*: Mentioned by four interviewees, more senior and more women
3. *Doing good*: Mentioned by five interviewees, mostly youth
4. *Integrity*: Mentioned by five interviewees, mostly senior
5. *Adaptability*: Mentioned by three interviewees, mostly senior

These attributes resonate with the findings of the survey relating to the single greatest cause of losing respect for a leader, which for the majority, 19 out of 30 respondents, was lack of honesty and integrity. The responses included comments such as:

- *Lack of courage and lack of integrity*
- *A leader who abdicates their responsibility*
- *Self-interest and selfishness*
- *Unavailability: Travelling for self-interests*
- *Dishonesty and lack of integrity*
- *Corrupt practices: Immoral behaviour*

The five attributes are discussed below. At times, the attributes are quite interlinked; for example, candidness, decisiveness, and adaptability have interconnections, as have doing good and integrity.

*Candidness:* The ability to speak truth to people in power is one way for people to get recognized, as they need courage to speak out. Straightforward and truthful talk might be also described with the adjective candid; it can also be called assertive. Out of all interviewees, six (both men and women) made specific remarks about the need to be candid.

*Senior female leader, Personal experience: "Ask for what you deserve or say what you need to say"*

I believe in asking for things. After all, what is the worst that can happen? I also have some sense of entitlement. What I mean by this is that if I am paying for something and this is what you said I am getting, I will make a lot of noise about not getting it in full. As a leader you must be able to ask for what you deserve or say what you need to say. Judy Wambui, a senior female CEO, Retail sector

*Junior male leader, Personal experience: "Open communication is key"*

In my view one of the key values to be a good leader is communication—you must be open and communicate clearly, allow people to criticize you, otherwise you lose valuable inputs from them—in doing this you have to put your ego aside. My experience is that a lot of fights and disagreements are caused by miscommunication, not incompetence. It is my belief, that if you can communicate clearly and openly you will have fewer conflicts. However, cultural norms are an issue if you want to give honest feedback. Percival Omuronji, junior male leader, ICT sector

*Junior female leader, Personal experience: "Persistent and focus on my target"*

Over time I have learned to become more persistent and ignore people's assumptions and judgements—I focus on my target, and make sure that I get there—by all means. I'll be nice about it—but people quickly realize I am serious about what I want and patient enough to get it. This I learned already from a young age—I was born and brought up in Mathare—a slum area of Nairobi. I had to be tolerant, as the living conditions were not very good and very often I did not know what was going to happen next, some days we would not have food, for example. All I could do was persevering and remain hopeful. Brenda Wanjuki, junior female leader, Research sector

*Decisiveness:* Decisiveness stands for the ability to take up challenges and to act when no one else will. This attribute was mentioned by four interviewees (mostly senior female leaders) and considered essential for their success as a leader.

*Senior female leader, Personal experience: "Fanatical about time-keeping"*

I changed the issue of time-keeping. In general, everyone would come late to meetings. Prior to my becoming CEO, the CEO would be called in only after everyone had arrived. But I believed I had to be present from the start. On a day when we were discussing salary structure, I got fed up. I waited 45 minutes for everyone to come in. When everyone was finally seated I said "thank you and the meeting has ended, you have all taken half an hour to come for a meeting as if I have nothing to do. If you would like to discuss salary structure we can do it at a meeting two weeks from now." That was the last time anyone was late. People learned that productivity and time are correlated. They thought I was fanatical about time-keeping and integrity, and called me bossy, crazy and arrogant. But many of these structures are still in place. I had to change to a style that was not really me and was not 100% confident with and I felt I was not giving people a chance. Looking back it was the right style to get things done in that institution. Dawn Atak, senior female CEO, ICT sector



*Senior male leader, Personal experience: "Success earns you a seat at the table"*

Success brings credibility and failure to deliver it early in a new setting brings about difficulty in earning your seat at the table. I did a project based on my experiences in Kenya that I was sure would work and it did. After that they accepted me as very different in my approach to things, but productive. So I could get away with being different. Capo, senior male business leader, Retail and media sector

*Doing good:* Doing good, as an attribute of a leader, is mostly mentioned in the context of the need for a leader to have an impact on the wider environment, feeling social responsibility in terms of impacting a change for disadvantaged groups in society. The importance of this attribute is mentioned mostly by young interviewees (four), and interestingly only by one senior interviewee. Three young male interviewees mentioned the issue more than once. For young people this is, in most cases, their core leadership ambition, for which they see the need and also witness a gap in the behaviour of current leaders. In some cases, this relates back to the challenges they experienced or witnessed in their own childhood and upbringing.

*Young male leader, Personal experience: "I want to light candles"*

In my own village and region on the Lake (Victoria) there are very high rates of HIV/Aids—some of the highest in the country. As a kid I grew up with so many orphans around me, and there was a stigma attached to this as well. This is still there. Also people seem to be aware of the risks, but do not care—nowadays even less than before. For me this is my rationale to want change—to influence the negative and fatalistic attitude—and experience a level of fulfilment if I could achieve a change. I am not complete; I have to continue to work on myself. My passion is to make people's lives better, especially of youth. I have initiated a livelihoods programme in my home county, hoping to reduce the number of HIV infections as a result of the common "Sex for Fish business". If we could just be successful with a few people, this would save not only them but also their kids. I am also looking for a way to do a master's degree in Development studies. I want to continue lighting more candles, everyone has one but some are struggling to locate theirs but I am positive about the future. Henry, young male leader, ICT sector

Young interviewees also remarked on the need for ethical leaders and compassion, as is indicated by the example below.

*Young male leader, Personal experience: "Ethical and compassionate leaders"*  
 The aim of our outdoor leadership training is to produce ethical leaders for the future who are aware, self and environmentally conscious, and have fun. It is my nature to be compassionate and I aim to feel and know others' struggle and put myself in others' shoes because I have to understand others to solve problems. I find it most difficult to deal with people who are not able to be compassionate and make decisions lacking ability to see other people's feelings or needs. Mr Safari, junior male leader, Education sector

*Integrity:* The issue of integrity was specifically mentioned in five of the interviews, mostly by senior leaders. Indirectly this is also mentioned in the context of doing good that we discussed earlier. One young male interviewee voiced his hope for young leaders as follows: "Do not be corrupt—as a leader try to practice servant leadership and stay out of people's way—let them do their work, facilitate them, and be there to help them."

In recounting difficult situations at work, several interviewees talked about the challenge of dealing with dishonesty and integrity issues at work.

*Senior female leader, Personal experience: "Dealing with the misuse of vehicles"*

Once when I was in charge of administration, people who were senior to me were misusing vehicles, they were abusing their position. It was tricky, because I did not want to confront them, but at the end of the day—during an audit—I would be responsible and held accountable for it. Ultimately, I proposed to senior management the introduction of procedures that would make staff accountable. This was accepted and became the new policy and managed to stop the misuse. I thus managed to solve the situation amicably and without personal confrontation. Sifa, senior female leader, Finance sector

*Senior male leader, Personal experience: “Curbing personal interests”*

There at times can be a misconception that people are appointed to the board to make money or to get their relatives employed or awarded tenders. Whenever I felt a board member was going off track I would call them in, one on one, and tell them that I have information about their possible personal interest—relative employed, etc. I would remind them that we are public institution and inform them that all applicants irrespective of their relations would have to go through the transparent open process. If they make it to be hired, it is because of the system and not personal influence. We instituted anonymous qualification such as IQ exam where candidates are listed by code so you don’t know who is who. George Wandera, senior male CEO, Construction sector

One of the features of leadership expressed here is that of conflict avoidance. Leaders find it particularly hard to avoid conflict when faced with issues of integrity. Their ability to deal with integrity issues while avoiding conflict has been enhanced by new digital technologies. Not only do these technologies offer ways to curb corruption, but they are particularly appealing as they also avoid face-to-face confrontation.

*A survey respondents view (young man without leadership experience):**Transparency, technology, and engaging the populace*

The world is moving more and more to digital systems, which means that the leaders will need to be able to use technology in their day to day tasks. The use of technology will also, probably, lead to a more transparent society, and the leaders will also need to engage with the population, to inform them of what the leader is pursuing, and also address the concerns of the people. (Survey respondent)

*Adaptability:* Many of the leaders’ personal experiences link to the need to be flexible, able to adapt to the circumstances or organizational culture, in order to get things done. This attribute also often determines how well a leader is able to manage changes. In three interviews, senior leaders expanded on this in more detail.

*Senior female leader, Personal experience: "Managing a difficult transition"*

One of the difficult things to work on as a leader was the national ban on plastic bags. I had to guide transitioning supermarkets from giving free bags to selling bags. Free bags had been one of their largest advertising tools. I had to show them the value over and above the money saving for supporting the plastic bag ban. I did this through consultations and using case studies from other parts of the world. I managed to show them that their greatest fear that customers would revolt was not the experience of anywhere else, as long as they were given solutions of reusable things. However, it is still a challenge to get customers to carry the reusable bags. Judy Wambui, senior female CEO, Retail sector

*Senior female leader, Personal experience: "Thinking out of the box"*

The situation required me to be very innovative and think out of the box. If I was told something was impossible, I would look within the law and find a way to make it possible. I could not trust people 100% and had to read the law and documents and do research to make innovations. Dawn Atak, senior female CEO, ICT sector

*Senior male business leader, Personal experience: "From a one-man show to a management team"*

A general manager of a company in Mombasa was used to running the company on his own, holding all responsibilities. Under new management after an international merger it was decided to change the organizational structure and bring in a high-level management team. Therefore the GM had to delegate responsibilities to experienced professionals who were recruited from outside the company. The GM recounts: "I was open to this change, which was for me a novel approach and went along with the required changes. It took a while for me to get used to making decisions as a team and learning how to think with others. It turned out that I actually appreciated the support of the experienced colleagues and the sharing of responsibilities, as before it was lonely at the top."

## 9.8 THE ROAD TO BECOMING A LEADER: LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

This section explores how people have become leaders, their role models, and different initiatives for development of leadership skills.

### 9.8.1 *Determinants of Success*

All interviewees explained how they had become a leader and what factors contributed to this. Senior women leaders expanded on this in more detail and mentioned it twice or more often. Several factors that influence being or becoming a leader were mentioned, including the following: order of birth (with firstborns assigned more responsibilities in the family); leadership role experiences at school or university or in sports; the influence of others, such as parents, mentors, and guides; and being recognized by people above in the organization. Almost all the leaders we spoke with had some opportunity, often in the form of responsibility, given to them either by parents (as oldest child), in school (as prefects), in sports or university (as captains), or at work. As such, people were more chosen than self-made. Many remain in a system that rewards their hard work and skills but is dependent on internal recognition rather than self-promotion. A few reflections of leaders are presented below.

*Senior female leader, Personal experience: "Being the eldest girl I was given a lot of responsibility"*

When I look back I have always been in positions of leadership from when I was young. I was class prefect, senior prefect, games captain, and hockey captain. I was conscious that if someone is not doing something you should take charge. I was also the eldest girl in my family, and although I had an older brother, I was given a lot of responsibility and was forced to be in charge of my siblings. I was forced to do things because I was a girl. By the time I was in school, I was very responsible. I did well at Moi University and came out the top student in my Faculty. Dawn Atak, senior female leader, ICT sector

*Senior female leader, Personal experience: "Born a leader?"*

I am a responsible and dependable person. Prior to my current job, I was in positions that would have positioned me to move higher, but I doubted my ability. But there were people who saw there were traits in me that showed I was leadership leaning. For instance, they said I had the education, the personality, and the character for leadership. I could not see it. Now, by character I am very prone to leading. Before I used to think it was being helpful. For instance, we are in a meeting and no one is taking charge so I would stand up and take charge. Perhaps it is from being the eldest as my dad gave me a lot of responsibilities; the rest of my siblings picked up on that and would look to me for guidance. In addition, I lost my mum in 2010 so there were her shoes to fit into, as she was always the "go-to" person before. Dad passed on the following year 2011 so I really became the firstborn. Judy Wambui, a senior female business leader, retail sector

*Senior female leader, Personal experience: "Discover your passion!"*

My journey so far has taught me that it is important that you need to discover what drives you, your passion—the rest will then follow by itself. I found my niche eventually in governance. Continuous learning and exploring new areas creates new perspectives and opens new doors. Interaction with people in various spheres opens your eyes or opens doors for you and gives you different perspectives from what you held. Five to ten years back I did have a very different perspective on what I thought was my passion and my work, but with time you get to know better from experience. Luck also plays a role in that you need to be at the right place, at the right time. Finally faith in God is also crucial in all you do. Sifa, a senior female business leader, Finance sector

Only one senior male leader mobilized his leadership skills, identified through parents (firstborn) and school (prefect) to seek out his own promotion, demonstrating to a stranger how he could transform the stranger's organization. Rather than waiting to be recognized and

letting competence speak for itself, he pushed further by taking a risk. These stories also reflect the nature/nurture debate, and we can conclude that it seems often a mixture of factors causing someone to become a leader.

### 9.8.2 *Role Models and Mentors*

Having an inspiring role model has been very important for many of our interviewees. Half of them mentioned this specifically, predominantly young male leaders (with one of them mentioning this multiple times).

*Junior male leader, Personal experience: "You need role models and mentors"*  
Henry was born and grew up in Western Kenya, close to Lake Victoria. His dad was a primary school teacher but died when Henry was in primary school. Life was a struggle after that; his mother had to feed the family from some livestock and some petty trading. He wanted to be a teacher. "My teacher would send me to buy bread for him—I only got bread at Christmas, so this made me think that I also wanted to be a teacher. In the village, you do not have many examples apart from a teacher and also a doctor—who was a mere pharmacist, but we called him doctor. If you want to grow you need a mentor, someone to look up to. These do not have to be prominent people. Instead they can be people near to you, and they can be even unaware that you see them as your mentor. I picked a few mentors and observed everything they did very closely. This included a youth leader in a church environment. I admired his confidence and how he encouraged people and got things done. Another mentor was the director in my organization. I watched her from a distance, did not directly talk to her, but watched how she handled things and learned a lot that way." Henry, young male business leader, ICT sector

*Senior male leader, Personal experience: "My GM was my guide"*

I had great respect for the general manager who sent me for training. He got us through difficult things. It got to the point we would do pretty much anything he asked. He had become a guy we trusted to lead. He allowed us to question and took up our ideas most of the time. We hardly did anything we did not create and he would just tweak things. He was also as tough as nails. When he told me I would be general manager, I had to think seriously because he was not just another GM. Capo, senior CEO, Retail and media sector

Having an inspiring role model and a mentor has really benefitted many of the leaders in their development and in dealing with specific challenges and difficult situations.

Not all interviewees mentioned the benefits of role models. Our data suggest that women have benefited less from having role models, which could be related to there being less female leaders which could set an example for them. Some mentioned the benefit of their schooling, skills development, and the importance of reading books, including science fiction books, philosophy, and, as indicated below, books on politics and wars.

*Young male leader, Personal experience: "I benefited from skills and books"*

I don't have role models. Rather I think of leadership as skills. I had teachers at university and people who helped me gain skills. I also read a lot starting with philosophy when 13. I was the librarian in high school so had access to books. The Principal was American and so he left me in the library, allowed me to take home books. My interests were politics and war such as stories of Genghis Khan, Ivan the terrible, and Pharaohs of Egypt, which made me ask throughout my schooling—What is being great? Mr Safari, young leader, Education sector



### 9.8.3 *Skill Development*

Skill development was considered an important issue by eight interviewees, especially by senior male leaders. However, examples of formal leadership skill development activities, like training and coaching, were rare. A few leaders had participated in formal training events in their companies, but most had not. Also, in terms of developing the leaders in their companies or groups, our interviewees resorted to devising their own training system and programmes.

*Senior male leader, Personal experience: "I want my team to be independent and ambitious"*

I have some experience with formal training conducted by outsiders—often based on western training programmes. My experience is that this makes no difference whatsoever. Therefore, I conduct training for my staff by myself; I have developed my own system and materials. I organize retreats at a nice place out of town for two days. We sit together, I tell them now we are in this room together there are no hierarchical differences, everyone is equal—we all can participate. I invest time and money in developing my people and my teams. I want to reach a point where they think for themselves, take initiative and I am not needed to give instructions. Important is to achieve the highest quality in what we do as a business. I am ambitious, and I want my team to be ambitious. Kaimenyi Mwangi, senior leader, Construction/hospitality sector

For the youth, autonomy and innovation along with team building were considered important parts of leadership. In the rapidly changing and flexible environment in which most leaders were working, the leaders had to find innovative ways to build teams and manage people, as well as ways to implement their broader philosophy of inspiration and team cohesion.

*Young male leader, Personal experience: "Training a group of peer mentors/influencers"*

As I personally could not interact and influence 300 people at the same time, this is when I thought of working with a few youth who had the ability to influence their peers. I developed a scheme of peer mentorship among the young people entering our company. The peer mentors would need to have a similar background in order to be able to influence them. As complementary support, we would have mentors and motivational speakers from outside, advising them—guiding them on what needs to be done.

I work closely with these influencers to ensure they only influence positively, give them responsibilities and trust them. Some have now grown to a higher level than we had expected. My motto is: I have one candle that I can use to light someone else's candle—he or she can do the same to others—as a result the whole place becomes brighter. Using the influencers was the biggest break for me in getting results in my current role. Henry, young male business leader, ICT sector

One interviewee is developing specific African leadership training programmes, as he explains below.

*Young male leader, Personal experience: "I believe in outdoor leadership training"*

Currently I am trying to start my own leadership school and I have run some independent courses. The courses range from week-long trips to a month in the outdoors where students can learn and practice leading self and each other. The aim is to create compassionate, resilient, and ethical future leaders. I use African (Ubuntu) values and "primitive skills", for example, spear throwing, tracking, making fires, natural history on edible and medicinal plants. I involve sage philosophy/knowledge from elderly cultural liaisons who hike with the students. I also touch on a bit of tech skills including camping, map reading, and environmental ethics. Mr Safari, young male leader, Education sector

### 9.8.4 *Confidence*

Building self-confidence and overcoming problems of self-doubt was mentioned by seven interviewees as crucial in the path to becoming a leader.

*Senior female leader, Personal experience: Self-confidence lost and found*

I never talk about myself. I have no idea how. I don't think this has served me well. Not selling myself is what allowed me for some years to be a subdued character, it did something to my self-confidence. Demanding things from people, I still find this hard and in my "lost years" I was not able to. I would have characterized myself during my lost years as a push-over, but now I stand up for myself and I am not easily swayed. I was self-doubting but now I am confident, I did not believe in myself but now I am totally a believer in myself. I am quite happy and hit my 50s with a bang. Judy Wambui, a senior female business leader, Retail sector

The importance of confidence and not doubting your ability was also a key lesson for a senior leader during his training to be a general manager (GM).

*Senior male leader, Personal experience: "Failure is not an option"*

My mentor told me that you must back yourself—don't doubt. You don't always know if it would work, but you trust that you have enough ability, intelligence, and people around you to overcome any problem that you meet. In one training session we watched *Apollo 13*. On things going pear-shaped during that trip, the Lead flight director Gene Kranz said: "We've never lost an American in space, we're sure as hell not gonna lose one on my watch! Failure is not an option." In a moment of doubt the leader used one statement that turned the attitude to problem solving to action rather than wallowing. This training session had a great impact on my attitude to leadership. Capo, senior male CEO, Retail and media sector

A senior female leader provides the following advice to young female leaders:

*Senior female leader, Personal experience: "Do what you have to do and do it well"*

My advice to young women is that you don't have to wave your hand frantically to be heard, but rather do what you have to do and do it well, always know that where a man has to take one step you may have to take three, be patient about it, if you feel there is a fight in front of you don't get emotional but fight with facts and dig deep. If appointed to a task force/board make sure it is something you can do. When part of something, believe in yourself and do the best you can with integrity and humility. That is to say, humility to the level where you are supposed to be humble—if it is issues of integrity don't be humble at all. Where struggling, talk to the right person, look for a mentor in or out of your organization or industry, and feel free to talk to them about challenges. Be selective of who they are and how many. There will always be some people who don't have your interest at heart. It is how you rise out of it is where your strength comes. Continue doing what you believe in and don't let others derail you. Be careful of who you speak to. Don't be over-friendly and over-trusting of people you first meet in the job. Dawn Atak, senior female leader, ICT sector

## 9.9 CONCLUSIONS/DISCUSSION

The perceptions on hierarchy impact strongly on people's expectations and behaviour. Our case study indicates a shift in the attitudes towards hierarchy, with the majority of survey respondents and interviewees favouring less hierarchy than they witness currently in society. There are also several differences between private sector and government structures, with the latter requiring a more structured and at times authoritarian approach than the private sector, where results orientated and less hierarchical leadership style is more common.

