



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

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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			1	1
	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	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		
	04_Leadership Attributes	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					
	05_Leadership Development	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.

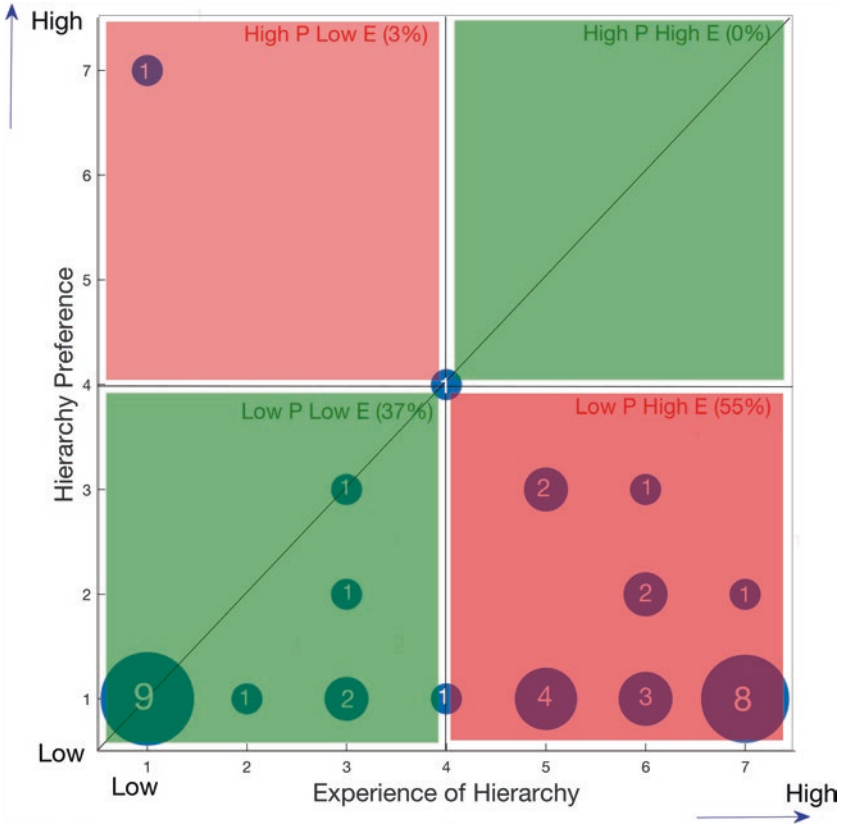


Fig. 8.1 Experiences and preferences towards hierarchy (Tanzania)

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

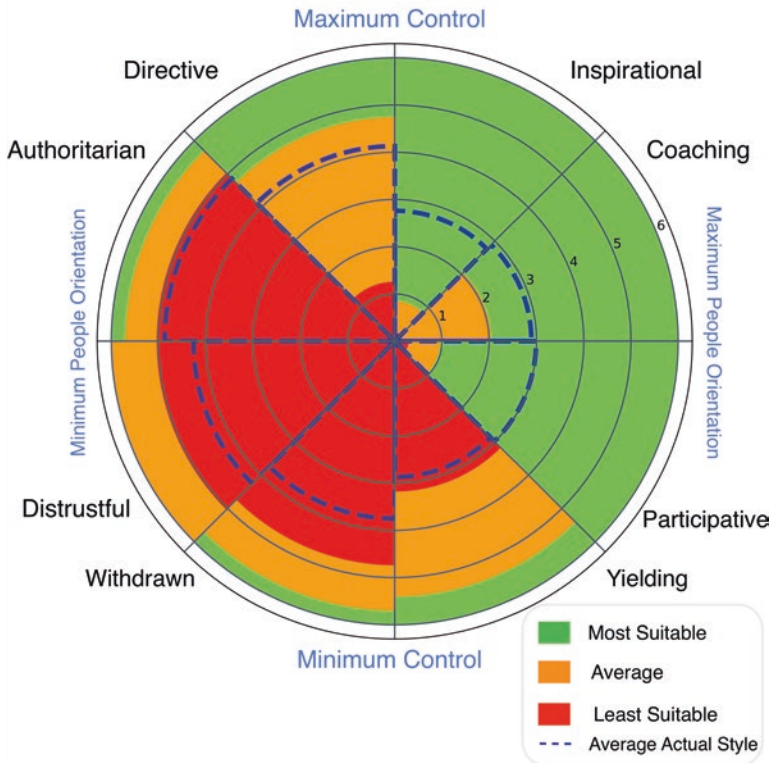


Fig. 8.2 Actual leadership styles versus perceived suitability (Tanzania)

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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