

**INFLUENCE OF POSTMODERNISM ON MENTORING AMONG UNIVERSITY
STUDENT LEADERS: A CASE STUDY OF SELECTED UNIVERSITIES IN KENYA**

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DECLARATION

I declare that this is my original work and has not been submitted to any other College or University for academic credit.

Sign _____

Date _____

Ezekiel Muganda Baraza

This Thesis has been submitted with my approval as the University Supervisor

Sign _____

Date _____

Prof. Nathan Chiroma,

Supervisor

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DEDICATION

To my wife Nabulumbi, my daughters Miret and Elyanzi, and my sons Shisino and Elmwayi, the five most influential people in my life after God, with whom I keep learning and practising the most basic leadership and mentorship lessons of life. To the student leaders in our beloved country Kenya, for whose growth and development I worked on this project.

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God is faithful and worthy of praise and thanks. He has gifted me with life and salvation, and chosen me to be His instrument. He has equipped me for His service and anointed me to lead in places I never imagined I would. I give Him thanks and praise.

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ABSTRACT

Mentoring is one of the key strategies for developing university students' academic, social, professional and leadership capabilities. With globalization, university students today are exposed to multiple worldviews and how this exposure influences them is something anyone seeking to mentor them must contend with. One of the worldviews increasingly being embraced among the students is postmodernism. This research sought to explore how mentoring as a leadership development strategy among university student leaders works in the context of postmodernism. Postmodernism is conceptualised as a worldview characterised by 'questioning' and thus does not affirm the existence of a universal frame of reference for the mentoring endeavour.

The research therefore sought to establish the influence of five themes of postmodernism; pluralism, non-objectivism, deconstruction, cynicism and community on mentoring among university student leaders in Kenya. The study employed a descriptive case study design. The study was conducted among 112 student leaders comprising of 91 leaders from Kenyatta University and 31 from Daystar University. The respondents were identified through purposive and snow ball sampling techniques. A mixed method approach was adopted and data was collected using questionnaires with both closed and open-ended questions. The data was collected between October 2020 and April 2021. Thematic analysis was used for qualitative data, involving systematic identification, organization, and clustered of data collected into meaningful summaries. Quantitative data was cleaned, coded, summarized and then presented using descriptive statistics including frequency tables, proportions and percentages. Pearson's correlation analysis was used to establish the relationships between various variables under investigation.

It was established that postmodernism significantly influenced mentoring among university student leaders pointing to the fact that students who upheld postmodernism had preference for higher relational intensity, reciprocity and adaptability in mentoring relationships. As such mentoring university students in the context of postmodernism should be more relational, experiential, reciprocal and adaptive. The study also proposed areas of further research. These include a survey of expressions of postmodernism among university student leaders, expanded scope to include more universities, a longitudinal rather than cross-sectional approach and a more detailed analysis of each of the themes of postmodernism and their influence on mentoring university student leaders.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

PAC:	Pan Africa Christian University
FOCUS:	Fellowship of Christian Unions
SPSS:	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
DCF:	Daystar Christian Fellowship
DUSA:	Daystar Students Association
KUCU:	Kenyatta University Christian Union
KUSA:	Kenyatta University Students Association
YCS:	Young Catholic Society

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Mentoring: Over the years, there has been a lack of consensus on a consistent definition of mentoring (Crisp & Cruz, 2009). This study considers mentoring as an intentional relationship between people, more often having one as a less experienced, and the other as a more experienced, that fosters growth and development of the less experienced and promotes mutual benefit (Haggard et al., 2011; Wai-Packard, 2009). Mentoring is therefore a developmental relationship that is mutual, reciprocal and intentional. Further, this research focuses on mentoring as a strategy for leadership development.

Mentor: According to Lewis (2009), a mentor is a person who guides a less experienced person through a developmental process. In this research, mentors are more experienced people in leadership supporting university student leaders in their growth and development.

Mentee: A mentee is a person who has identified an area of personal or professional growth and seeks the guidance and help of a mentor to help them achieve their goal of growth in the specified area (Lewis, 2009). In this research, to a large extent, the term mentee is used to refer to the less experienced university student leaders in a mentoring relationship.

University Student Leader: A leader is an individual who influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal (Northouse, 2016). University student leader as used in this study refers to any university student in Kenyan Universities in a position of leadership in a group, team or organization within the university. This research limits its scope to student leaders in executive leadership positions in the Student Unions (Student Governing Councils) and registered religious societies within the university.

Leadership Development: According to Clinton (2018), leadership development includes all of life's processes, not just formal training, through which a leader is shaped and made. This research assumes that leadership can be developed (Riggio et al., 2009).

Leadership development as used in this research therefore refers to the processes through which leadership ability is developed.