Expectations of today's business leaders include a shift towards more strategic leadership and people-oriented leadership styles. The survey results, backed up by leaders' personal experiences, indicate a major shift

in perceptions of effective leadership, typically from authoritarian/control focused leadership styles towards people-oriented leadership styles, based on the concepts of participation and consultation. Interestingly, women are seen to be more able to practice this style of leadership.

*Leaders' diversity:* The group of leaders in Kenya is becoming more and more diverse. Increasingly women leaders and youth leaders are taking up leadership positions. Both groups have different, often novel, approaches that they bring to the workplace. This change in the status quo is causing some resistance, mostly from men and from some senior leaders. Others, however, see the benefits from diverse leadership, often more people-oriented styles, by women and youth, and appreciate their different approaches and skills.

*Leadership attributes:* In our survey and interviews five attributes emerged as being important for leaders: decisiveness, candidness, doing good, honesty/integrity, and adaptability. Decisiveness, integrity, and adaptability were mostly mentioned by senior female leaders, while doing good was mostly mentioned by young male leaders.

*The road to being a leader:* Common factors for success in how people have become leaders include order of birth (with firstborns assigned more responsibilities in the family); experiences at school or university; influence of others, such as parents, mentors, and guides; and being recognized by people above. Half of our interviewees, especially men, have benefitted from having role models. Formal initiatives for development of leadership skills have so far been very limited; most leaders learned through learning by doing, informal mentoring, and reading. In terms of developing the leaders in their companies or groups, many leaders resorted to devising their own training system and programmes. Finally, in the process of becoming a leader and carrying out this responsibility, many leaders emphasize the importance of increasing confidence.

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# Emerging People-Oriented Leadership in Rural Development in Rwanda

*Joseph K. Nsabimana and Eva Jordans*

## 10.1 INTRODUCTION

This case study explores how current leaders in rural development in Rwanda perceive their role, the challenges they experience, and their strategies for operating effectively as leaders. The study involved both young and senior leaders, male and female, and also private sector and government leaders. The study aims to be of use for developing young leaders for the future, especially (but not exclusively) for people in Rwanda and in Africa.

How is this chapter structured?

- Section 10.2—The context of leadership in rural development in Rwanda, including the policy of *decentralization* and introducing the range of stakeholders such as farmer organizations, government staff from the village to national level, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and private sector leaders.

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- Section 10.3—“Case Study Data”: We describe how our data were collected.
- Section 10.4—“Perceptions of Hierarchy”: This includes the national culture and aspects of organizational culture, notably in the context of decentralization.
- Section 10.5—“The Need for Change”: The survey results, backed up by leaders’ personal experiences, indicate a gradual shift in perceptions of effective leadership, typically a move from authoritarian/control focused leadership styles towards people-oriented leadership styles, based on the concepts of participation and consultation.
- Section 10.6—“Leaders’ Diversity”: Leaders differed in their age, gender, and sector. We explore the constraints and challenges identified by these diverse leaders.
- Section 10.7—“Leaders’ Attributes”: We discuss leadership attributes that are considered important, including decisiveness, candidness, doing good, honesty/integrity, and adaptability.
- Section 10.8—“The Road to Becoming a Leader”: We explore how people have become leaders, their role models, and different initiatives for development of leadership skills
- Section 10.9—“Conclusions/Discussion”: We discuss lessons learned and suggestions for the further development of leadership in rural development in Rwanda.

## 10.2 CONTEXT: LEADERSHIP IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN RWANDA AND THE POLICY FRAMEWORK

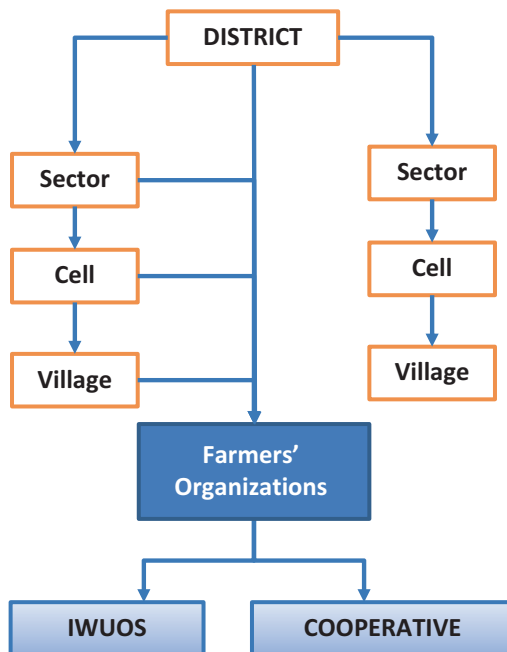
In Rwanda, a district is a key geographical area and administrative unit to which the leadership has been transferred from all national level ministries and governmental and non-governmental organizations as detailed by the Rwanda National Decentralization Policy of 2001 (GoR, 2001).

Through the Rural District Organizational Structure, established in 2014, the district is well appointed with different units for ensuring the proper service delivery to farmers and other beneficiaries. The revised National Decentralization Policy (GoR, 2012) details the responsibilities, authority, and functions, as well as power and appropriate resources which have been transferred to district and sub-district levels, that is, sectors, cells, and villages (see Fig. 10.1). The Government of Rwanda adopted the National Decentralization Policy to achieve three main goals: (1) good governance; (2) pro-poor service delivery; and (3) sustainable development.

The revised National Decentralization Policy (GoR, 2012, p. 22) states, as a lesson learnt after a decade of implementing the decentralization policy,



**Fig. 10.1** Rural District Organizational Structure



that: “Empowerment is a process and doesn’t happen uniformly: A lot of effort has been put in citizen empowerment and participation, change of mindsets, and embracing decentralization as the most effective mechanisms to promote good governance and sustainable service delivery. Nonetheless, there are still challenges, and communities and local governments have different levels of empowerment. Government now realizes that a long-term empowerment agenda through decentralization must be developed and impact will happen after a long time and must target both the leaders and the led (citizens).” In the context of rural development, the decentralization includes empowerment and leadership of farmer organizations (FOs), as well as leadership by government staff at different administrative levels (cell, sector, district, and national level—see Fig. 10.1).

As indicated by the Ministry of Local Government (MINALOC, 2018) in Rwanda, districts are responsible for coordinating public service delivery and economic development. They are divided into sectors, which are responsible for the delivery of public services as mandated by the districts. The cells and villages are the smallest units, providing a link between the people and the sector. All adult resident citizens are members of their local cell council, from which an executive committee is elected. In addition, farmers are organized

into farmer organizations. These include Cooperatives and Irrigation Water User Organizations (IWUOs). IWUOs are responsible for operating and maintaining irrigation schemes. Some have up to 900 members, and some irrigation schemes are spread over an area of 15 kilometres long, divided into zones or blocks. Cooperatives are often even larger; some have several thousand members. Their main function is to support farmers with agricultural inputs, for example, for rice or maize production, including seeds, fertilizer, and credit, and organize collective marketing of the produce. FO leadership is organized with an executive committee headed by a president, and in addition an audit committee and a conflict management committee.

The World Bank in its 2015 Rwanda Poverty assessment report states that “In 1997, three years after the genocide, the country was characterized by deep and widespread poverty, rock-bottom health indicators, and pervasive hunger and food insecurity” (World Bank, 2015). The World Bank further states that while poverty in Rwanda is still high, the trends over the past decade have been firmly positive. Between 2001 and 2011, Rwanda’s economy grew at more than 8% per year, earning the country a spot on the list of the ten fastest-growing countries in the world. Strong growth resulted in rapid poverty reduction. “The share of the population below the national poverty line dropped from 59 per cent in 2000 to 46 per cent in 2010 and 39 per cent in 2013”, as is shown in Fig. 10.2 (Knoema, 2019).

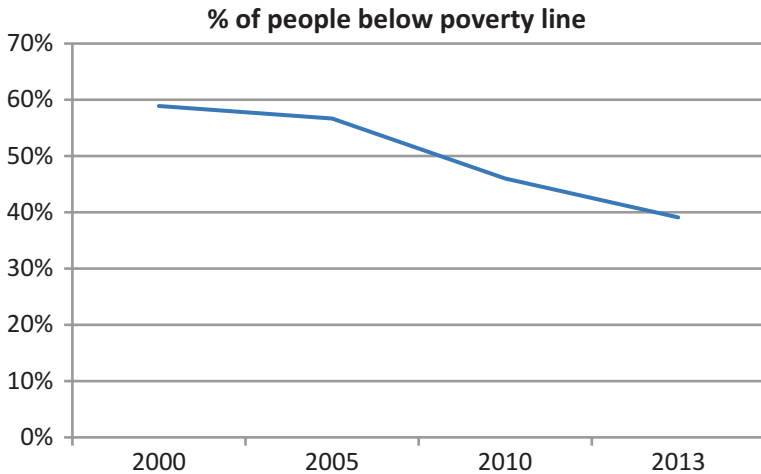


Fig. 10.2 Percentage of people below poverty line. (Source: Derived from Knoema, 2019)

### 10.3 CASE STUDY DATA

This chapter is based on data and insights that have been derived from an online survey that was sent to 50 people who are working in government, non-government, and private companies involved in rural development. The survey was completed by 25 leaders—6 female and 19 male. The majority, 60%, have less than six years of leadership experience. The survey was followed up by in-depth qualitative interviews held with 18 leaders; of these, there were 7 senior and 11 young leaders (35 years or younger), with 3 of them being young female leaders (Table 10.1). The interviewees included nine government staff leaders, and nine leaders from the private sector, including farmer organizations (three) and six leaders from companies/NGOs. The sample of leaders interviewed was collected based on availability and their interest and willingness to be interviewed. The major-

**Table 10.1** Demographic information on the interviewees (Rwanda)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Young/senior</i>	<i>Private/ government</i>	<i>Position/role</i>
Ngabo Marc	Male	Senior	Government	District official
Muhiza Juste	Male	Senior	Government	Cell executive secretary
Kalisa Patrick	Male	Young	Private	Cooperative president
Gasangwa Leo	Male	Young	Private	IWUO president
Mugisha Pierre	Male	Young	Government	Cell officer
Senga Jado	Male	Young	Government	District official
Kamali Modeste	Male	Young	Government	Sector executive secretary
Ineza Sophie	Female	Young	Private	Supply assistant for NGO in refugee camp
Uwase Divine	Female	Young	Private	Senior researcher for Int. NGO
Hirwa Jean	Male	Young	Private	Rural development consultant
Mukiza Freddy	Male	Senior	Private	Director of contractor firm
Muhigo Anaclet	Male	Senior	Private	MD consultancy firm
Shimwa Danny	Male	Young	Private	IWUO president
Muhineza August	Male	Young	Government	District director
Sangwa Alice	Female	Young	Private	NGO trainer
Ngenyumva Euladie	Male	Senior	Government	National level leader
Mugisha Eric	Male	Senior	Government	District director
Gashumba Luc	Male	Senior	Government	District official
Total 18	15 M, 3 F	7 senior, 11 young	9 private, 9 govt.	

**Table 10.2** Coding frequencies by attributes (Rwanda)

Code Category (5)	Codes (15)	Number of times coded (339)	In how many different interviews (18)	Attributes of interviewee (Number)						Number of interviewees, by attribute, who mentioned the coded issues two or more times					
				Age		Gender		Sector		Age		Gender		Sector	
				Youth	Senior	Man	Woman	Private	Govt.	Youth	Senior	Man	Woman	Private	Govt.
01-Perception of hierarchy	General	11	10	6	4	8	2	3	7	1	1	1	1		
	Organization Specific	13	7	4	3	7	0	4	3	2	3	5	4		
02_Leadership Style	Strategic Leadership	41	18	11	7	15	3	9	9	6	7	13	5		
	People Oriented Leadership	79	18	11	7	15	3	9	9	11	7	15	3		
03_Leader Diversity	Women leaders	4	3	3	0	0	3	3	0	1	1	1	1		
	Youth	6	3	2	1	1	2	3	0	1	1	1	2		
04_Leadership Attributes	Candidness	10	9	4	5	7	2	5	4	1	1	1	1		
	Decisiveness	17	12	6	6	11	1	5	7	2	2	4	1		
	Integrity	23	16	11	5	13	3	8	8	4	1	3	2		
	Doing Good	17	11	8	3	9	2	6	5	3	1	3	1		
	Adaptability	33	16	9	7	13	3	7	9	4	6	8	2		
05_Leadership Development	Leadership determinants	19	18	11	7	15	3	8	10	1	1	1	1		
	Role Model	32	17	10	7	14	3	7	10	6	3	6	3		
	Skills Development	16	9	6	3	7	2	4	5	3	2	4	1		
	Confidence	18	14	8	6	11	3	7	7	2	1	1	2		

ity (15) of the interviewees were not able to participate in the online survey, partly because of limited information technology (IT) access and partly because of timing. Three national level leaders interviewed responded to the online survey. Overall, the study covers the views of 40 different leaders (32 men and 8 women; 25 young and 15 senior).

Table 10.2 shows the coding scheme used for the case studies (see the Methodology chapter for an explanation) along with the coding frequencies, which are also disaggregated by attributes of age and gender.

The following sections (Sects. 10.4, 10.5, 10.6, 10.7 and 10.8) report the findings from both the survey and interview data, organized by the interview coding categories.

### 10.4 PERCEPTIONS OF HIERARCHY

The leadership context in Rwanda encompasses many different elements, including leadership norms and beliefs and also aspects of organizational culture, notably specific aspects of rural development that involves both private and government sector stakeholders. An important concept that is influenced by cultural values is the norms and beliefs around hierarchy. The survey recorded both respondents’ experiences of hierarchy as well as their personal *preferences* on hierarchy. Below the data ( $n = 25$ ) is presented (Fig. 10.3).

The results are positioned in four quadrants. The respondents in two of these could be considered broadly satisfied (the green quadrants) and the respondents in the remaining two quadrants could be considered broadly dissatisfied (the red quadrants).

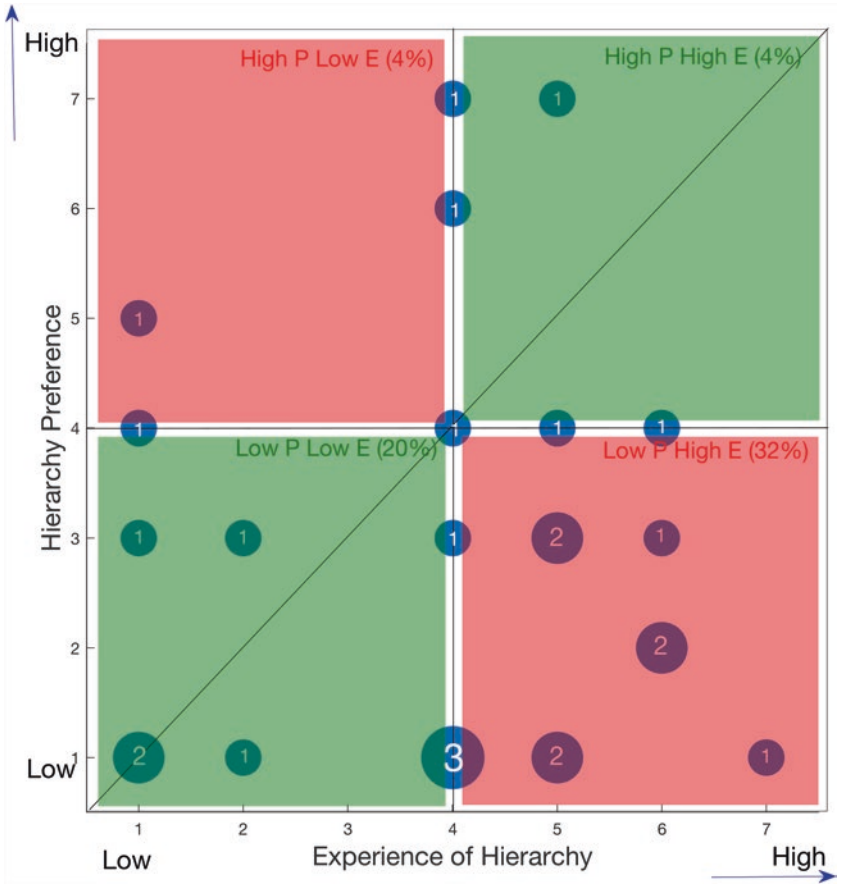


Fig. 10.3 Experiences and preferences towards hierarchy (Rwanda)

*Broadly dissatisfied (72%):*

- *Lower right quadrant:* The largest group of eight respondents rates their experience as quite hierarchical and would personally prefer less hierarchy than they currently witness in the society.
- *Upper left quadrant:* One respondent considers the current practice not very hierarchical and would prefer more hierarchy than they currently witness in the society.

- *On the lines*: There are a further six respondents who consider the current practice average to high but would prefer a lower hierarchy, and another three who consider the current practice low to average but would prefer a higher hierarchy—so these could likely be also termed broadly dissatisfied.

*Broadly satisfied (28%):*

- *Upper right quadrant*: One respondent perceives the current practice on hierarchy as high, which is also the strong preference.
- *Lower left quadrant*: Five respondents consider the current practice not very hierarchical, and this links to their preference.
- *In the middle*: One respondent perceives the current practice as average, which is also the preference.

If we look at this in more detail, the closer a respondent's answer is placed near the diagonal, the more satisfied this person is, as the practice and preference are identical; if far from the diagonal the level of satisfaction is lower. In this case, three respondents' (12%) responses are on the diagonal, mostly (two) in the lower left quadrant. A further four respondents are close to the diagonal (one space removed). Thus, these respondents (a total of seven, or 28%) are more or less satisfied. However, the majority (18 or 72%) of respondents fall further from the diagonal, with most—12—preferring a lower hierarchy, in other words less enactment of power differences than they currently experience. As one private sector leader stated: "*I consider first of all my employees as my 'bosses' because my success depends on them.*" However, six respondents would prefer more hierarchy than they currently experience.

How perceptions on hierarchy can influence the position and effectiveness of a leader is illustrated in the following challenge mentioned by one of the highest ranking district officials, who was promoted from a lower ranking position to take up this high position.

*Young male leader's Personal Experience—Managing hierarchy reversal*

The challenge I have experienced after my promotion is the complexity of leading staff members whom used to lead me before, who are mostly my seniors in age. Before I was working in the same district but at the lower sector level, and I was led by district officials. Since I

(continued)

**(continued)**

have been promoted to my current role these same persons now actually fall under my responsibility. To lead in this situation takes time and a process of convincing these male and female employees that the roles have changed, in other words the “game” has changed. To end this challenge, I tried to improve my collaboration with them through consultation. I involved them and asked them to explain to me their opinions on our objectives. After analysing the objectives and jointly developing our action plan, including roles and responsibilities, these employees have become convinced that I have to coordinate and lead them and now understand how much they need me for supporting their activities. **Senga Jado**, District official

Senga Jado’s personal experience also shows that he chose to adopt a participatory leadership style to address the challenge, ultimately leading to a workable situation for all. This experience was echoed by a young female leader: “*Today the challenge I meet is in terms of mindset of some staff of my team, who are not happy with my promotion. I was under the responsibility of some of them; nowadays it is not easy for them to consider me as their leader as I am younger than them.*” The following example also indicates that choosing to use a participatory style instead of an authoritarian one was the answer to the challenge he faced.

