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TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN KENYAN UNIVERSITIES: YOUTH
PERCEPTIONS AND THE ROLE OF MENTORSHIP

by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	ii
DEDICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv
LIST OF FIGURES	ix
LIST OF TABLES	x
ABSTRACT	xii
CHAPTER ONE	1
INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY	1
Background information	1
Youth and society	1
Youth Development	2
Sociology	2
Education	3
Definition, theories and models of leadership	4
Mentoring	7
Statement of the problem	7
Purpose of the study	9
Objectives of the research	10
General Objective	10
Specific objectives	10
Research questions	10
Justification of the research	11
Significance of the study	11
Scope and limitations of the study	12
Definition of terms	14
Assumptions	15
Summary	16

CHAPTER TWO	18
LITERATURE REVIEW	18
Youth 18	
Education	21
Leadership	23
Leadership definition	23
Theoretical framework	24
Leadership theoretical framework	25
Spiritual and servant leadership	31
Leadership in the Bible	32
Leadership and change	34
Youth Development	38
Mentorship	41
Definitions of mentoring and its historical development	41
The role of mentoring in adult learning and development	43
Mentoring as a leadership development initiative	45
Emotional Intelligence	47
Sociology and culture	49
Culture	49
Cultural orientations and dimensions	52
Organizational culture	53
Morality	54
Conceptual framework	55
CHAPTER THREE	57
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	57
Introduction	57
Research approaches, methods and designs	57
Population	62
Sampling	63
Data collection instruments	65

Validity and reliability	66
Instrument pre-testing	66
Ethical considerations	67
Summary	67
CHAPTER FOUR.....	68
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	68
Demographic data	68
Age of the respondent	68
Gender of the respondent	69
University attendance.....	70
Place where a respondent grew up.....	70
Level of study	72
The Perceptions of the Youth at Selected Universities on Transformational Leadership	72
Leadership.....	72
Transformational leadership	80
The relationship between area of growing up and understanding the concept of transformational leadership.....	83
The relationship between University attended and understanding the concept of transformational leadership.....	84
Influence of different types of leaders on the life of a youth in the universities	86
Effective leadership at university.....	93
The relationship between area of growing up and belief of existence of effective leadership at the university	95
The relationship between University attended and belief of existence of effective leadership at the university	96
Leaders at the universities.....	97
Mentoring of youth in the selected Kenyan universities	106
The relationship between area of growing up and knowledge of mentoring programmes at the university	108
The relationship between University attended and knowledge of mentoring programmes at the university	111
Mentorship at universityx.....	113

Mentoring university students in preparation for future leadership.....	120
CHAPTER 5	129
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	129
Conclusion	129
Recommendations.....	133
REFERENCES	136
APPENDICES	144
I SAMPLE QUESTIONNAIRE	144
II GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR INTERVIEWS WITH KEY INFORMANTS AND FOR FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS	151

ABSTRACT

There is a general concern that the youth of Kenya are not preparing well for their future roles. The proposed study aimed at exploring the perception of the Kenyan university students on transformational leadership and mentoring and their effect on transformation into good citizens and future leaders. The literature reviewed revealed gaps in knowledge about youth and leadership and especially in universities. It was also clear that only a few of the leadership theories and models could be applicable to leading youth. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were used and a descriptive research design. The study was exploratory and phenomenological. A stratified probability sample, semi-structured questionnaires, interviews and focus discussion groups were used. Various leaders in the universities and alumni provided supplemental information. The SPSS was used and Chi Square to test statistical significance. Perceptions of university youth on transformational leadership and mentorship were captured. It was clear that university youth understand and appreciate transformational leadership. Family, teachers/lecturers and fellow students were identified as the leaders and mentors who have had great influence on them but not university administrators. They agreed that universities significantly contribute to the leadership of a country and that transformational leadership and mentoring can help prepare the youth for the future. It was recommended that parents, church leaders, lecturers and students be empowered for leadership and that university administrators focus more on providing leadership to the students. It was also recommended that leadership training, programs and courses be introduced or enhanced in Kenyan universities.