Postmodernism: Andreotti (2009) suggests that there are two ways of looking at the ‘post’ in postmodernism, one as ‘after modernism’ and the other as ‘questioning modernism’. This research is anchored on the perspective of ‘questioning’ and thus defines postmodernism as a worldview characterized by questioning with five key themes; pluralism, non-objectivism, deconstruction, cynicism and community (Kelm, 1999; Green & Roberts, 2012). Postmodernism is the independent variable in this research.

Pluralism: Pluralism refers to the assertion that truth is relative and therefore somewhat fluid. It flows more from one’s personal experiences than propositions, and it can therefore change from person to person (Green & Roberts, 2012). This research considers pluralism as one of the themes of postmodernism, defined as the assertion that truth is relative resulting in openness to all beliefs, values, religions, cultures, traditions and lifestyles.

Non-objectivism: Non-objectivism is a philosophy that assumes everything is subjective. It conveys that all facts are not hard facts and therefore science and rationality has limited application (Kelm, 1999). Non-objectivism as used in this study is one of the five themes of postmodernism that asserts that there is no such a thing as objective reality, truth, value or reason.

Deconstruction: Deconstruction refers to the philosophy that meaning is through the interpreter rather than the text or object being interpreted (Green & Roberts, 2012). In this research, deconstruction is a theme in postmodernism that asserts that we must ‘deconstruct’ the cultural assumptions and philosophical nuances of every text or object to ‘free’ it for one to interact with it in their own way and context.

Cynicism: Cynicism can be defined as an inclination to believe that people are always motivated by self-interest thus leading to doubt, mistrust and pessimistic view of life (Green & Roberts, 2012). In this study, cynicism is considered one of the themes of postmodernism.

Community: Community is used in this research to refer to the preference to have meaning and understanding to be determined through a communal identity rather than individual identity (Green & Roberts, 2012). As such, the basis for understanding self and life therefore is in seeking for a communal identity where each individual finds meaning.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Introduction

This chapter gives the general background information for the study and stipulates the statement of the problem. It also captures the research objectives and research questions as well as the justification and significance of the research project. Since the area being covered is relatively wide, this chapter also specifies the scope, the limitations, delimitations and the assumptions made as the research was conducted.

Background to the Study

Universities should not only be places to acquire professional knowledge and skills, but also a place to explore and answer important questions of life, shape character, develop strong values and convictions, and nurture leadership potential (Osiemo, 2012). University student leaders are therefore a very strategic group. They have great potential and they also hold the promise of both present and future leadership endeavour for any society (Brown, 2010). Mentoring among university students serves to enhance their sense of identity and belonging, increase their capacity for responsible leadership, enable deep and strategic learning approaches, build self confidence in professional skills and abilities among other benefits (Lunsford et al., 2017). Mentoring of university student leaders should therefore be made as effective as possible to enable them function at their optimum capacity both in their current leadership roles as students and later in life. This assertion draws from the principle that while some people are born with key leadership traits, effective leaders are made and therefore leadership development is essential in developing leadership capacity (Northouse, 2019).

In a critical review of literature on mentoring among university students ranging from 1990 to 2007 Crisp and Cruz (2009) identified four key functions in mentoring as an effective

means of developing undergraduate students. The four functions are psychological and emotional support, support for setting goals and choosing a career path, academic subject knowledge support and role modelling. A later synthesis of mentoring literature among undergraduate students covering the years 2008 to 2015 revealed that besides developmental benefits for the mentee as stated in the research by Crisp and Cruz (2009), there are reciprocal benefits for the mentors and potential to address other broad issues such as promoting social justice and addressing inequalities (Crisp *et al.*, 2017). Crisp *et al.* also identified key distinguishing features of mentoring relationship among university students as the nature, structure and source of the relationship, program types and forms of mentoring support provided to the students.

Chiroma (2008), in a study on mentoring programmes in theological seminaries of the Evangelical Church of West Africa observed that mentoring is a sure way of bridging leadership gaps and developing other leaders. This view was affirmed in a study on mentoring in universities in Ghana where it was observed that mentoring is a proven tool for developing student leaders' academic capacity and career paths (Amo-Mensah, 2015). Mentoring among university students therefore has many positive outcomes including enhanced academic performance, skills acquisition, improved life skills and higher capacity to lead (Muola & Migosi, 2012; Moseti, 2015; Wachira, 2019). It is important then, that universities and other relevant stakeholders embrace and strengthen mentoring of university students.