*Young male leader’s Personal Experience—People’s involvement leads to the solution*

Since I am a leader, the challenge that I have experienced is about managing the issue of land inheritance among family members whose parents have died. The eldest sons want to share only with brothers and do not consider sisters who are married. Other difficult situations are related to selecting beneficiaries for the programme of “One cow per poor family”. However, all of these issues have been resolved by involving the villagers and to let them take decisions themselves in the meetings I have organized at village level. This has shown me how the people should be involved if I want to succeed in my task. **Kamali Modeste**, Sector executive secretary

Not everyone agrees that using a participatory style of leadership is feasible, citing education level and time constraints for encouraging more participation and consultation. One survey respondent remarked: “*Low level of education of citizens and lack of enough resources make citizens oppose to leaders decisions. In addition, the economic development aspirations require taking quick decisions and thus reducing consultations which take much more time.*”

Survey respondents also described the challenges they themselves face as a leader, with the most frequently mentioned challenge being managing downwards (16 times out of 25 respondents). Examples included *resistance of beneficiaries or team members, lack of trust in them as leader, lack of leadership skills, no team spirit, and problems with decision-making and conflict management.*

*Young female leader's Personal Experience: Competition for promotion is a challenge*

My challenge is the competition within my team. All of them need to be promoted. So, some team members sometime do not advise their colleagues, so that they will be disqualified. As a leader to deal with this challenge, I try to create a good environment within the team and work hard so as not to discourage our organization. And for those who consider me as child, I do really work in excellent ways to show them how able I am. For me this challenge gives me the courage to work. **Ineza Sophie**, Supply assistant for NGO in refugee camp

#### 10.4.1 *Hierarchy and Decentralization*

Specific situational and organizational characteristics of rural development also affect perception of hierarchy, notably in the context of decentralization which involved devolving decision-making and implementation from national to district and lower levels. Leadership in rural development within the context of a decentralization brings about its own challenges. Leaders involved in this study work at various levels in the hierarchy, from national level to farmer level. Often, their responsibilities involve balancing and negotiating the policies and directives from above with the demands and ideas from below. In some way, it can be compared with the position of middle managers in larger firms. Analysing the middle manager, Anicich



and Hirsh (2017) state that “by virtue of their structural positions, middle managers are simultaneously the ‘victims and the carriers of change’ within an organization, receiving strategy prescriptions from their bosses above and having to implement those strategies with the people who work beneath them. In many cases, the norms and expectations associated with being a leader (e.g. assertiveness) are incompatible with the norms and expectations associated with being a subordinate (e.g. deference).”

Within the decentralized rural development system, a leader’s important roles are to consult, plan, coordinate, and communicate, on behalf of the team or farmer organization, with outside actors and stakeholders, and influence and negotiate upwards on behalf of the people. Furthermore, stakeholders are placed not only at higher hierarchical levels but also at lower levels, so leaders need to simultaneously manage upwards as well as downwards.

The capacity to do this depends on leaders’ communication skills and their degree of power and influence, which are also linked to the enactment of hierarchy by their bosses. Managing these interactions is a key responsibility of leaders at each level. From the interviews it became clear that “managing upwards” to address the needs identified at lower levels, is identified as a challenge, and some leaders feel “*sandwiched*”, meaning they face a difficult choice between two duties or responsibilities (Macmillan Dictionary, 2018) in trying to reconcile their responsibilities towards different stakeholders.

*Senior male leader’s Personal Experience: Not being heard at higher level*

My leader at the district could improve his way of taking decisions on budget use. Sometimes, my leader doesn’t consider the ideas of Sector level staff on how the activities can be oriented, though these sector staff members know much more of the needs and strategies of the farmers. **Ngabo Marc**, District official

Some leaders interviewed expressed the friction of being caught in the middle between higher and lower hierarchy levels and ultimately the farmers. A feature of this buffer position is that different interests, expectations, and attitudes are focused here and this may give rise to conflict. A leader in the middle “falls between two stools”; does he or she, for example, go for the interests of those at the higher level or those at the lower level? Where does his or her ultimate loyalty lie? How participatory can the decision-making processes be? Figure 10.4 presents the decentralization

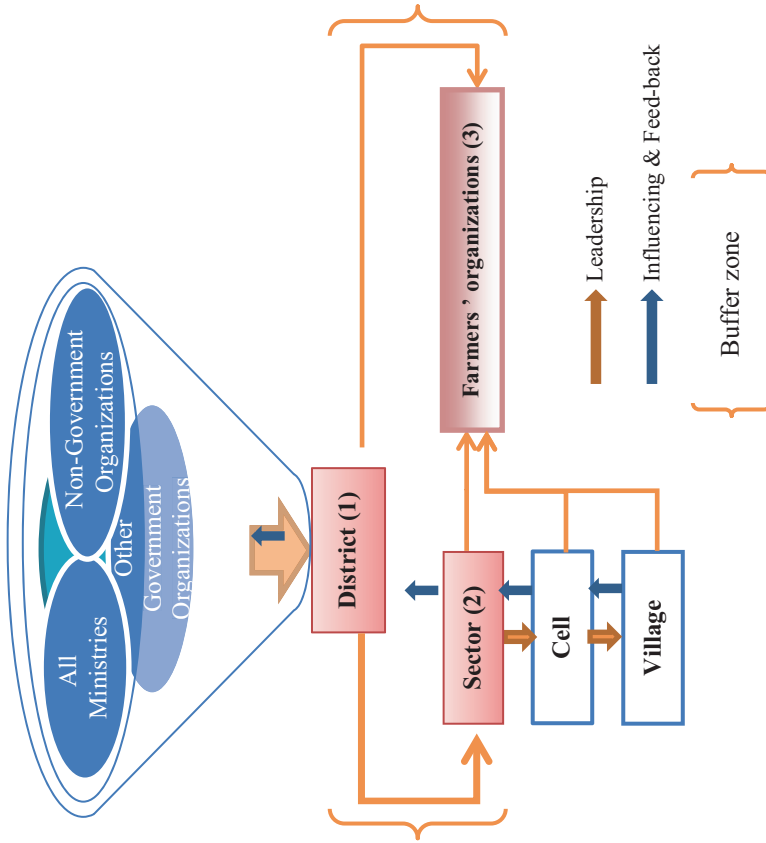


Fig. 10.4 Decentralization of leadership

of leadership between central level and decentralized administrative entities as well as the farmers' organizations.

There are three main buffer zones where leaders find themselves at a "crossroads" between higher and lower levels: these include district level, sector level, and FO level.

At district (1) level, the leaders are responsible for responding to all basic duties of all ministries and to act as the representative to the citizens of the central level. This is done through different approaches and strategies to provide the response required to the target group's needs and for smooth communication between all institutional levels. However, in our study some constraints were mentioned. One respondent talked about his disappointment and frustration with his leader's regular cancellation of village level meetings at the last minute, when more than 300 farmers would have already gathered. Another respondent recounts: "*People from outside or a higher level in the hierarchy come and start (re)directing our work, not taking into account our planning prepared in a participatory manner.*" At the same time, this research confirms that the approaches used in communication between the different levels do not need to be formal in order to be fruitful. At the field level, most of the time the leaders work closely together and sometimes this is done in an informal way due to the level of flexibility and ownership of responsibilities.

At the sector (two) level, the leaders are linked and report directly to the district staff and leaders. Some sector leaders are supposed on a daily basis to combine several responsibilities coming from the district level. There is both a formal and informal relationship between district and sector levels. Sector staff is directly interacting with (three) farmers' organizations and responding to their needs as well as cell level staff and the villages.

For example, a sector agronomist is right in the middle between the forces from top and from bottom. Based on bottom-up information and pressure from farmers, a sector agronomist is supposed to respond to their needs as he/she is the one at sector level who is in charge of agriculture and natural resources on behalf of farmers' organizations, such as the Irrigation Water Users Organization, FOs in cash crops, FOs in forestry and natural resources, and so on. To respond to his tasks, the sector agronomist has to manage these pressures from all sides and has to achieve results.

In order to manage these pressures, the sector agronomist uses different approaches to make sure that the communication and service delivery are well done. The effective field approaches identified are proximity coaching of FOs, training of farmers groups, and improving the commu-

nication style and the use of a standard reporting format. For knowledge transfer in agriculture among the target group, information technologies were introduced such e-soko (which is the use of ICT for market prices information) and free mobile calls between farmers' promoters and cell and sector leaders. Communication through local workshops, farmers' competitions, and household performance contracts are also used to accelerate rural development and achievements.

At the FO level (three), two farmer leaders provided examples of situations in which coordination and communication were not ideal and issues were at times decided beyond their control.

*Two young male FO leaders' personal experiences*

**Need for Coordination:** As there are several responsible officials at sector and district level, it would be better if they could coordinate with each other so that they can organize one integrated intervention plan. We sometimes have various institutions which provide training to us, and we found both some duplication and divergence on different topics we learn. So once they co-operate, they can produce matching contents and they can help us manage our time more efficiently instead of planning their activities separately, which takes a lot of our time. **Kalisa Patrick**, Cooperative president

**Support Needed:** For officials, especially who are working in local administration like sectors, district, and ministries, they could evaluate if what we do corresponds with their vision. They could support us in managerial and technical issues. Even if they visit us, such kind of visit supports all farmers to feel responsible for the irrigation scheme. **Gasangwa Leo**, IWUO president

There are also examples of successes, with mobile phone technology greatly facilitating communication.

*Young male leader's Personal Experience—Request for support by farmers*

The success I experience is that farmers are calling me by phone to ask me to support them. This shows me that there is no barrier between us. When someone believes in me to be the one who can do something for him, this is my success I experience since I started working with them. **Mugisha Pierre**, Cell officer

Nevertheless, a key constraint in the context of this organizational set-up is to manage effectively upwards. Overwhelmingly, the answers to the survey question on scope for improvement of their own leader indicates that respondents (19 out of 25) expect from their leader more consultation and consideration: that is, they are (more) consulted in decision-making and have their suggestions and opinions listened to.

- *My leader can improve her leadership because she is a dictator. If she says something nobody is supposed to challenge her or to disagree. She likes blaming staff rather than encouraging them and she is poor at motivating staff;*
- *Sometimes my leader takes decisions without consultation, not taking into consideration the ideas of the staff;*
- *As far as possible, my leader should consider the citizen participation in the process of different decisions/policy making;*
- *Consultation with the subordinates, listen to the employees voices;*
- *Accepting his or her weakness when making an error or making a wrong decision.*

Interestingly, the question on scope for improvement of their own leader led to respondents requesting for anonymity, as openness on this aspect could be seen as criticism and reflect negatively on them. Encouragingly, two respondents could not see any need for improvement of their own leaders, as they are very pleased with them:

- *My leader is the best one that I have ever seen. I do not know what he can improve as I have seen him being very simple and effective. Leadership is his vocation.*
- *My leader is very brave and a good motivator. He is very flexible and a good collaborator. I wish him to continue like this.*

The survey findings and personal experiences thus illustrate organizational challenges and change management challenges centring on reconciling managing upwards and downwards more effectively and the wish for less enactment of hierarchy. People have different expectations and leadership approaches and these do not (yet) match. Often this results in sub-optimal planning, decision-making, and communication, ultimately affecting the outcome and sustainability of the activities. At a personal level, it can lead to feelings of frustration, powerlessness, and demotivation.

## 10.5 THE NEED FOR CHANGE: LEADERSHIP STYLES

A common theme among the survey respondents and interviewees is the need for or evidence of a change in leadership styles. This relates to both strategic leadership, as well as people-oriented leadership styles.

### 10.5.1 *Strategic Leadership*

Several of the survey responses and all interviewees indicated the importance of and their experiences with strategic leadership. Strategic leadership is defined by Hitt, Ireland, and Hoskisson (2001) as “the ability to anticipate, envision, maintain flexibility, and empower others to create strategic change as necessary”. In our study, this mostly related to the importance of having a vision and being able to plan to reach this vision. The need for strategic leadership was mentioned twice or more often mostly by senior leaders and by leaders in government.

*Senior male leader's Personal Experience—To realize our vision we need a strategy*

My vision is to develop farmers. To be successful, my organization should set in place the planning and evaluations tools with specific periodic targets. This can help to know where the organization may improve before the end of every year. Every period, the organization may be assessed to see what is missing and suggest ways to correct this. My leader may be simplifying different procedures which delay the activities. In my plan, I always see what I can do better to achieve my set tasks. Sometimes, it becomes difficulties to realize it due to the challenges like “transport facilities”. As a leader, I have to use my available time efficiently to do better. So I have to create my strategy and planning accordingly. **Gashumba Luc**, District official

Strategic leadership issues also came up in the context of decentralization; these centred on issues of decision-making and budget responsibility, as the following experience indicates.

*Senior male leader's Personal Experience—Lack of control and budget*

The challenge that I experience is to manage a problem while not being able to take a decision. For example, if there are some people who are constructing their house in an illegal way, I have to respond. However, we are at cell level not the ones who authorize construction permits. This authorization is given by the district, but we do not have any copies showing us who are building legally or illegally. Furthermore, my leader (who is in his early forties), can improve his ways of managing his subordinates. As the institutions are decentralized, they should also decentralize the power and the financial capacity. At cell level, we are responsible for a range of activities, but we do not have any budget. **Muhiza Juste**, Cell executive secretary

Strategic leaderships was also linked to flexibility and managing the necessary changes. As such, it is reflected in the section on the leadership attribute “adaptability”.

### 10.5.2 *People-Oriented Leadership*

Survey respondents rated the need for a change towards a more participative style of leading and managing change and innovations as one of the important challenges that leaders have to deal with at the moment and in the near future.

Respondents rated how frequently they have experienced eight leadership styles, based on Redeker, de Fries, Rouckhout, Vermeren, and Filip's (2014), and indicated the most and least suitable leadership styles for addressing the challenges that leaders in their context face. Combining these two questions in one figure, with the styles ranked according to their suitability, we see the pattern emerging, as shown in Fig. 10.5.

None of the styles are very common: most are averagely used, with only small differences. Directive is somewhat more common, whereas distrustful, withdrawn, and coaching are slightly less common.

The inspirational style is considered the most suitable style of all and is averagely common. Next, two people-focused styles, coaching, and participative are considered very suitable, but coaching is relatively less common; and participative is slightly more common. The most common style,

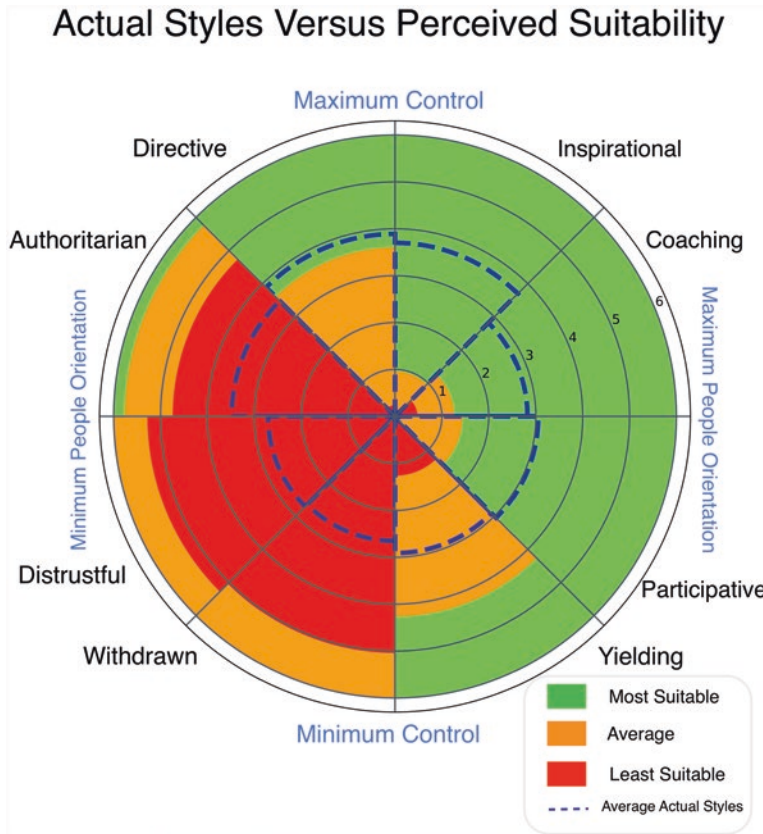


Fig. 10.5 Actual leadership styles versus perceived suitability (Rwanda)

directive leadership, is considered averagely suitable. Yielding is less common but averagely suitable. The second most common leadership style, authoritarian, is considered not suitable. The withdrawn and distrustful styles are somewhat less common and are also considered the least suitable styles. The experience with, and need for, some different leadership styles was expressed by survey respondents as follows:

- *I dislike that sometimes, my leader delays to respond or provides no reaction on reports or requested support (withdrawn leadership style);*
- *The biggest challenge is the lack of trust of leaders in their subordinates (distrustful style);*



- *The approach of top-down leadership from my superior whereby he imposes decisions to employees shows that later on the results are unsustainable* (authoritarian style);
- *Need to create a team spirit* (inspirational style); and
- *Need for a better understanding and respect for rights of employees and benefits of motivating employees* (coaching style).

Some respondents find it challenging to adopt, for example, a coaching or participative style, as one leader explained: “*My challenge in adopting a participative style is followers’ expectations and lack of initiative: they expect to receive everything from their leader, think every initiative should come from the leader.*”

During the interviews the leaders found it very interesting to review their own behaviour against the different leadership styles, as they had never before come across a theory or model on different styles of leadership. The need for people-oriented leadership styles was very often mentioned—79 times, and multiple times by all 18 interviewees. What is evident is that the people-oriented styles, inspirational, coaching, and participative are considered the most suitable, with inspirational the second most common style, with coaching and participative less common. Among these three most suitable styles, interviewees mostly provided practical examples of a participative style, but only a few gave examples of a coaching or inspirational style. An example of a coaching and inspiration style was given by a young female leader:

*Young female leader’s Personal Experience—Motivation and support*

In my team, we interact regularly through different means. We have a WhatsApp group that is used to communicate urgently. Every day we conduct in the evening a field meeting with all team leaders and facilitators to evaluate the day activities and plan for next day. My motivation to my team members is to encourage them by creating a friendly and hopeful environment. Motivation does not take money; just saying “Thank you for your work” is effective. I always look for all we can do to support them in their activities, motivate them, and support them directly where they have some challenges. **Uwase Divine**, Senior researcher for an international NGO

The majority identified as the biggest challenge the need to adopt a participative style, which is a change from the more commonly used authoritarian style. This is expressed in the following opinions:

- *In Africa, many top leaders take decisions without consulting their subordinates, often bowing to specific interests. Instead, they need to understand what people need and their point of view.*
- *Leaders have to know how to mix styles of leadership in order to make subordinates more participative.*
- *The biggest challenge is the lack of trust of leaders of the subordinates.*
- *African leaders should know how to deal with criticism. They should not consider it as opposition.*
- *At the moment, followers in Africa are not very well informed and so they do not show interest in their leadership. In the near future, leaders will not be able to meet accountability need from followers.*

*Senior male leader's Personal Experience—I facilitate sharing within my team*

I have different channels to interact with my team. Most important is that we meet every Monday to discuss to the action plan of coming week in which we evaluate even the activities conducted in previous week. In our meeting, we use a participatory approach in which everyone is able to provide inputs to other team members. As we have staff working in different fields, such meetings help each of us to know the progress in general and share the experience based on field experiences. Everybody should be satisfied during this meeting. **Ngengiyumva Euladie**, National level leader

The picture that thus emerges from this case study is of a period of transition: leaders are favouring the need or preference for a change towards more people-oriented leadership styles and less hierarchy and control enacted by leaders.

*Young male leader's Personal Experience—A participative style*

My “leaders” are the farmers in our Farmer Organization. I meet them regularly, and even outside planned meetings. I meet them also when I am working in my own field, as I am also a farmer. By interacting with them, if there is any issue, I have to make sure that is resolved directly with the farmers supporting me as best as possible. Every problem of any farmer, I consider as if it is me who is facing this problem. So it gives me the courage to look for possible solutions. First of all, I make sure that I am a good example and I am practising what I am mobilizing them to do. The farmers are always my leaders because I am their leader only because they elected me.

**Gasangwa Leo**, IWUO president

## 10.6 LEADERS' DIVERSITY

Here we discuss some findings on the impact of age, gender, and sector on perspectives on leadership. The study covers the views of 40 different leaders (80% men; 62.5% young) and half are leaders in a government job and the other half are farmers or from the private sector. Our data and insights indicate the following lessons on the impact of age, gender, and sector differences.

### 10.6.1 *Age*

Overall, the majority of both men and women involved in this study prefer to adopt people-oriented leadership styles and want the society to change in this direction. Young leaders were more outspoken as compared to senior leaders on the need for this change and, probably for that reason, more critical of their own leaders. Young leaders also indicated they face issues around respect, especially from older team members who struggle to accept their leadership.

### 10.6.2 *Gender*

The Rwandan political sphere stands out because of the large number of women in parliament (more than half of the seats in lower house are occupied by women). From our survey and interviews, no striking differences between men and women in terms of leadership are evident. It was men-

tioned that leadership is formed by character and also by how you are brought up in your family. A notable difference is that less women than men have university degrees. This is partly due to favouring/promotion of technical sciences over social sciences for scholarships. With the latter more often chosen by women, less women have a chance to study. Also, if a family has limited means there is a preference to send sons to university instead of daughters. Some of the women interviewed had attained leadership positions due to their hard work and were studying for a university degree during weekends in order to progress further. Nevertheless, there is some anecdotal evidence that men more often use authoritarian styles, and that most women, but not all, tend to favour people orientation and flexibility. An interviewee said, “*Women are ready to accept you, understand you more than men. For example, a policewoman will likely be more understanding than a policeman.*”

### 10.6.3 Sector

Leadership in the private sector: The study involved a balance of staff in government and farmers and private sector leaders. Flexibility and people-oriented leadership appear to be more valued and considered essential for achieving results in the private sector and FOs compared to the government.

#### *Senior male leader's Personal Experience: Result and benefits*

In my company, my leadership is based on results to be achieved. The company profit results from how the employees are treated and what each of them benefit from the outcome of the projects available within the company. It means that the more we speed up construction, the more profit we gain. This profit helps me to motivate my employees, especially the team leaders and technicians, by paying some bonus according to their contribution. Based on my experience, to become a good leader, people don't need to have university degrees or have experience in terms of working period. The leadership is a principle of humanity and personality: “owning” the people and the work—that is leading. **Mukiza Freddy**, Director of contractor firm

*Senior male leader's Personal Experience: Flexibility and responsibility*

We sell our skills. In terms of leadership, my employees are hired according to the available projects. Every employee is considered as a leader for the position that he has to own and be accountable for it. In our company, we are flexible, essential is that whatever we do generates cash, which is totally different from government institutions. The success I experienced is to see how my colleagues accept to work even during crisis while we are waiting payments. Their commitment to serve is higher than I could have imagined. This is the result from the collaboration we have created within our company. For me leadership is being flexible in managing and organizing the human being and their resources through flexible and friendly ways. **Muhigo Analect**, MD consultancy firm

The above experiences indicate that people-oriented leadership styles are key to results and success in the private sector. It also shows that there is much more flexibility on hiring and motivating staff as compared to the government, and the success and empowerment of staff leads directly to success for the company.

## 10.7 LEADERS' ATTRIBUTES

In the survey responses and interviews, several leaders' attributes were mentioned and considered important. This means that several qualities or features were regarded as a key characteristic or an inherent part of being a good leader. Below we describe the following attributes that were mentioned in detail:

- *Candidness*: Mentioned in nine interviews
- *Decisiveness*: Mentioned in 12 interviews
- *Integrity*: Mentioned in 16 interviews
- *Doing good*: Mentioned in 11 interviews
- *Adaptability*: Mentioned in 16 interviews

These attributes resonate both with the findings of the survey and the personal experiences shared during the interviews.

*Candidness*: Interviewees (nine) indicated the need for a leader to be candid and the benefit of frequent and direct feedback.

*Young male leader's Personal Experience: Negotiation failed*

The main challenge I have experienced was to present to the general assembly on how the water fee paid through cooperative was, contrary to what was agreed, not transferred to our IWUO account. I was ashamed, as even I and my farmers are members of this same cooperative. Finally, I have written an official letter to the cooperative requesting transfer of the specific amount to our IWUO account. I have also explained to the cooperative everything in detail. But till now the Cooperative has never paid us. For me as president I feel like I am the one who failed. **Shimwa Danny**, IWUO president

To facilitate feedback within teams, several mentioned the use of social media tools that facilitate communication among teams being easy, regular, and inclusive.

*Young male leader's Personal Experience—WhatsApp management*

My team is composed of twelve technical sector staff (male and female) that I have to coordinate. Each week I make sure that I meet everyone in his sector and discuss our progress of activities. The interaction is done regularly because we also have a WhatsApp group, which allows us to discuss all the time. The feedback when we are in a meeting doesn't require much time due to the discussion on WhatsApp where we share in friendly mood. Working as a team makes everyone motivated and in case we have some difficulty we are used to share and explore together how we can resolve it. **Muhineza August**, District director

*Decisiveness*: Decisiveness was mentioned in 12 interviews, both as a quality of being a leader, but also interviewees were at times critical of a lack of decisiveness in their own leaders. Among the most important qualities of a leader it was mentioned most often by survey respondents (six). They included the following comments:

- *Self-confident decision maker; Decision-making; To partner and collaborate with subordinates and beneficiaries in decision-making for any policy design before its implementation starts (collecting different ideas from different participants for satisfaction of citizen's needs); Man of Decision and cooperative; Being able to take a decision and stick to it*

*Senior male leader's Personal Experience: A business mind*

Nowadays, I sometimes employ more than one thousand people, mostly local people who excavate trenches and transport materials at construction sites. To take the decision to start a company, and invest capital at my own risk, did not come as a surprise. When I was in primary school, I already used to work for myself and see how I could innovate and generate much money by buying and selling something. **Mukiza Freddy**, Director of contractor firm

*Integrity.* In the survey, *corruption or sin* (ten) emerged as the single most important cause for losing respect for a leader, with specific comments such as:

- *Misconduct, bad behaviour, lack of integrity, corruption, injustice, lack of honesty of the leader, and sin*

Likewise, in the interviews the need for integrity was mentioned by almost all interviewees (16), and mentioned multiple times by mostly young leaders in private sector. Lying, or being corrupt, and not being responsible were mentioned as the most important reason for losing respect for a leader. “*A leader should not lie. It is not easy to respect someone who lies.*”

*Young female leader's Personal Experience*

In Africa, most of leaders become leader almost “by accident”, without having the character of a leader. Some of them are not well informed on leadership and understand it as if it is like a job that first and foremost has to benefit themselves. So the challenge is a lack of change in terms of mindsets, lack of accountability. **Uwase Divine**, Senior researcher for an international NGO

*Doing good:* Doing good, in the sense of improving the lives of staff or the rural poor, is a key driver for many of the interviewees in their job, mentioned specifically by 11. This was, for example, expressed as follows: “My vision is to participate in change of livelihood of population where I am working.” The interviewed leaders are genuinely interested in achieving their goals in order to improve the lives of rural poor people.

*Young male leader's Personal Experience: Seeing poor people develop*

The success I have experienced is to see people who were very poor and become someone who can support others. We have some families who used to be supported by government and now they have started to contribute for other poor families who need support of insurance. For me when my target group changes or develop, I feel stronger and successful. **Muhineza August**, District director

*Young male leader's Personal Experience: I support my young staff*

My success is not only earning money with my company, it is more. First of all is to create jobs for more people. Since I have started my company, I have 12 young engineers who have grown up within my company after completing their university studies. They have got married and they are able to live with their families and pay all requirements like school fees of their children, health insurance and other social needs. I feel happy when I see how their life has changed and nine of them already have their own houses. If one of them has family project, I have to support him or her by giving some credit without interest. So he can pay as long as he works with me according to his capacity. **Mukiza Freddy**, Director of contractor firm

*Adaptability:* A leadership challenge mentioned by the majority of respondents (16) is managing change and innovation. Views were, for example, expressed as follows: leaders should be more ready to deal with changes happening in the world, in their institutions, be innovative and dynamic, keep up with expectations and increase innovation. In every developing society, the change and the innovation are phenomena which are completely inevitable. For that, the leaders should accept such change



and innovation and promote such phenomena. Nevertheless, some leaders consider or observe change in a negative way.

During the interviews, the need for adaptability, or flexibility was mentioned by almost all, 16 out of 18 interviewees.

*Young male leader's Personal Experience—Accepting change*

Before I started working as a president of water users' organization, as farmers we have experienced various conflicts within the Cooperative that I am a member of. The conflicts were based on elections, decision-making, management of cooperative accounts, etc. The former president was considered as the one who has to take decision for the whole general assembly and farmers were not aware of their own responsibility in managing the cooperative. The farmers who used to present their points of views on management of cooperative were considered as the enemies; some of them have even been driven out of cooperative. This is a serious challenge that some societies face. A leader who does not accept change or innovation is the one who works only for his own interest not for all his members. In my leadership, I prefer to consult my members and consider that I represent them as people with their ideas. A leader who wants to develop in sustainable way, he has to consider change and innovation like inputs which should support the organization. **Shimwa Danny**, IWUA president

## 10.8 THE ROAD TO BECOMING A LEADER

More than half of the interviewees indicated that becoming a leader had *not* been their goal, ambition, or intention. An FO leader remarked: "*I didn't dream to be a leader. I thought that to lead people you have to study and have different experiences. But, I have been voted by farmers by about 90%, after I first was the vice president of IWUO.*" Some indicated that stories of leaders that abused their power had discouraged them from thinking about leadership. "*I heard the story of Napoleon Bonaparte, Mobutu Sese Seko, Robert Mugabe, and Idi Amin Dada. Maybe that is why I was not thinking to be a leader.*"

The road to becoming a leader was for most respondents thus not straightforward. To become a leader they were democratically elected because of their skills and attitude, prompted to take leadership positions by others or applied or appointed for leadership positions when their first choice of career did not work out as planned.

*Young male leader's Personal Experience—An unexpected nomination*

I have been elected to be President by the farmers working in this marshland. I was not confident that I would be able to manage more than 600 farmers. Before, I used to participate as a group member in all activities of scheme maintenance and I contributed a lot to the meetings, sometimes I was critical in the meeting. I have been president of water users' organization since 2013. Before this current position I was the vice president of the executive committee of the water users' organization. The then president resigned due to pressure of farmers after they observed that he was not able to lead them well, and I was then nominated. **Gasangwa Leo**, IWUO president

**10.8.1 Role Models**

With one exception, the leaders interviewed mentioned the need for role models, although almost half of the leaders interviewed indicated that they lacked inspiring role models in their vicinity or had no role models of good leaders. As one district official said: "*I have never learnt about leadership by looking at others. I have taken the decision to look for my methodology based on the situation of my beneficiaries.*" Majority of young leaders and all women interviewed mentioned the issue of role models more than once. Some respondents mentioned teachers as their role models; the teachers were persons they admired when they were young.

*Senior male leader's Personal Experience: My role model: My teacher*

My vision was never to be a leader of group of people as I am doing now. In my life, I was thinking to teach in primary school closer to my home. I used to see the teachers and I considered them amazing and wanted to become like them. After my primary school, I continued my secondary school at a teacher training centre. After my study, I didn't find the job I dreamed of. After one year, I got a scholarship for university of Rwanda where I did four years on education. I completed my university in the period of decentralization in 2004 when most of the students of my class, including me, were appointed to work as leaders in local administrative institutions. **Ngabo Marc**, District officer

*Young female leader's Personal Experience*

I am the firstborn in my family; when you are first born you have to be responsible for your brothers and sisters, as I do. This is also leadership. I have started my weekend programme for studying in the university where I have been promoted to class representative. To be class representative, it is like coaching me in leadership, on how to deal with people having various behaviours and how to manage the complicated ones. I think there should be clubs or schools specialized in leadership where identified qualified people should be trained as leaders. **Ineza Sophie**, Supply assistant for NGO in refugee camp

A little more than half of the respondents mentioned well-known leaders that they have read or heard about, and that they consider as role models. Frequently mentioned were African leaders such as Paul Kagame, President of Rwanda; Nelson Mandela; and former Tanzanian president Julius Nyerere. In interviews with a private sector leader it was indicated that *“I am inspired by businessman leaders as I am working with a private company. I know some like: Warren Buffett, Jeff Bezos, and Jack Welch.”* Others mentioned author Stephen Covey, Jack Ma of Alibaba, and Steve Jobs. The only female leaders were mentioned by a female NGO leader. *“As I am a woman, I like the stories of women. The example that I know is Hillary Clinton, Susan Rice, etc. and in my country I like Louise Mushikiwabo [Foreign Affairs Minister] and the story of Agathe Uwiringiyimana [who served as Prime Minister of Rwanda from July 1993 until her assassination in April 1994].”*

### 10.8.2 Leadership Determinants

School and university is a phase that presents an opportunity for young people to assume first leadership roles. A national level leader remarked: *“When I was at my University I have been a Secretary of an organization for two years, and I can say that my leadership experience started from there.”* Two leaders interviewed indicated that they feel that being a leader starts when you are young and gave examples of their own youth.

*Young male leader's Personal Experience—Training ground*

I remember that I started to be a leader in my first year of primary school when I was chosen by other students to become their leader of the football team in a competition. I do not remember what criteria they used to select me, but what I know is that I was not at all good in football.

During my second year in University, I was pushed by friends to apply for the position of Commissioner of Sport, Culture and Leisure and was elected with many votes. My vision was to satisfy all those who voted for me, and also those who did not vote for me. My success was based on implementing ideas of the university students, which I collected through meetings of the general assembly. It was an amazing period that I will never forget. All who played a role were considered important; we shared the successes and challenges as one team. I found that success depends on how a leader interacts positively with his group members, by soliciting their views and sharing the successes. **Hirwa Jean**, Rural development consultant

*Young male leader's Personal Experience—Born leaders*

For me, I think that the leadership doesn't come accidentally. I started to feel a leader when I was in secondary school where I was a class monitor in my senior two, three, and five; I was voted by students as a "doyen" to represent them. That day I was known by all students because I also used to lead a scouting troupe. **Senga Jado**, District official

Respondents were asked their advice for young people in developing effective leadership skills and behaviour.

*Advice to young leaders*

**A young male elected farmers' leader:** My advice to young people is to accept being led by their people. When you are a leader, you have to accept that the community that you lead is like your boss. Young leaders have to consider the idea of community and give them time to contribute in the development of their organization. To succeed in leadership doesn't require special skills. The important thing is to respect the vision of community and integrate the idea of all through cooperation. **Gasangwa Leo**, IWUO president

**A young female NGO trainer:** My advice to young people is that leaders should accept and lead people based on their contexts. The leadership is specific in each situation, and you should not copy and paste as most of them they do. The leadership depends on the society, its culture, the ways of believe, social cohesion of local communities, etc. A leader should know the society he wants to lead and try to improve what they have, not change everything. Every community has its own ways of being managed. **Sangwa Alice**, NGO trainer

**A senior male district director:** Young leaders have to develop their emotional skills and they should be intelligent in order to know how to handle community issues. They should motivate their team and facilitate all services as soon as possible. The leaders should be flexible and responsible in all activities conducted under their leadership. These leaders should create a good environment within their team. **Muhineza August**, District director

### 10.8.3 *Skills Development*

The Rwanda Government's Policy note on decentralization states that empowering stakeholders for action is a part of the change management strategy. The note states that a "decentralized service delivery approach is a relatively new concept that will need capacity building support and training. Training will support new expected behaviours during the transition period and will provide tools to implement the new management practices."

*Young male leader's Personal Experience: Training on roles and responsibilities*

About seven years ago, I worked in the district as director of planning and evaluation. I organized training for staff at district, sector, and cell level in order to clarify their objectives and roles and responsibilities and relationships between all staff. We designed various templates for a reporting system. The resulting success was that all participants were aware of the vision on all levels. Thus, the capacity of a group that you are leading can be built by having common goals and objectives. **Hirwa Jean**, Rural development consultant

Nevertheless, respondents indicated that a challenge they face is the lack of leadership skills or team management skills. The majority started leading people without any, or enough experience, and developed their skills mostly by learning from mistakes. This is not necessarily a problem, as for example one district official remarked: *“I consider leadership as a vocation. I have seen successful leaders who did not get any training or education, whereas some who are specialized in it can do the worst things.”*

Some of the leaders from farmer-based organizations were involved in a training programme based on participatory principles, combining leadership training with participatory planning, implementation and monitoring and evaluation. This was the Kirehe Community-based Watershed Management Project (KWAMP), an International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) supported project, implemented by the Rwanda Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources in Kirehe District (IFAD, 2016). This project facilitated IWUO capacity building. Four key areas were covered: management and governance; agronomy, technical irrigation, and water management; monitoring and review; and exchange of experiences. Governance issues related to understanding the roles and responsibilities of the IWUO; causes of conflicts and their resolution and the awareness of the members of IWUO on their rights related to access to water services; information and their collective power in holding their leaders accountable. Participatory and practical training activities at scheme level improved the retention of learning among the IWUO committees, block leaders, and farmers. Training in the field, instead of in

a classroom, increased awareness of the roles and responsibilities of the IWUO among a large number of members and other stakeholders. This resulted in enhanced monitoring and planning practices by all stakeholders involved. A large pool of trainers was involved: it included district, sector, and cell staff, local leaders, IWUO committee members, and farmers. This wide involvement had an impact on improved coordination and planning and resulted in an increased sense of ownership. After thus strengthening the organizations, the operation and maintenance of large irrigation systems in the district of Kirehe was formally transferred to IWUOs.

Author Joseph K. Nsabimana worked as Water Users' Organization Specialist; he explains: "*The vision was to see farmers own the irrigation scheme, able to maintain the infrastructure, and pay water fees. The key challenge was that most of these farmers experienced a serious problem with management of the Cooperative in the past. To succeed, the farmers needed to take the lead and be involved in the process of creating their own, new, organization. To determine the roles of each member was also important because everyone had to know how each role is important for the whole group. In this situation, a leader is the one who is working friendly with subordinates and wants to build their capacity.*"

## 10.9 CONCLUSIONS/DISCUSSION

The majority of survey respondents and leaders interviewed in Rwanda indicate a desire for a shift to more people-oriented leadership styles. Several examples were cited where the use of more authoritarian leadership styles was seen as hampering proper planning and ultimately obstructing achievement of results in rural development. Many leaders interviewed already practice a participative style and believe that this is the reason they are achieving results. Most of them express the wish that their own leaders also become more consultative.

To support the process of decentralization, which entails devolving power and responsibilities to lower levels in the administration and farmer organizations, they argue for greater (financial) control and more coordination and consultation. Managing upwards and reconciling, or buffering, different needs and interests by leaders who feel "sandwiched" in middle level positions is identified as a systemic challenge, especially as perceptions of enactment of hierarchy are changing.

Respondents' leadership challenges also relate to managing downwards, such as the management of people/followers, especially when attempting to use more participatory, inspirational, or coaching leadership styles.

Overall, people have different expectations and leadership approaches and these do not (yet) match. Often this results in sub-optimal planning, decision-making, and communication, ultimately affecting the result and sustainability of the rural development activities. At a personal level, it can lead to feelings of frustration, powerlessness, and demotivation.

An interesting finding is that the majority of leaders never aimed for a leadership position but happened to be elected or appointed. Few of the leaders interviewed had received any leadership training prior to becoming a leader. Probably the most trained are the Farmer Organization leaders. They did receive training, mostly on governance, clarifying the roles and responsibilities of their organizations and on the functioning of different committees in their organizations.

Many leaders lack Inspiring Leadership role models in their vicinity. They indicated that they want to be a different type of leader—use more a participative, coaching, or inspirational style—but only a few have experienced these styles from their own leaders.

The findings indicate that development of young leaders needs to focus on learning skills to support the people-oriented leadership styles, as well as communication, influencing, and negotiation skills to implement these styles in a changing environment with mixed values and expectations and in “sandwich” positions. Mentoring by inspiring role models would be of great benefit in the learning process.

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# Leadership Development Needs and Experiences: Survey Findings

*Helen Spencer-Oatey, Daniel Dauber, and Eva Jordans*

## 11.1 SURVEY DESIGN

As explained in Chap. 5, a follow-up survey was designed to explore and validate on a broader scale the leadership issues and development needs emerging from the case studies. Since many case study participants commented on the need for a change in traditional leadership styles and expressed a desire for personal self-development as a leader, we designed the survey to explore five facets of leadership spheres, plus routes to developing as a leader:

- *Self*: Me as a leader
- *Employee*: Me and the employees I am responsible for
- *Team*: Me and my team
- *Organization*: Me and my organization

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- *Community/society*: Me and the wider community/society
- *Leadership Development*: Routes to becoming a leader

A total of 33 items were designed, whereby each of these facets was probed with five to eight items and, building on the design of the Global Education Profiler developed by Spencer-Oatey and Dauber (2015) at the University of Warwick, we asked respondents to answer each of the items in two ways:

- “**Importance to me**” (i.e. how important it is to you to practise or experience this at work, e.g. for carrying out projects well and/or for people’s well-being)

and

- “**Frequency of occurrence**” (i.e. how often you actually practise or experience this in your workplace).

They gave their responses on six-point Likert-type scales, ranging from “Very important” to “Not at all important” for “Importance to me” and ranging from “Very often” to “very rarely” for “Frequency of occurrence”.

These scales enabled us to examine not only the issues of importance to the respondents but also the size of the gap between the importance they attach to something and the extent to which they are experiencing it in their context. This information then offers insights that are helpful for prioritizing the development issues. The survey was available in English and French.

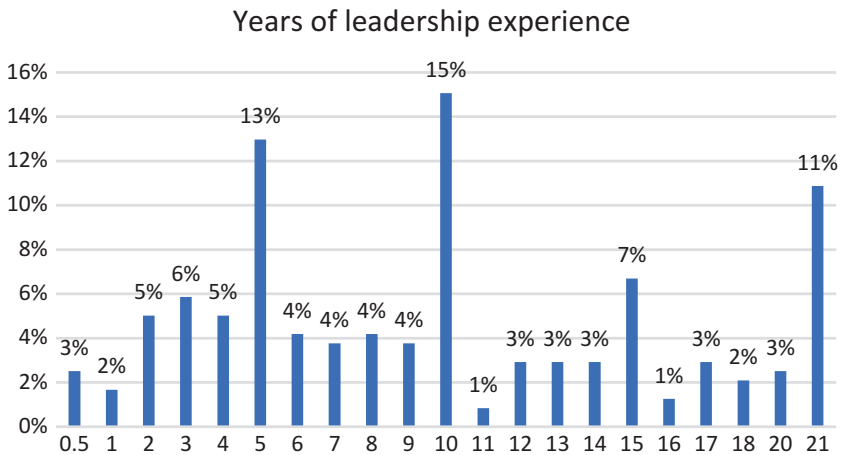
## 11.2 PARTICIPANTS

A total of 240 completed questionnaires were received, with respondents from 31 different countries in all five regions of Africa (North, West, Central, East, and Southern). One hundred and eighteen completed the English version and 122 completed the French one. Details of participants’ demographic characteristics are shown in Table 11.1 and Fig. 11.1.

Overall, our survey respondents were two-thirds male and one-third female, half of them from West Africa, and another third from East Africa, with the remaining 18% from other regions in Africa. About 65.4% of respondents were from countries other than our five case study countries.

**Table 11.1** Descriptive statistics of participants based on gender and region of origin

	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Prefer not to say</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>%</i>
Central Africa	5	20	0	25	11
East Africa	33	41	3	77	33
North Africa	3	3	0	6	3
Southern Africa	4	6	0	10	4
West Africa	29	89	0	118	50
Total	74	159	3	236	
%	31	67	1		



**Fig. 11.1** Relative distribution of participants based on years of leadership experience

About 38% of respondents we can categorize as young, with six years or less years of leadership experience.

### 11.3 “TOP TEN” ITEMS

First of all, the mean ratings for importance (IMP) and frequency of occurrence (FOO) were calculated for all of the individual items, along with the gap between IMP and FOO. Then the items were ordered in three ways: size of mean importance, level of frequency of occurrence, and size of gap.

**Table 11.2** The ten items rated highest for importance and their corresponding frequency of occurrence and gap scores

	Mean IMP	Mean FOO	Mean gap
<i>Having a clear vision for my team and my organization</i> [Self]	5.69	5.03	0.66
<i>Being aware of my weaknesses</i> [Self]	5.69	4.89	0.80
<i>Ensuring fair treatment for both men and women inside and outside my/our work</i> [Community/society]	5.69	5.11	0.58
<i>Motivating staff</i> [Employee]	5.66	4.97	0.72
<i>Promoting ethical ways of doing my/our work</i> [Community/society]	5.64	5.16	0.48
<i>Helping my team diagnose and address problems that are preventing progress</i> [Team]	5.63	5.03	0.60
<i>Communicating strategic direction and goals to my team</i> [Team]	5.60	4.96	0.65
<i>Having strong values that influence my work</i> [Self]	5.60	5.09	0.52
<i>Coaching my staff</i> [Employee]	5.60	4.92	0.68
<i>Giving constructive feedback to my staff</i> [Employee]	5.59	5.06	0.53
<i>Managing my emotions well at work, for example, controlling my anger or level of anxiety</i> [Self]	5.59	4.70	0.88

Participants' mean ratings of the items for importance ranged from 5.69 to 4.57. Since 3.5 is the cut-off point between important and not important, these figures indicate that all items were regarded as important or very important. Table 11.2 shows the "top ten" items for IMP (in other words, the ten items that received the highest mean scores for importance), along with their corresponding FOO and gap scores.

As can be seen, the items ranged across the different facets of leadership, with issues relating to "self" and "handling employees" appearing more frequently than the other elements (four out of ten and three out of ten items respectively).

Participants' mean ratings of the items for frequency of occurrence ranged from 4.08 to 5.16. Since 3.5 is the cut-off point between frequent and infrequent ratings, these figures indicate that all items were regarded as occurring relatively frequently. Table 11.3 shows the "bottom ten" items for FOO (in other words, the ten items that received the lowest mean scores for frequency of occurrence), along with their corresponding IMP and gap scores.

As can be seen from Table 11.3, the items relating to Leadership Development and to leadership across the organization (four out of ten items for each) occurred with comparatively lower frequencies than other facets of leadership. These same items did also not figure in the top ten most important items and ranked most often among the lowest in importance.

**Table 11.3** The ten items given the lowest ratings for frequency of occurrence and their corresponding importance and gap scores

	Mean IMP	Mean FOO	Mean gap
<i>Having access to helpful leadership training programmes</i> [Development]	5.32	4.08	1.24
<i>Seeking feedback from the external community/stakeholders on my/our work</i> [Community/society]	4.92	4.16	0.76
<i>Being mentored very well</i> [Development]	5.39	4.23	1.15
<i>Respecting my leaders by always obeying what they say</i> [Organization]	4.57	4.25	0.32
<i>Consulting widely with all my/our stakeholders</i> [Community/society]	4.98	4.28	0.71
<i>Developing plans for managing change in my organization</i> [Organization]	5.33	4.32	1.02
<i>Learning from reading (leadership) books</i> [Development]	5.10	4.33	0.66
<i>Reconciling conflicting needs/demands of leaders above and the people below me</i> [Organization]	5.20	4.40	0.80
<i>Persuading my leaders to consider new ways of doing things</i> [Organization]	5.33	4.42	0.91
<i>Having peers with whom I can discuss leadership challenges</i> [Development]	5.48	4.45	1.03

In terms of size of the mean gap between participants' importance ratings and frequency of occurrence, they ranged from 1.24 to 0.32. Table 11.4 shows the 11 largest mean gaps between mean importance ratings and mean frequency of occurrence ratings (there were two tied items at #10, and so 11 items have been included).

As can be seen from Table 11.4, the largest gaps again occurred for Leadership Development and leadership across the organization (4 out of 11 items for each), followed by issues related to "self" (2 items).

## 11.4 UNDERLYING LEADERSHIP CONSTRUCTS

After this we carried out separate factor analyses of the importance items and the frequency of occurrence items and found there were three underlying constructs. A few of the items either loaded across two or more constructs or else loaded differently on the importance scales than on the frequency of occurrence scales so, for the purpose of subsequent analysis, these items were discarded. The retained 22 items and their factor loadings are shown in Table 11.5. Reliability scores were obtained for each scale (importance and frequency of occurrence)

**Table 11.4** The 11 items with the largest gaps between ratings for importance and frequency of occurrence, along with their corresponding IMP and FOO ratings

	Mean IMP	Mean FOO	Mean gap
<i>Having access to helpful leadership training programmes</i> [Development]	5.32	4.08	1.24
<i>Being mentored very well</i> [Development]	5.39	4.23	1.15
<i>Having peers with whom I can discuss leadership challenges</i> [Development]	5.48	4.45	1.03
<i>Developing plans for managing changing in my organization</i> [Organization]	5.33	4.32	1.02
<i>Being able to choose competent people to work with me</i> [Employee]	5.56	4.55	1.01
<i>Persuading my leaders to consider new ways of doing things</i> [Organization]	5.33	4.42	0.91
<i>Having good role models to follow</i> [Development]	5.46	4.56	0.90
<i>Managing my emotions well at work, e.g. controlling my anger of level of anxiety</i> [Self]	5.59	4.70	0.88
<i>Confidently voicing my opinion to people who are above me even when my views are different from theirs</i> [Organization]	5.31	4.48	0.83
<i>Reconciling conflict needs/demands of leaders above me and the people below me</i> [Organization]	5.20	4.40	0.80
<i>Being aware of my weaknesses</i> [Self]	5.69	4.89	0.80

for each of the three underlying constructs and all were satisfactorily high (Cronbach's  $\alpha > 0.7$ , and  $>0.8$  in three cases). These are shown in Table 11.6.

Factor 1 reflects people's perceptions of working with others when leading, including developing a vision, enhancing team performance and relations, and enabling everyone to achieve. Factor 2 reflects people's concerns about dealing with hierarchy and their desire to lead in a more egalitarian environment. Factor 3 reflects people's perceptions of Leadership Development needs and opportunities. So, on the basis of the content of the item loadings (and also partly drawing on terminology used by Redeker, de Fries, Rouckhout, Vermeren, & Filip, 2014), we have labelled the three factors as follows:

- *Factor 1*: Inspiring Leadership (IL)
- *Factor 2*: Egalitarian Leadership (EL)
- *Factor 3*: Leadership Development (LD)

**Table 11.5** The three underlying leadership constructs and the factor loadings of the component items

Item	IMP			FOO		
	IL	EL	LD	IL	EL	LD
<i>Enabling my team to perform their tasks through ensuring supportive processes and available means</i>	0.74	0.01	0.17	0.74	0.14	0.12
<i>Helping my team diagnose and address problems that are preventing progress</i>	0.69	0.11	0.12	0.63	0.42	0.14
<i>Having a clear vision for my team and my organization</i>	0.64	0.09	0.17	0.52	0.33	0.31
<i>Ensuring that my team members of different backgrounds co-operate well among each other</i>	0.61	0.27	0.16	0.39	0.31	0.21
<i>Motivating my staff</i>	0.64	0.12	0.14	0.61	0.28	0.20
<i>Coaching my staff</i>	0.54	0.11	0.21	0.54	0.19	0.24
<i>Giving constructive feedback to my staff</i>	0.57	0.27	0.10	0.71	0.19	0.01
<i>Managing my time and conflicting priorities well</i>	0.49	0.12	0.18	0.56	0.00	0.35
<i>Managing my emotions well at work, for example, controlling my anger or level of anxiety</i>	0.43	0.09	0.22	0.44	0.19	0.25
<i>Confidently voicing my opinion to people who are above me even when my views are different to theirs</i>	0.09	0.74	-0.04	0.13	0.76	0.10
<i>Reconciling conflicting needs/demands of leaders above me and the people below me</i>	0.23	0.64	0.25	0.14	0.59	0.14
<i>Communicating effectively to my leaders the needs of my staff</i>	0.43	0.47	0.14	0.22	0.65	0.10
<i>Confidently managing staff members who are older than me</i>	0.17	0.52	0.38	0.21	0.47	0.13
<i>Persuading my leaders to consider new ways of doing things</i>	0.36	0.46	0.02	0.18	0.65	0.18
<i>Being given responsibilities early on in my life/career</i>	-0.05	0.47	0.40	0.08	0.43	0.25
<i>Promoting ethical ways of doing my/our work</i>	0.29	0.29	-0.05	0.28	0.48	0.14
<i>Reflecting on the challenges I have faced as a leader</i>	0.10	0.28	0.68	0.34	0.30	0.49
<i>Being mentored very well</i>	0.13	0.20	0.66	0.16	0.18	0.75
<i>Having good role models to follow</i>	0.29	-0.07	0.66	0.12	0.19	0.73
<i>Learning from reading (leadership) books</i>	0.18	-0.03	0.64	0.23	0.12	0.62
<i>Having access to helpful leadership training programmes</i>	0.35	-0.02	0.66	0.16	0.25	0.76
<i>Having peers with whom I can discuss leadership challenges</i>	0.14	0.20	0.63	0.20	0.11	0.70



**Table 11.6** Reliability of the three underlying leadership constructs (Cronbach's alpha)

<i>Construct</i>	<i>IMP</i>	<i>FOO</i>
Inspiring Leadership (IL)	0.813	0.834
Egalitarian Leadership (EL)	0.700	0.743
Leadership Development (LD)	0.789	0.832

**Table 11.7** Mean IMP and FOO scores for each of the underlying leadership constructs, and the significance of the gap between them

	<i>IMP</i>	<i>FOO</i>	<i>Gap</i>	t	p
Inspiring Leadership (IL)	5.58	4.93	0.65	15.92	<0.001
Egalitarian Leadership (EL)	5.34	4.64	0.70	16.49	<0.001
Leadership Development (LD)	5.35	4.37	0.98	17.07	<0.001

## 11.5 ANALYSIS OF THE THREE UNDERLYING LEADERSHIP CONSTRUCTS

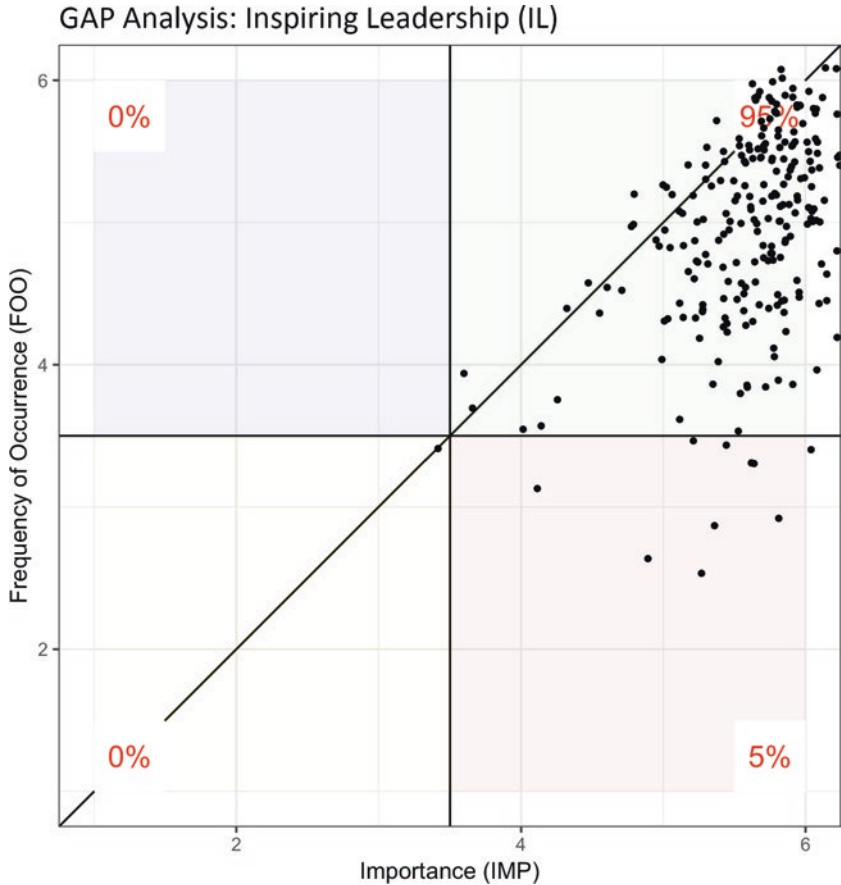
Having established the reliability of the three underlying leadership constructs, we used these for all further analyses.

Table 11.7 gives the mean scores for the IMP and FOO scores for each of the constructs, the gap between them, and paired t-test scores for each of the construct pairs. As can be seen, there was a statistically significant difference between the IMP and FOO ratings for all three constructs, indicating a desire for change.

Tests were also run to explore whether any of the following demographic characteristics influenced the ratings: gender, age (less than 40, 40 and older), length of leadership experience (less than six years and six years or more), and geographical region. No meaningful significant differences were found for any of these independent variables.

## 11.6 DISTRIBUTION OF SCORES BY UNDERLYING LEADERSHIP CONSTRUCT

Distribution plots were then obtained for the three leadership constructs and these are shown in Figs. 11.2–11.4.



**Fig. 11.2** Gap matrix for Inspiring Leadership

As can be seen from the matrices, almost all of the respondents rated the three constructs as important or very important, as nearly all the scores fell in the two right-hand quadrants. For Inspiring Leadership (Fig. 11.2), there is a very strong consensus on the importance of the issues (the ratings are closely bunched); nevertheless, the gap between the importance ratings and the frequency of occurrence ratings is noticeable. In fact, 5% of the respondents' ratings fell into the unfulfilling quadrant (bottom right), suggesting that they would experience a sense

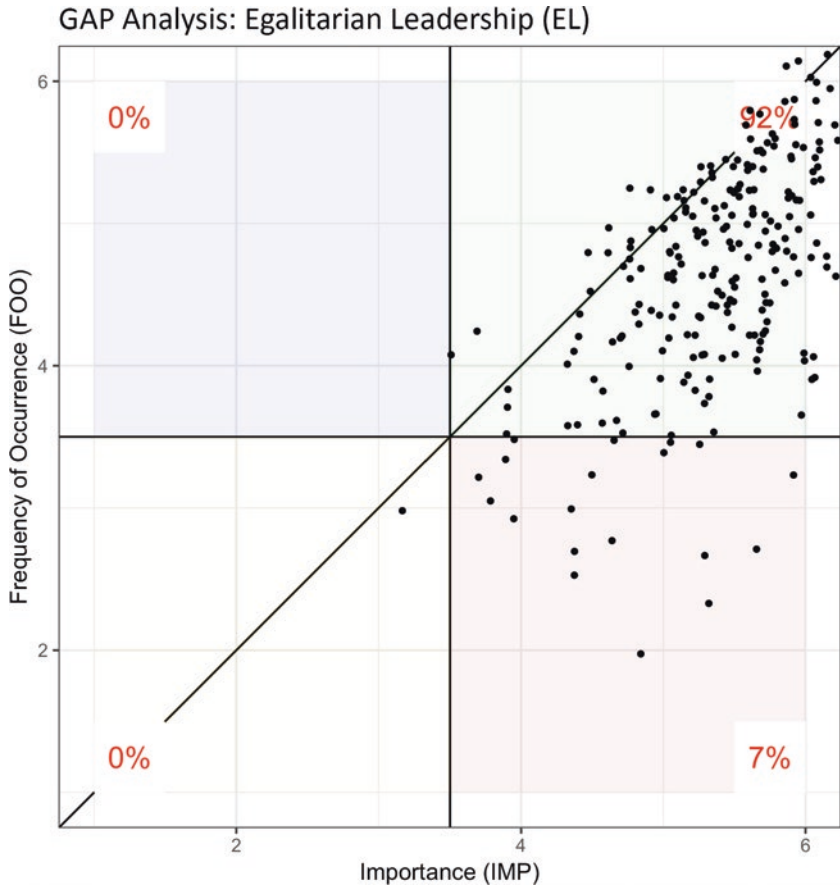
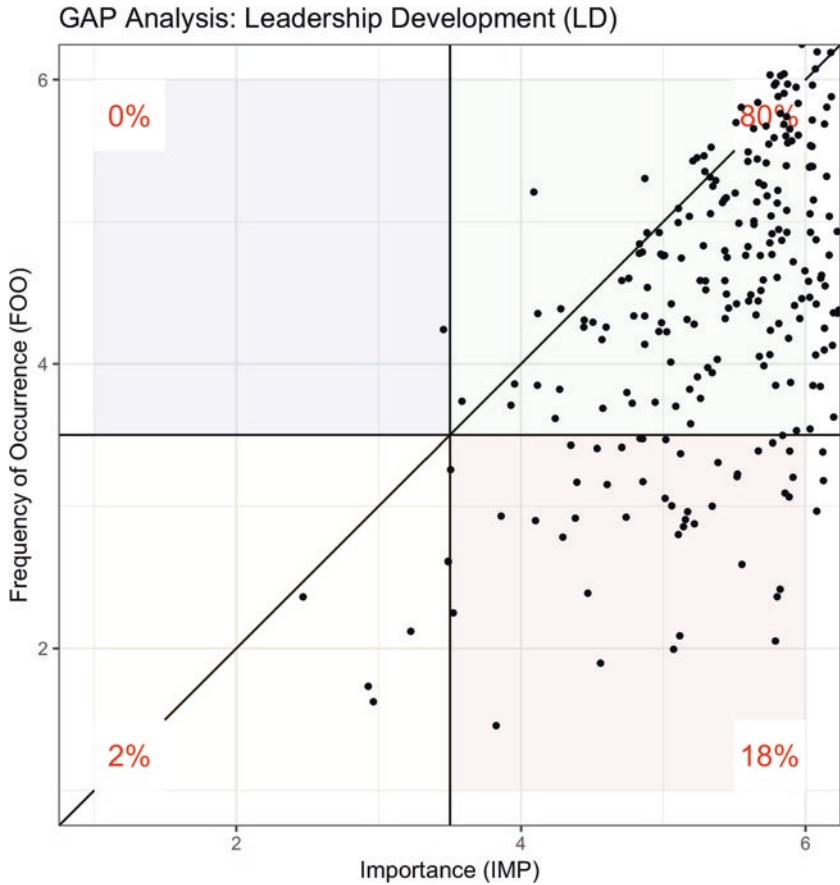


Fig. 11.3 Gap matrix for Egalitarian Leadership

of dissatisfaction. For Egalitarian Leadership (Fig. 11.3), there was almost unanimous agreement that this was important or very important, although the distribution was a little more dispersed than for Inspiring Leadership. Seven per cent of respondents reported that their experience of new ways of leading was low. For Leadership Development (Fig. 11.4), the distribution is noticeably more dispersed. Ninety-eight per cent regard it as important or very important, but 18% rated their experience of Leadership Development as low or very low, and thus fell into the



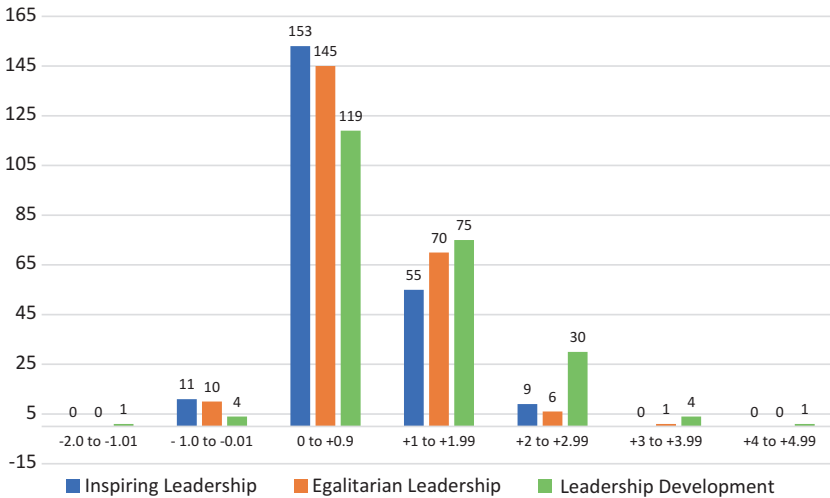
**Fig. 11.4** Gap matrix for Leadership Development

unfulfilling quadrant. This clearly indicates a perceived need for more and/or better Leadership Development.

The diagonal in the matrices shows where the IMP and FOO scores are the same (i.e. where their scores are identical, with no gap at all) and thus indicate that the respondents are satisfied. Another way of analysing this data is thus to examine the proportion of respondents who fall into different sizes of gap. This is shown in Table 11.8 and Fig. 11.5.

**Table 11.8** Size of gap between IMP and FOO ratings by frequency and percentage per construct

Size of gap	IL		EL		LD	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
-2.0 to -0.01	0	0	0	0	1	0.4
-1.0 to -0.01	11	4.6	10	4.2	4	1.7
0 to +0.99	153	63.8	145	60.4	119	49.6
+1.0 to +1.99	55	22.9	70	29.2	75	31.3
+2.0 to +2.99	9	3.8	6	2.5	30	12.5
+3.0 to +3.99	0	0	1	0.4	4	1.7
+4.0 to +4.99	0	0	0	0	1	0.4



**Fig. 11.5** Frequency of size of gap between IMP and FOO (on a six-point scale)

As can be seen from Table 11.8 and Fig. 11.5, the most frequent gap for all three constructs was between 0 and +0.9 on a six-point scale, although the proportion falling into this category was noticeably less for Leadership Development than for the other two constructs. Between 22.9% and 31.3% of respondents were showing a gap of between +1.0 and +1.99 on a six-point scale, which is a large gap and a relatively large percentage. In this category, Leadership Development once again showed the

highest proportion, but Egalitarian Leadership was very close. There were relatively few people showing an even larger gap, although for Leadership Development, 12.5% showed a gap of between +2.0 and +2.99, which is massive, and a further 2.1% showed larger gaps still.

These results indicate that there is an evident degree of dissatisfaction with the current state of leadership. This is particularly marked for Leadership Development, with a huge 45.6% of the respondents revealing a gap of one or more points (on a six-point scale) between IMP and FOO; that is, between the importance they attach to Leadership Development and the frequency with which they experience it. For Egalitarian Leadership, the percentage showing a gap of one or more points is 32.1%, which is also very high since it is about one-third of the respondents. For Inspiring Leadership, the figure is 26.7%, which again is high in that it is about one-quarter of the respondents.

## 11.7 OPEN COMMENTS

A total of 68 participants added comments in the open question at the end of the survey. Some made a brief one-sentence comment, while others wrote several paragraphs. The French comments were translated into English by one of the authors, and then the data were imported into the qualitative data analysis programme, MAXQDA, and coded inductively. Three broad themes emerged, as shown in Fig. 11.6: the leadership multiplex, leadership in Africa, and Leadership Development. In addition, two comments were unclear and seven commented on the survey (e.g. that they had found it helpful to complete). We report on the three broad themes in turn.



Fig. 11.6 Broad themes in the open comments

### 11.7.1 *Leadership Multiplex*

As we explained in Chap. 2, leadership can be conceptualized as a multiplex, involving four interrelated elements: leader, follower, context, and purpose/goal. These elements emerged in the comments, with a total of 51 comments referring to the leadership multiplex. Of these, the largest number of comments was made on the “leader” and on the leader-follower dynamic, which we have labelled Inspiring Leadership. The distribution and frequency of comments are shown in Fig. 11.7.

Nineteen comments were made on the attributes of a good leader, with confident/resilient and caring/supportive being mentioned the most often; for example:

*Confidence always makes a leader to have courage to stand to any challenges that they may face in an organization.* [East Africa participant]

*It's always very important to know your staff and apply emotional maturity to handle them, you get their commitment more that way and they can go the whole hog to do whatever task you assign them with all pleasure. I have the habit of saying to my staff “Thank you”, “well done” and they get more encouraged and motivated that way. I don't criticize to make them feel bad, but help them see deficiencies in a given assignment and give them clues and suggestions on how to handle it. This way, I get better results. It has made my leadership less cumbersome and easy to do.* [West Africa participant]

Several personal challenges were mentioned, including gender bias and age bias, as well as personal needs in relation to leadership.

There were 11 comments on Inspiring Leadership—the importance of consulting with others and being open to incorporating their ideas.

*Leadership is an aspect that is exercised by relying on other Colleagues of Work. To be a good leader, you have to open up, try to understand the other in your points of view and see how to integrate it into the dynamics of your organization or your project. It's not about taking all the points of view into account, even the insane ones, but focus on those that are realistic and achievable in time and space that can visibly advance your organization or your project in its race for the realization of its ambitions.* [East Africa participant]

*I believe working in a dynamic environment and team work. I feel that creative does not happen in isolation.* [East Africa participant]

*I work in South Sudan my experience in leadership is that mindset and positive attitude towards development and embracing change is the driving force to any successful project. Above all is the readiness to integrate ideas from different*

● Leadership multiplex	0
▼ ● The leader	0
▼ ● Leader attributes	0
● Confident, strong, resilient	5
● Caring & supportive towards st...	3
● Act as role model	2
● Open-minded/positive attitude	2
● Fair, humble	2
● Responsible & disciplined	2
● Dynamic & passionate	1
● Emotionally intelligent	1
● Good communication	1
▼ ● Personal challenges for leaders	0
▼ ● Jealousy & bias	0
● Gender bias	2
● Age bias	2
● Difficult tasks	2
● Lack of mentoring	1
● Leadership is generally difficult	1
● Lack of belief from superiors	1
● Supervisors have limited knowl...	1
▼ ● Personal needs of leaders	0
● Sense of achievement	1
● Time for reflection	1
● Inspiring leadership	11
● Benefits of good leadership	1
▼ ● Context	0
● Contexts are different	1
● Broader environment	2
● Workplace culture/morale	2
● Task/goals should not be only priority	3

Fig. 11.7 Codings for the Leadership multiplex

*stakeholders and individuals by valuing their ideas as great contributions to any developmental initiative.* [East Africa participant]

Finally, with regard to the leadership multiplex, a few people commented on the importance of both the workplace context and the broader regional/national context.



### 11.7.2 Leadership in Africa

Participants made 27 comments on the leadership situation in Africa, on the one hand mentioning hindrances to good leadership, and on the other leadership needs that exist (see Fig. 11.8).

With regard to hindrances, there was a cluster of comments on the problems caused by traditional beliefs/customs, corruption, and autocratic or egocentric leadership.

*Actual practices in many public agencies are at variance with the policies and ethics and a lot of people do not question this due to the fear of losing their jobs.* [West Africa participant]

*Effective leadership inevitably contributes to achieving the goals of the firm. but in Africa the socio-cultural burdens related to customs and beliefs make it difficult to apply good corporate leadership.* [West Africa participant]

*Leadership can be subverted and directed to fulfill a narrow minded and fraudulent perspective; it becomes an arduous task to fight such a captured leadership. The best way is to be vocal and continuously raise concerns about fraudulent activities and to never compromise one's conscience. Repeated exposure of fraudulent behavior is paramount.* [Southern Africa participant]

Leadership in Africa	0
Hindrances	0
Impact of traditional beliefs/customs/s...	6
Corruption	4
Autocratic & egocentric	2
Lack of leadership skills	2
Lack of consultation	1
Lack of good role models	1
Unsuitable appointment processes	1
What is needed	0
Strong values/internal sense of leader...	4
More participative/people focused	2
Nurture younger leaders	2
Clear vision	1
Good role models	1

Fig. 11.8 Codings for leadership in Africa

*In Ghana, leadership is a great challenge which retards development. Leaders are appointed because of their academic qualifications, the popularity of the school they attended, family, church, and political affiliations without necessarily considering competencies. Leadership is mainly autocratic and does not involve subordinate ideas and inputs. Leaders generally lack technical intelligence, spatial management and financial discipline. [West Africa participant]*

Linked with this, participants referred to several “lacks”: lack of leadership skills, lack of consultation, and lack of good role models. For some of the participants, this was very demoralizing.

*Africa lacks leadership skill, hence our problems. [West Africa participant]*

*The most important thing for me in leadership is that the leader must be a model and must take into account the concerns of his collaborators. This is often missing in Africa. In a nutshell, the model and sharing are essential for good management in Africa. [West Africa participant]*

*It's hard to be a leader in a dimension that only accepts chiefs and bosses, even more so if the superior does not have that notion of leader, which creates frequent conflict. I tried for a long time to be a leader but it was too difficult. Most people considered the participative approach as a weakness, this notion is still absent especially among the decision-makers who do not even accept it. I have a lot to say about it, I hope that I will have an opportunity to express myself. [North Africa participant]*

In light of these hindrances, some participants commented on leadership needs in Africa. Several referred to the need for stronger values, transformational leaders who can change the current situation, and training that come overcome traditional thinking.

*How to build the African leaders of tomorrow? By giving them models, offering them an educational system full of values and with a clear vision for the role they must play and finally giving them the opportunity to act and build up experience in the construction of Africa in their area of expertise. [Central Africa participant]*

*I consider the training of soft skills paramount at the workplace in order to disassemble primitive characteristics (traditional) that often surface among workmates especially those in decision-making positions. Characteristics such as “seniors are always true”, “young people do not talk among elder”, “Adults know it all”, “leadership is meant for grownup”, “commanding is for the adults*

*and submission for the young” among others have caused chaos at the workplace, hindering directed career development for younger workers. [East Africa participant]*

The last comment above brings us to the third broad main theme: Leadership Development.

### 11.7.3 *Developing as a Leader*

Participants made 34 comments on the process of developing as a leader, covering several different aspects, as shown in Fig. 11.9.

The largest number of comments referred to the importance of informal learning experiences.

*Leadership is a journey and not a destination, we progress continuously if we work on it and we stay stationary, in the best case, if we do not work on it. Leadership experiences seen early in the career have a very high probability of becoming a benchmark or reference against which the rest of the career will be measured at the personal level. The beginning of the Leadership trip is therefore very important. [West Africa participant]*



Fig. 11.9 Codings for Developing as a Leader

*Having started at the very bottom of the work/task ladder despite being academically qualified was/is the best thing that could happen to anyone with a vision to become a true professional person and leader of others. My most important qualification is not an academic one! It's called QBE, "Qualified by Experience". The scars gained from failure within real project experience and the assimilated feedback have shaped me as a professional and expert in my field and as a Leader. [Southern Africa participant]*

*I personally believe that leadership is learnt but not taught in any traditional training center. I learnt to be able to bring different people together by just going out and getting them to work together. The experience will establish a new perspective on the way you view leadership which is not often what you'd read from books. [Central Africa participant]*

Others referred to formal training courses. Many were very positive about them, although some had reservations.

*Some training courses on leadership in other contexts have allowed me to reinforce my choice to respect the good practices in my company and to increase my strength to influence my leaders. The impact has very often been fruitful for the organization. [Central Africa participant]*

*Outside stakeholders has shown a great impact towards career and leadership development by offering some training to leaders in Africa to enhance education transformation. I have a good example from Warwick in Africa project. They have impacted to many of us African teachers through various training and its impact is seen and acknowledged to high extent. [Participant's region not given]*

*Africa doesn't have the luxury of role models to mentor the youth by observing. Nonetheless, reinforcing our education with soft skills training elements such as teamwork, respect, discipline, communication, problem-solving, negotiation among others should be handy. The unfortunate part is that soft skill training is lacking in 80% of the workplaces for reasons that are part of the very discussion I am trying to present. [East Africa participant]*

*Leadership is too much in the books, it must be more in the guts of people and translate into actions. This is how we inspire others and those that follow us. One can learn theory, and yet true leaders are those who have not learned that in school and in all those MBAs of the earth that train on the basis of theoretical format instead of training. True leaders believe in what they do and live and do it with passion, humility, perseverance, resilience, and, hopefully, with integrity, otherwise they are only manipulative opportunists as we see every day. True leaders are ready to die for what they believe. [West Africa participants]*

As some of the above comments note, some of the participants also identified the qualities that need to be fostered in any development process. Others also referred to the importance of mentors and role models for Leadership Development.

*Having mentors as well as the desire and hunger for growth is very important for leaders. Leaders must be ready to learn and want to grow each day in order to help the people under them grow as well. “growth mindset”. [East Africa participant]*

*Mentorship and peers are important in developing good leaders. [East Africa participant]*

*Good examples can do a lot for leadership development, but it is important that the education system and the environment also play their part in acquiring the fundamental values and elements for forming a leader in society. Abilities and skills can also add opportunities to develop a leader. Finally, the sum of all this: experience helps to build confidence and create confidence in a leader. [Central Africa participant]*

As the last comment above indicates, in fact a combination of development opportunities is needed. In other words, multiple elements are involved in the development of leaders, including the broader environment and educational system, in addition to formal and informal learning and the influence of role models and mentors.

## 11.8 SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

This survey has highlighted a very strong consensus among respondents on the importance of all aspects of leadership; all our survey items scored well above 3.5 for importance. Within the top ten most important items, issues relating to “self” and “handling employees” appeared more frequently than others. We further noted that the items that were least frequently experienced were in the areas of “Leadership Development” and “leadership across the organization”. Consequently, these same items showed the largest gaps.

Factor analyses resulted in three factors as follows:

- *Inspiring Leadership—mostly related to aspects of self—dealing with employees and managing a team:* Some respondents (5%) rated their experience as low, indicating dissatisfaction, and consequently a need

to improve on these aspects. It is interesting that the survey items that focus on self-awareness as a leader, as well as people-oriented leadership skills such as dealing with employees and leading a team were rated so high on importance, but also that their occurrence is the highest of all items.

- *Egalitarian Leadership*: Mostly concerned items related to leadership across an organization and showed a lower occurrence than importance—with 7% dissatisfied. These include items related to leading across the organization, such as managing upwards, and managing change.
- *Leadership Development*: Gap analysis showed the largest group of respondents dissatisfied (18%) with their experience, indicating a need for better or more Leadership Development opportunities.

A more detailed gap analysis revealed that there is an evident degree of dissatisfaction with the current state of leadership. This is particularly marked for Leadership Development, with almost half of respondents revealing a gap of one or more points (on a six-point scale) between the importance they attach to Leadership Development and the frequency with which they experience it. For Egalitarian Leadership, the dissatisfaction percentage is about one-third of the respondents; for Inspiring Leadership, the figure is also high in that it is a little over a quarter of the respondents.

Respondents' interest in the topic was also evident from the many open comments (68: 44 in English, 24 in French) that they provided. Three broad themes emerged from the comments: the leadership multiplex, leadership in Africa, and Leadership Development. The comments illustrate the frustrations of respondents with the gaps they experience, but even more comments included ideas and suggestions on a practical way forward to address these gaps. The following comment is illustrative of this:

*African leaders often fall into an operational trap because of various factors including the pressure of the hierarchy that is often present in Africa and misleading our realities. We need more and more transformational leaders who can with the right conditions prove their effectiveness. It would then be necessary to allow these young leaders to pass on their knowledge and experience to the younger ones while they are active or through blogs, books or lectures in schools. Finally, we need platforms for research and exchange through teams that will focus on specific activities. [West Africa participant]*

Overall, the survey thus indicates a consensus among leaders of a need to improve Inspiring Leadership aspects, a need for more attention to be paid to Egalitarian Leadership, and for more Leadership Development opportunities. One young female survey respondent from Nigeria phrased her view on the need for transformation as follows:

*While many people don't usually discuss leadership, I think it is worth looking at the change of trend from passive leadership to proactive leadership when many African leaders are no longer in the limiting mentality of waiting to be provided for or waiting to be told what to do or waiting to be given things as we see in the relationship between Africa and more developed countries in the west or Asia. This is a mindset that needs to be broken free from at all levels of society from government to small business, farmers etc. Taking ownership, accountability and responsibility are key factors and servant leadership is serving the common good of the community and nation rather than trying to keep everything within the family and close friends. [LinkedIn message to one of the authors]*

We can conclude on a positive note. Our respondents' keen awareness of the gaps in leadership is combined with their ambition and a range of ideas on how, and confidence in the ability, to address these gaps. As such, we are witnessing the signs of emerging leadership transformation, especially among young leaders but also among many senior leaders.

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PART III

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Implications and Applications





# Understanding Leadership and Its Development in Africa

*Eva Jordans, Bettina Ng'weno, and Helen Spencer-Oatey*

## 12.1 INTRODUCTION

This volume presents a descriptive study of leaders and leadership in business and organizations in Africa. It emphasizes the context, doubts, struggles, and successes of leaders and presents their experience and advice on how to deal with the rapidly changing environment in which they find themselves.

While focusing on leadership experience generally, the volume specifically highlights the personal experiences of mid-level leaders in rural development in Rwanda; young leaders transforming science in Ghana; project management leaders in large business firms in Nigeria; gendered experiences of leaders in private business in Kenya; and intergenerational dynamics of leaders in Tanzania.

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E. Jordans et al., *Developing Global Leaders*, Palgrave Studies in African Leadership, [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-14606-1\\_12](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-14606-1_12)

Our study aims to respond to the gaps identified in the existing literature on leadership in Africa, including:

- A predominant focus on political leaders and much less focus on civic leaders; and also few studies on women leaders and youth. Even those publications that focus on women leaders have predominantly been looking at famous women who entered politics, for example, Johnson Sirleaf and Mathai. Less is known about non-political women leaders, as well as young women.
- Few descriptive studies of interaction between leaders and followers, notably few studies focus on the African take on servant and transformational leadership.
- Few studies explore the desire for change in leadership styles and behaviour, (a) using empirical studies to document perceptions of hierarchy in Africa, linked to organizational and cultural values, and (b) examining the attributes of leaders that people are looking for, notably integrity and doing good.
- Limited literature analysing the need for and experiences with Leadership Development in Africa. The existing literature tends to be prescriptive rather than conceptual or descriptive.

To fill some of these gaps we prepared descriptive case studies of civic leaders in five African countries, diverse in terms of both age and gender. Our case studies focus on leaders in business, NGOs, science, or government spheres. We describe leaders' personal experiences and leadership journeys, including their successes and challenges. We focus on the relationships between leader and follower, in the context of leadership styles and perceptions of hierarchy, and the changes occurring. We note examples of leaders' attributes, notably of doing good and integrity. Lastly, we include descriptions of experiences with becoming a leader, and the experiences with and need for Leadership Development.

## 12.2 COMMON THEMES: COMMUNITY, HIERARCHY, AND HUMANE ORIENTATION

Through our case studies and Africa-wide survey we analysed the leadership experiences and perspectives of a total of 422 diverse leaders from 31 countries across Africa. The five countries' case studies document the personal experiences of 186 leaders (78 young, 108 senior;

123 male, 63 female). A central overall finding from these data is how many similarities we identified: similar viewpoints across countries, age, gender, and organizational context.

In the early chapters of this book we argued that one cannot talk about typical “African” leadership, as there is a lot of diversity within the continent. Our findings reveal that leadership practices in Africa are indeed a hybrid form of traditional leadership practices, colonial influences, and leadership practices that have been impacted by Western concepts and frameworks of leadership. Nevertheless, from our literature review and our findings, three characteristics or dimensions of leadership in Africa emerged that resonate with each other and with Ubuntu:

1. *Community*: collectivism, doing good, and teamwork
2. *Hierarchy*: authority (power distance), transformational leadership, with a widespread desire for a lower enactment of hierarchy than currently practised
3. *Humane orientation*: people-oriented leadership and leadership characteristics such as integrity and servant leadership

Although each case study had its own specific context and type of leadership challenges, insights into the common themes are summarized below.

*Community*: A common theme is “doing good”. This is literally what it means—doing something good for the society. The wording is not a grammatical mistake (the software keeps suggesting changing it to “doing well”). It is understood as aiming to effect a positive change in society, for example, benefiting those groups in society that face constraints or impacting the environment. Some examples from our case studies are as follows:

- *Rwanda*: the young leaders of farmer organizations who are working towards more accountability of the executive committees and adopting democratic and equity principles while leading their organizations; mid-level government leaders striving to support bottom-up participatory approaches that consult and give a voice to the rural poor amidst a hierarchical government structure in the process of decentralization;
- *Nigeria*: young business leaders taking initiatives to address socio-economic issues, for example, improving the environment or initiatives to improve health services, supporting community development initiatives among youth, and informally coaching other young people;
- *Ghana*: the young scientists returning to Ghana from careers in the West striving to facilitate and implement high-level scientific research

in West Africa by setting up and leading research groups, and activists working on grassroots Science, Technology, Education, and Mathematics (STEM) initiatives that address socio-economic themes;

- *Kenya*: senior and young women leaders taking on gender discrimination and sexual harassment to perform well in their jobs, and young leaders' focus on "doing good", some from disadvantaged backgrounds, who want their work to make a difference for disadvantaged groups;
- *Tanzania*: keen interest and efforts among senior leaders to mentor and support young leaders, young leaders taking roles and responsibilities as change agents and leaders across generations striving for integrity.

*Hierarchy and transformation*: A common theme is the increased role and importance of young leaders, which is a generation that regards itself as undertaking a transformational role—to impact a change. They do not want to copy the leadership they have experienced themselves, or the leadership by senior leaders they have read or heard about. If we look at the combined graph below, we see in all case study countries a shift in the attitudes towards the notion of hierarchy (Fig. 12.1).

We also notice some differences between the five case study countries. On average, Rwanda is the only country that can be considered broadly satisfied (in green area) as they consider the current practice not very hierarchical, and this corresponds mostly with their preference. The remaining four countries can be considered broadly dissatisfied (in red area), as on average respondents consider the current practice as very hierarchical, and would personally prefer less hierarchy than they currently witness in the society. Among these four, Nigeria experiences the highest hierarchy, whereas Kenya shows on average the lowest hierarchy preference.

We can thus see that on average our case study respondents favour less enactment of hierarchy than they witness currently in their society, and there is dissatisfaction with the current practice. All countries are positioned some distance below the diagonal indicating more or less dissatisfaction. This is especially true for Nigeria and Kenya, which are furthest removed from the diagonal; whereas Rwanda is closest to the diagonal showing the least dissatisfaction. Our case studies confirm these survey findings, with numerous examples of leaders aiming for a change in how they deal with or enact hierarchy.

*Humane orientation*: Linked to this finding, we noticed that a shared concern is to adapt one's leadership style—typically from an authoritarian-focused leadership style towards an inspirational, people-oriented leadership style, based on the concepts of vision, participation, and consultation. In Fig. 12.2

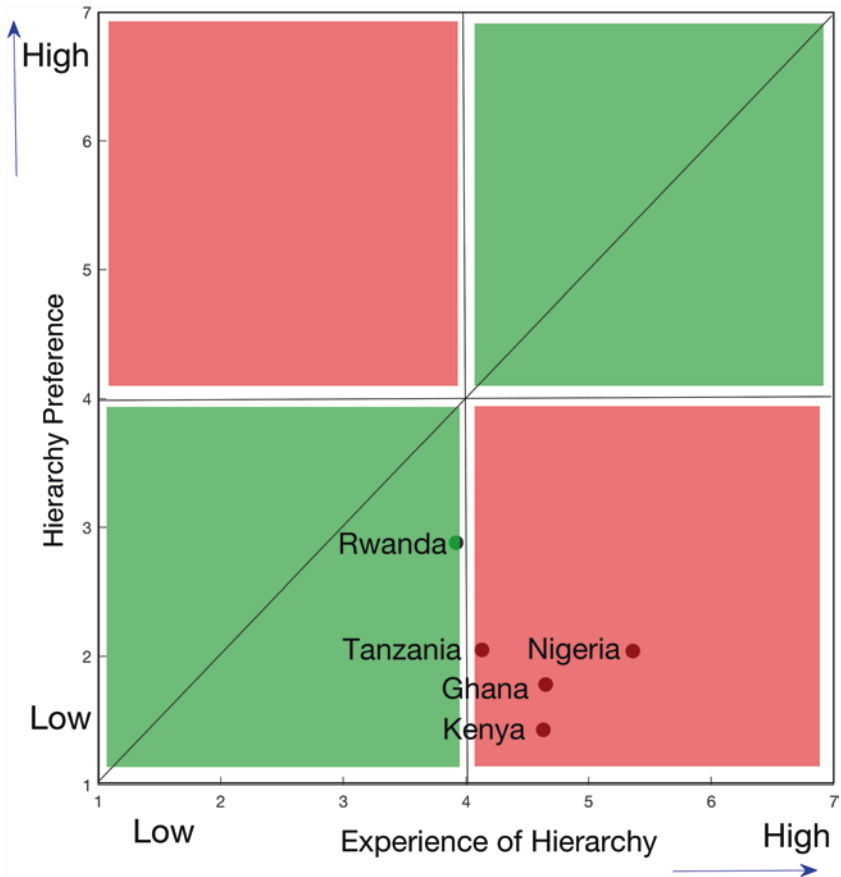


Fig. 12.1 Experiences and preferences towards hierarchy across the five countries ( $n = 139$ )

we present the average across all five countries in how frequently respondents have experienced Redeker, de Fries, Rouckhout, Vermeren, and Filip's (2014) eight leadership styles and indicated the perceived most and least suitable leadership styles to address the challenges that leaders face. Combining these two questions in one figure, with the styles ranked according to their suitability, we see the following pattern emerging.

Averaged for the five case study countries, the people-oriented styles such as inspirational, coaching, and participative were all considered highly suitable styles, with inspirational considered the most suitable. However,

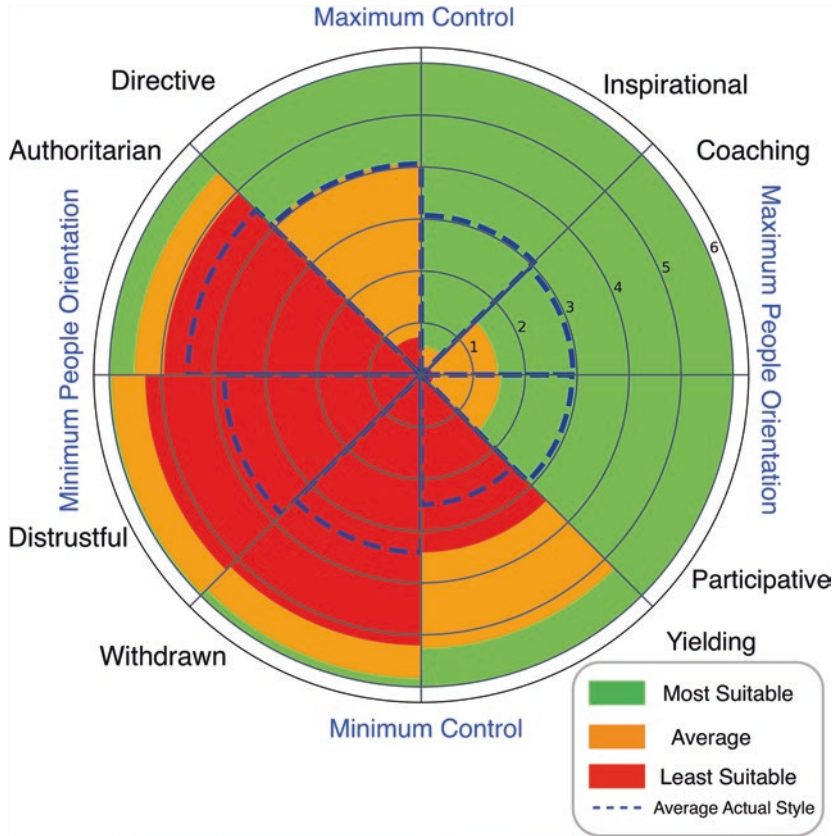


Fig. 12.2 Actual leadership styles versus perceived suitability for the five case study countries ( $n = 139$ )

with the exception of yielding, these are the three least commonly used styles. In contrast, authoritarian, withdrawn, and distrustful leadership styles were considered least suitable, especially withdrawn and distrustful. Yet authoritarian was rated as the most common style, followed by distrustful. Directive style is in the middle—it is relatively common and considered averagely suitable.

In terms of control, styles with more control by a leader are clearly favoured compared to the two styles with minimum control: withdrawn and yielding. Inspirational is considered most suitable as this style has more

control but it is handled in a positive way in that it is also people-oriented. Responses thus indicate that instead of the most commonly used leadership styles that are less people-oriented, which are on the left side of the circumplex, leaders expressed a preference for a change towards more people-oriented leadership styles, which are on the right side of the circumplex. People orientation relates not only to people within their own teams, or organization or company, but also to people beyond in the wider society.

Overall, there are more similarities than differences among the five countries. A few country scores differ from the average. This includes, for example, the score for the yielding style—which is considered more suitable in Rwanda than the average, whereas in Nigeria yielding is considered less suitable than the average. Participative and coaching styles score lower on suitability in Nigeria, while higher in Kenya, than the average.

In Chap. 2 we argued that in Redeker et al.'s (2014) circumplex model some styles seem to be phrased more positively than others. In addition, each end of the two core dimensions (control and people orientation) could have positive and negative versions, which we termed adaptive and maladaptive variants. These two aspects resonated in our case studies. We documented that leaders in Africa considered not one, but multiple leadership styles suitable. Leaders flexibly use different styles depending on the situation and the needs of the followers. Also, we saw evidence of regular use and perceived suitability of the adaptive form of directive, authoritative, and yielding styles. We did not record a positive or adaptive form of withdrawn or distrustful styles, though these styles are relatively common, and thus generally considered not suitable.

The preference and positive assessment of the suitability of people-oriented leadership styles resonate with the concept of servant leadership that features widely in the literature. People-oriented styles, including yielding, also are in line with the humane-oriented dimension as documented by Global Leadership and Organizational Behaviour Effectiveness (GLOBE) project (House et al., 2004), which was defined as the degree to which a collective encourages and rewards individuals for being fair, altruistic, generous, caring, and kind to others.

Overall, we can thus conclude that the change towards more people-oriented leadership styles would not be a move from one fixed style (i.e. authoritarian/directive) to another fixed style (i.e. coaching), but rather a move to the flexible use of different styles that incorporates the positive elements of the “agency” and “affiliation” dimensions discussed in Chap. 2 and responds flexibly to the situation and needs of followers.

### 12.3 DIVERSE LEADERS

Within the group of over 400 leaders we studied, youth (40%) and women leaders (32%) were represented. The personal experiences we have documented indicate that age stands out as a dividing line on how people understand and want leadership to be. Young leaders not only have a different take on leadership, but they also want to be different. However, they find they do not have readily available role models, support, access, or spaces to put their ideas into practice. Young leaders indicated that they have at times to navigate the cultural value that “respect comes with age”, but do not seem too much constrained or hampered by this. Many youth are empowered by networking among young peers and leaders, are active on social media, and are confidently setting their own course. Although there is some talk by senior leaders of a sense of entitlement among youth, the majority of young leaders in our study are convinced of the need to take initiatives, be entrepreneurial, and chart their own course. They are not expecting too much from the government or older generations in supporting or leading the transformation they envision.

However, our findings suggest that especially young female leaders continue to face gender-based obstacles and harassment, very similar to those of many senior women leaders documented in the literature. Interestingly, women leaders are well represented among the “bright” side of leadership in the history of Africa. Several women leaders both in the literature, as well as in our case studies, are able to be the “new type of leader”, that is, they hold a common aim of being a people-oriented participative leader. Illustratively, some male and female leaders in the Kenyan case study held the opinion that women are better able to adopt and practise people-oriented leadership styles due to their better-developed social skills. It could also be that many women leaders do not have many clear role models, as there are only a few women leaders that have set an example for them. Therefore, they go more by their intuition and try out new behaviours instead of copying less effective behaviour of male leaders that they have witnessed.

Taken together, women leaders and youth leaders are increasingly taking up leadership positions in Africa. Both groups have different, often novel, approaches that they bring to the workplace, and are practising transformational and servant leadership styles. Though much work remains to be done, it is clear that these diverse leaders are beginning to have a significant positive impact: furthering rural development, improving quality of life of disadvantaged groups, safeguarding the environment, mentoring others, advocating for grassroots action, developing African science,



and starting enterprises, to name but a few. All of these efforts are contributing significantly to addressing socio-economic constraints, including the growth of the African economy and improvement of the lives of disadvantaged groups. The positive impacts are not limited to their own environment or countries and many of these young leaders are committed to making their mark in other parts of Africa and indeed globally.

### 12.4 LEADERS’ ATTRIBUTES

Several qualities or features were regarded as key characteristics or inherent parts of being a good leader. The following leaders’ attributes were mentioned by interviewees in each country. Table 12.1 indicates how many of the 60 interviewees mentioned the attribute, and among them how many were young leaders.

In order of frequency:

1. *Adaptability*: 38 interviewees, 63% of total interviewees
2. *Integrity*: 33 interviewees, 55% of total interviewees
3. *Doing good*: 32 interviewees, 53% of total interviewees, 69% youth
4. *Candidness and Decisiveness*: both 29 interviewees, 48% of total interviewees

Below we will highlight some overall findings.

#### 12.4.1 *Adaptability: Flexibility and Transformation*

Adaptability was the leadership quality discussed by most interviewees—38 out of 60 of leaders gave examples of how they flexibly overcome challenges, how they adapt to a changing society, and how they strive to trans-

**Table 12.1** Total coding frequencies by attributes, number of interviewees, and number of youth

		Ghana youth	Nigeria youth	Nigeria youth	Tanzania youth	Kenya youth	Rwanda youth	Rwanda youth	Overall # of interviewees	Overall # of youth	% of youth			
Perceptions of hierarchy	General	3	2	8	2	8	3	7	3	10	6	36	16	44%
	Organization specific	2	1	3	2	3	3	3	0	7	4	18	10	56%
Leadership style	Strategic leadership	4	2	4	2	2	1	4	1	18	11	32	17	53%
	People-oriented leadership	9	5	9	3	8	4	11	6	18	11	55	29	53%
Leaders' diversity	Women leaders	4	1	4	3	2	2	8	3	3	3	21	12	57%
Youth	Candidness	7	4	6	4	9	4	8	5	3	2	33	19	58%
	Decisiveness	4	2	7	4	3	2	6	3	9	4	29	15	52%
Leadership attributes	Integrity	3	1	5	4	5	2	4	0	12	6	29	13	45%
	Doing good	4	2	4	2	4	2	5	1	16	11	33	18	55%
	Adaptability	8	4	5	4	3	2	5	4	11	8	32	22	69%
Leadership Development	Leadership determinants	6	3	8	3	5	3	3	0	16	9	28	16	47%
	Role Model	9	5	8	3	10	6	12	6	18	11	57	31	54%
	Skills development	6	3	4	2	7	3	6	4	17	10	40	22	55%
Confidence	Confidence	9	5	7	4	9	5	8	3	9	6	42	23	55%
	Confidence	5	3	3	3	10	5	7	4	14	8	39	23	59%
Total interviewees		9	5	10	3	11	6	12	6	18	7	60	27	45%

form society. In this context, innovation, taking initiatives, and entrepreneurship were important related concepts.

Adaptability was one of the leader's attributes that leaders commented on from their personal experiences. It is a much-needed attribute in the face of the challenges that leaders face, for example in charting their career path, especially for leaders coming from a disadvantaged background or for young female leaders. It is also an essential attribute in the process of transformation, especially for leaders wanting to effect a change in society. This is illustrated in the case studies, such as through innovations pioneered by leaders in science education in Ghana, diplomatically handling differences between generations in Tanzania, leaders in the private sector in Kenya managing changing circumstances, leaders in Rwanda embracing change in how they manage their organizations, or promoting a change of societal values around hierarchy, such as in the case study of Nigeria. In the last case, one interviewee (Mr Ian) reported how his personal experience of carrying a hammer on building inspections became a metaphor for the use of authority out of necessity, against a leader's own personal preference.

Another aspect of adaptability we noticed was the ability to function in different geographic and professional contexts. Some of the leaders interviewed had successfully studied and worked in the USA or Europe, and had either moved back to Africa, or were travelling back and forth between Africa and the USA or Europe. As such, these leaders manage to perform flexibly and achieve success across continents. Others are successfully combining multiple activities, such as working in a professional job and starting a business while also supporting community development initiatives.

Our interviewees and respondents did not always explicitly mention the importance of displaying attributes of flexibility—for them it may seem “business as normal” or an obvious requirement to deal with their challenges and reach their goals. However, their leadership journeys speak of a tremendous capacity to adapt, including being daring, flexible, and innovative to reach their goals.

#### 12.4.2 *Integrity*

The second most often mentioned attribute is integrity, mentioned by 33 leaders. Interviewees talked about the importance of the attribute of integrity in the context of leadership. It is often interlinked with, and sometimes hampered by, norms around showing respect and managing relations, including showing gratitude. It is also directly linked to values around governance, notably the attribute is threatened by certain patron-

age and loyalty systems, and requires deft handling and balancing skills. Lack of integrity is a common reason for followers to lose respect for a leader. The youth especially critiqued the unequal societies that have been built through corruption and expressed a desire for structures to help others, pull up society, or build the nation, rather than the individual or corporation. Overall, interviewees strive to maintain personal honesty, and would also like their own leaders to display more integrity than they currently witness in society.

### 12.4.3 *Doing Good: Community*

The third most often mentioned attribute is doing good, mentioned by 32 leaders, which is directly linked to the characteristic of community. This attribute is mentioned by many more youth, 69%, than senior leaders. As such it seems an attribute that defines the current generation of young leaders more than senior leaders. We have discussed this attribute in more detail in Sects. 12.3 and 12.4.

## 12.5 AFRICA-WIDE SURVEY RESULTS

The above-mentioned themes were cross-checked in our Africa-wide survey, which was designed to explore and validate on a broader scale the leadership issues and development needs emerging from the case studies. The survey had 236 different respondents from 26 additional countries across Africa (159 male/74 female, 90 young, 146 senior). A detailed gap analysis revealed that there is an evident degree of dissatisfaction with the current state of leadership. This is particularly marked for Leadership Development, with almost half of respondents revealing a gap between the importance they attach to Leadership Development and the frequency with which they experience it. For Egalitarian Leadership, the dissatisfaction percentage is about one-third of the respondents; for Inspiring Leadership, the figure is also high in that it is a little over a quarter of the respondents.

Overall, the survey results indicated a consensus among leaders for a need to improve on Inspiring Leadership aspects, more attention to Egalitarian Leadership, and also opportunities for Leadership Development. Respondents' keen awareness of the gaps in leadership is combined with their ambition and a range of ideas on how to address the gaps, and confidence in their ability to address them. As such, we are witnessing the signs of emerging leadership transformation, especially among young leaders but also among many senior leaders.

## 12.6 LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

Here we draw some conclusions on the “how”: how future leaders in Africa could develop leadership skills in this era of transformation.

Our case studies in East and West Africa show that many leaders in Africa are eager to lead well. With many young and female leaders new in leadership roles, and the widespread desire for transformation, there is a substantial need for various forms of Leadership Development that are supporting the “new” leadership as well as helping this fit the African socio-economic context. This implies that Leadership Development needs to be creative and innovative, in particular for young leaders. In fact, it is not just young women and young men who will personally benefit from leadership skills development; it will also impact on the organizations or enterprises they lead as well as other key influencers—senior leaders, service providers, government staff, and politicians. These people will observe these young people acting differently, and have the possibility of creating a synergy that catalyses further changes.

However, very few of the leaders in our study had benefited from formal Leadership Development initiatives. Only a few of them reported participating in or having benefited from formal Leadership Development programmes. Most of them are learning by doing, and learning from and with others. It is not yet common for organizations or companies to invest in Leadership Development. If they do invest in Leadership Development, the approach is often largely influenced by Western Leadership Development frameworks, and rarely the “hybrid” approach proposed by Iwowo that we discussed in Chap. 3.

Some of our interviewees and respondents commented that having an inspiring role model who set an example of the desired behaviour has been very beneficial. Unfortunately, many of the leaders we engaged with lacked this type of role model, especially a role model who demonstrates what they strive for. More women report lacking role models than men.

In addition to having a role model, learning from a mentor, mostly through informal mentoring schemes, has been very beneficial. Formal mentoring programmes also exist and show results, but affect only a few. Informal mentoring is much more widespread but could benefit from support, both on the side of the mentor and on the part of the mentee. This support could be focused on clarifying the mentor–mentee roles and their relationship, and open communication and feedback skills.

In line with the argument presented by Iwowo, it is important that Leadership Development programmes in Africa are based on the third or hybrid space she proposes: “a leadership development model in which current mainstream theories are examined and understood in the light of the prevailing socio-cultural work environment and subsequently contextualized via creative adaptation” (Iwowo, 2015, p. 420).

Frequently mentioned in our study is the need for role models. Therefore, Leadership Development programmes in Africa would need to include memoirs and experiences of African leaders that could serve as role models: both from pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial times. In this regard, the self-learning approach used by the African Leadership University (ALU) in their Leadership Development programmes and the type of programme sponsored by the British Council (see Bolden & Kirk, 2005) serve as examples of how Leadership Development in Africa can take this hybrid approach. Building confidence and self-awareness are also crucial aspects, which need to be built into Leadership Development programmes.

For women leaders, based on our research, several implications for ensuring more opportunities in leadership for women in Africa include:

- Hand-picking young female leaders and mentoring them—as opposed to voting for a leader (Tanzania)
- Setting quotas for female leaders (i.e. like in the Constitution) and monitoring both adherence and impact (Kenya)
- Mentoring and role models (Kenya, Tanzania)
- Specific Leadership Development programmes for women (Tanzania)
- Following the advice of one senior leader to a young female leader: “do what you have to do and do it well, always know that where a man has to take one step you may have to take three, be patient about it, if you feel there is a fight in front of you don’t get emotional but fight with facts and dig deep” (Kenya)

For young leaders, these include:

- Mentoring support and role models (all case studies)
- Youth Corps, internships (Nigeria)
- Networking events (Ghana and Nigeria)
- Bar-camps (Ghana)
- Soft skills development (Tanzania, Nigeria)

- Community mobilization projects/volunteering: honing leadership skills in practice (Rwanda, Kenya, Nigeria, Ghana)
- Specific Leadership Development programmes for youth, such as YALI and ALU

## 12.7 CONCLUSION

Overall, we conclude that Africa is doing extremely well in many respects. The impact of the “youth bulge” in Africa is that there are many young people and the average age of people to assume a leadership role is often quite young. Young leaders in Africa are ready to take over from the previous generations and to make a difference. There is thus a critical mass of young leaders who are aiming for change and transformation. Young leaders are flexible and ambitious and have a vision for the future: their own future, but more importantly the future of the people around them, the future of their country and continent. There are also many senior leaders supporting transformation and advocating for a change in leadership styles, as well as actively mentoring young men and women in their leadership journeys.

Our research has addressed several of the gaps in the literature on leadership in Africa. We have documented personal experiences and insights of civic leaders, both women and men and young and senior leaders. These experiences emphasize the context, doubts, struggles, and successes of leaders and present their views and advice on how to deal with the rapidly changing environment in which they find themselves. Our case studies indicate an emerging leadership transformation, especially among young leaders but also among many senior leaders.

In Sect. 2.6 we included the World Economic Forum definitions of global leadership (World Economic Forum, 2019), which includes characteristics such as dynamic, driven, intellectual curiosity, service-oriented humility, and entrepreneurial in the global public interest, who are empowering widespread innovation and action, based on mutual accountability and collaboration. On the basis of our study, we would suggest extending the definition of global leadership to include those attributes highlighted by the leaders we interviewed: the attributes of adaptability, integrity, and doing good.

We conclude on a positive note. Our respondents’ keen awareness of the gaps in leadership is combined with their ambition and range of ideas on how to address these gaps and the confidence to do so.

Personal reflection on leadership aspects, as for example triggered by our surveys and interviews, is not yet very common in Africa. It is our hope that the personal experiences documented in this book can serve as examples for leaders. These leadership reflections, together with a mix of mostly informal Leadership Development opportunities such as role models and mentoring, greatly support the Leadership Development transformation process. Further empirical, descriptive research on the characteristics of leadership in Africa, with personal, case study accounts, would helpfully support this process.

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# ANNEX A: INITIAL SURVEY (A COMPONENT OF THE CASE STUDIES)

## LEADERSHIP IN AFRICA

1. Are you currently a male or female leader in Africa? Or do you have leadership experience? Please indicate whether, and if so how many years of leadership experience you have (please note the separate answers whether you are a male or female respondent).
  - Female respondent: I have no leadership experience yet
  - Female respondent: Yes, my leadership experience is less than 3 years
  - Female respondent: Yes, my leadership experience is 3–6 years
  - Female respondent: Yes, my leadership experience is more than 6 years
  - Male respondent: I have no leadership experience yet
  - Male respondent: Yes, my leadership experience is less than 3 years
  - Male respondent: Yes, my leadership experience is 3–6 years
  - Male respondent: Yes, my leadership experience is more than 6 years



2. Power differences: Please rate below your perception to what extent in your society behaviour is practiced and encouraged that enacts power differences, and next, your personal opinion on this:

	1 Obey their leaders (boss) without question	2	3	4	5	6	7 Question their leaders (boss) when in disagreement
Current practice: In this society, followers are expected to:							
My personal opinion: I believe that followers should:							

3. What challenges do you face as a leader? What could your leader improve in his/her leadership?
- You
  - Your leader
4. What support do you as a leader need to be successful, i.e:
- From your colleagues?
  - From your team members?
  - From your own leader/boss?
  - From the organization?

5. In the six left hand columns, please rate how frequently you have experienced the following leadership styles in Africa using a scale from 1 (not at all common) to 6 (very common).

	1 Not at all common	2	3	4	5	6 Very common
Authoritarian leadership style: leaders tend to force subordinates to obey them, tend to be harsh on subordinates, and to not accept criticism						
Coaching leadership style: leaders tend to show their appreciation for subordinates and let them know how important they are; tend to stimulate subordinates through positive communication and listen to the opinion of subordinates						
Directive leadership style: leaders tend to try to reach success competitively, tend to actively monitor and correct subordinates, and to behave strictly towards subordinates						
Distrustful leadership style: leaders tend to be suspicious of the motives of subordinates, tend to be quick and negative in their judgement, and stay distant from their subordinates						
Inspirational leadership style: leaders tend to stimulate and persuade subordinates through a clear vision, tend to act decisively when performance or organizational problems arise, and motivate subordinates to perform optimally						
Participative leadership style: leaders tend to include subordinates in all processes; tend to easily accept and incorporate subordinates' propositions, and to show their understanding of the feelings and emotions of subordinates						
Withdrawn leadership style: leaders tend to be personally and professionally absent, tend to avoid confrontations and responsibilities, and to act too late when problems arise						
Yielding leadership style: leaders tend to be very flexible when interacting with subordinates and hesitant to provide guidance; tend to put subordinates' interest above the organization's interest, and avoid being the centre of attention						

6. In your experience, what are the most important challenges that leaders in Africa have to deal with at the moment and in the near future? (i.e. innovation, managing change, keeping status quo, etc....)
7. Among the eight leadership styles which styles are best (most appropriate) to respond to the challenges you listed in Question 6? And which styles are worst (least appropriate)? Please rate them.

	1. Worst style	2	3	4	5	6. Best style
Authoritarian leadership style:						
Coaching leadership style:						
Directive leadership style:						
Distrustful leadership style:						
Inspirational leadership style:						
Participative leadership style:						
Withdrawn leadership style:						
Yielding leadership style:						

8. What is the single greatest cause for you to lose respect for a leader?
9. What is the most important quality for a leader in Africa?
10. Could you please indicate your nationality?

## ANNEX B: THE CASE STUDY INTERVIEW GUIDE

The face-to-face qualitative interview is meant to follow-up on the online questionnaire (with a select group). It is meant to be an open discussion around effective behaviour of leaders and insights on leadership from practical experiences. Some of the questions from the online survey could be discussed again, but more in-depth. Below list of questions are meant as a guide, not all of them may need to be asked. Focus is on having a good discussion around perceptions on, and experiences with, leadership and some critical incidents that have shaped someone's leadership style. It is important to register quotes and concrete, real-life examples. The interview should take around one hour (or more). It can be recorded to facilitate the write-up later on.

### **Introduction:**

Start explaining the background to this interview. Then talk about the background of the person you are interviewing:

1. How did you get to the place where you are now? (narrative biography)

### **Perception on Leadership:**

2. Do you consider yourself a leader or a person in a leadership position (Why or do you believe there is a difference)?

3. Tell me about your current role as a leader in the organization? What are your aims, what is your vision?
4. How do you interact with the people you are leading? What do you do, how often do you meet, how do you motivate them, how do you give feedback, how do you convince them?
5. How do you interact with your own leader? What does he/she do, how often do you meet, how does he/she motivate you, how do you get his/her feedback?

### **Challenges and Successes as a Leader:**

6. What main challenges have you experienced as a leader (give specific examples)? And how did you respond to these?
7. Can you tell about a critical incident/period that has defined your leadership?
8. What main successes have you experienced as a leader (give specific examples)? What were the keys to the success?
9. What is the single greatest cause for you to lose respect for a leader?

### **Developing and Improving (Your) Leadership**

10. Have you learned leadership by looking at others? In other words, did/do you have a role model of a good leader? If yes, who was this and why?
11. When you grew up did you hear people tell stories about leaders? (If so, give examples)
12. What support do you as a leader need (and what do you get) to be successful, that is: (from your colleagues, from your team members? from your own leader/boss? from the organization?)
13. What could you do better as a leader?
14. What could your leader improve in his/her leadership?
15. What is your advice for young people who will assume a leadership role? Which skills do they need to develop, and how?

### **Leadership in Africa:**

16. In your experience, what are the most important challenges that leaders in Africa have to deal with at the moment and in the near future? (e.g. innovation, managing change, keeping status quo, etc.)
17. Is leadership in Africa (or specific country) different from Leadership in the rest of the world? If so why?

## ANNEX C: RQDA CODE STRUCTURE

Code Category (5)	Codes (15)
01_Perceptions of hierarchy	General Organization-specific
02_Leadership Style	Strategic leadership People-oriented leadership
03_Leader Diversity	Women leaders Youth
04_Leadership Attributes	Candidness Decisiveness Integrity Doing good Adaptability
05_Leadership Development	Leadership determinants Role model Skills development Confidence

## ANNEX D: FOLLOW-UP SURVEY

### LEADERSHIP IN AFRICA

This questionnaire asks about your experiences of leadership—leading people and being led by others. You will be given statements about your possible experiences at your workplace and we would kindly ask you to answer them in two ways:

“**Importance to me**” (i.e. how important it is to you to practise or experience this at work, e.g. for carrying out projects well and/or for people’s well-being)

and

“**Frequency of Occurrence**” (i.e. how often you actually practise or experience this in your workplace).

#### *Data Protection*

Data collected as part of this survey will be treated confidentially. Your individual responses will never be published in such a way that others could identify you. Where data is reported to third parties, your responses

will be made anonymous. Also, data collected through this survey will not be handed over to third parties or be used in other ways than described as follows. Please check each type of use to indicate your agreement.

**Please click on each type of use to indicate your agreement.**

- My anonymous responses can be used to develop initiatives which enhance people's leadership experiences.
- My anonymous responses can be used for academic publications and presentations.
- My anonymous responses can be used for development purposes, including in training materials.

*Before You Start this Survey*

It will take you approximately **15 minutes** to finish this questionnaire. Please read each statement carefully and tick the response in one of the categories that best matches your opinion. Please evaluate all the statements quickly but carefully. Although it may sometimes seem difficult to decide which answer to choose, we would kindly ask you to still tick one of the boxes that best represents your opinion.

It is worth mentioning that **there are no right or wrong answers** to these questions. Evaluating each statement to the best of your knowledge will yield the most meaningful results.

Any complaint about the way you have been dealt with during the study or any possible harm you might have suffered will be addressed. Please address your complaint to the person below, who is a senior University of Warwick official entirely independent of this study: Head of Research Governance, Research & Impact Services, University House, University of Warwick, Coventry, CV4 8UW, Tel: 024 76 522746, Email: Jane.Prewett@warwick.ac.uk / E.C.Dight@warwick.ac.uk

Gender: M/F/Prefer not to say

Year of birth:

Where are you from:

Region in Africa

Eastern Africa; Central Africa; Northern Africa; Southern Africa;  
Western Africa



## Country

Burundi	Zambia	Algeria	Botswana	Benin
Comoros	Zimbabwe	Egypt	Lesotho	Burkina Faso
Djibouti	Angola	Libya	Namibia	Cabo Verde
Eritrea	Cameroon	Morocco	South Africa	Côte d'Ivoire
Ethiopia	Central African Republic	Sudan	Swaziland	Gambia
Kenya	Chad	Tunisia		Ghana
Madagascar	Congo	Western Sahara		Guinea
Malawi	Democratic Republic of the Congo			Guinea-Bissau
Mauritius	Equatorial Guinea			Liberia
Mayotte	Gabon			Mali
Mozambique	Sao Tome and Principe			Mauritania
Rwanda				Niger
Seychelles				Nigeria
Somalia				Saint Helena
South Sudan				Senegal
Uganda				Sierra Leone
Tanzania				Togo

How many years of leadership experience do you have?

Less than 1 year

More than 20 years

Which of the following categories best describes the organization you work in?

Self-employed

Small private company

Large private company



18. Reconciling conflicting needs/demands of leaders above me and the people below me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19. Persuading my leaders to consider new ways of doing things.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20. Confidently voicing my opinion to people who are above me even when my views are different to theirs.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
21. Communicating effectively to my leaders the needs of my staff.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
22. Serving and supporting my region/country through my/our work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
23. Consulting widely with all my/our external stakeholders.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
24. Ensuring fair treatment for both men and women inside and outside my/our work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
25. Promoting ethical ways of doing my/our work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
26. Seeking feedback from the external community/stakeholders on my/our work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**How would you rate the following statements on developing as a leader?**

	Importance to me						Frequency of Occurrence					
	Not at all			Very important			Very rarely			Very often		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6
27. Having good role models to follow.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
28. Being mentored very well.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
29. Being given responsibilities early on in my life/career.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
30. Having peers with whom I can discuss leadership challenges.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
31. Having access to helpful leadership training programmes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
32. Reflecting on the challenges I have faced as a leader.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
33. Learning from reading (leadership) books.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**If you would like to add any comments/personal reflections on your workplace experiences, please do so here.**

If you would like to receive a copy of the findings from this study, please leave a valid email address below.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your response has been recorded.

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