With regard to leadership development, alongside general mentorship on university students, investing in mentoring university student leaders is crucial. According to Crip & Alvarado-Young (2018), mentoring is a key strategy in developing students as leaders. Hastings *et al.* (2015) affirmed this view by observing that leadership mentoring of student leaders results in socially responsible leadership as it generates more positive social change in

the lives of both the mentors and mentees. The findings of Hastings and Sunderman (2019) also showed that university student leaders who are involved in mentoring relationships demonstrated significantly higher levels of generativity compared to those who were not in mentoring relationships. Besides having mentor-mentee relationships to develop university student leaders capacity, peer mentorship among the student leaders themselves is also essential for mutual support, sharing challenges and exploring solutions together (Walters & Kanak, 2016).

University student leaders in the world today are living in the era of globalization and fast advancement in technology that facilitates easy access to information and exposure to multiple influences and worldviews (Campbell et al., 2012; Payne & Askeland, 2016). According to Ongong'a (2013), this environment promotes openness to historical and philosophical questioning and delight in finding answers to questions of life. The question of how this exposure influences student leaders is something anyone seeking to mentor them must contend with (Prieto-Flores et al., 2016). This is because in the quest to find their own truth and in pursuit of freedom, the journey of exploration can degenerate into confusion, lack of structure and disorder leading to disillusionment and failure of mentoring and other leadership development initiatives (Elaati, 2016). Besides, the cultural and philosophical dynamics in the lives of student leaders have ramifications on their experiences and their preferences in the mentoring practice.

A study on experiences and perceptions of student and junior faculty mentees, and senior faculty mentors at the Makerere University College of Health Sciences in Uganda revealed that misalignment between mentoring programmes and practices and the desired characteristics of mentors and mentoring relationships is a key challenge in mentoring initiatives in universities (Ssemata et al., 2017). In a review of a mentoring program that involved 95 students from 12 universities in Kenya, it was observed that designing a

mentoring program aligned with participants' needs and areas of interests and allowing flexibility to adapt with emerging realities enables greater success (Mbogo, 2019). This implies that there is need to design and implement mentoring programs with due consideration of the preferences of targeted participants and changing realities in the operating environment.

It has been observed that key issues facing youth in parts of the world are also facing youth in Kenya (Ndereba, 2022). According to Starcher (2009), one of the changing realities among young people as a result of exposure to global community, and significantly influencing how they engage life is postmodernism as a worldview. Underlying postmodernism is the belief that nothing is truly knowable and that truth both moral and spiritual is suspect and open to re-evaluation (Dickens & Fontana, 2015). Postmodernism therefore fundamentally redefines truth, language and reality (Morrow & Bock, 2011). According to Elaati (2016), postmodern thinking is less likely going to follow rigid ideologies rendering traditional approaches and concepts to mentoring less relevant.

In a study engaging teaching as mentoring in a postmodern context, Levy-Feldman (2018) recommended application of a combination of both traditional and modern approaches by adapting various approaches to fit their relevant contexts. Another study that explored postmodern views of education that shape mentoring and teaching in Colombia, it was observed that awareness of the need for flexibility in approach and acknowledging that teachers or mentors are no longer the only source of knowledge made teachers more open to dialogue in their engagement of issues with learners and mentees (Medina & Bohórquez, 2020). Akaranga and Ongong'a (2013) observed that in Kenya, postmodernism influenced students spirituality by making them less responsive to religious rules and less concerned about their relationship with self and God. In another study by Ongong'a (2013), it was established that postmodernism was promoting pluralism and inclusivity among university

students in Kenya resulting in more cases of students switching religions. These are pointers to growing influence of postmodernism among university students.

While this is happening, most of the leadership and mentoring theories and models used are largely informed by modernism that espouses ideals such as progress, objectivity, reason, certainty and existence of absolute truths and grand narratives and this does not sit well in the context of postmodernism (Akuul, 2010; Ntini, 2014; Nwagbara, 2011). Yet, as Ndereba (2021) observed, mentoring still remains a key strategy in influencing youth, as they wrestle with their developmental questions in a complex world and with exposure to global trends. Mentoring, as Ndereba opined, will help them to define their identity in their families, congregational and educational communities.

Kelm (1999) identified five key themes of postmodernism namely; pluralism, non-objectivism, deconstruction, cynicism and community. According to Kelm, pluralism refers to the denial of any one universal truth. Truth is therefore seen as relative and thus knowledge is only relevant to specific contexts. Non-objectivism conveys that all facts are not hard facts and therefore science has limited application. Deconstruction teaches that meaning is through the interpreter rather than the text or object being interpreted while cynicism riding on the assertion of absence of absolute truth and no universal purpose in life, is engaging reality with a view that there is no possibility of arriving at certain knowledge of anything. Community advocates for meaning and understanding to be determined through community setting rather than individual.

Based on these five themes, one can argue that at the heart of postmodernism, therefore, is the idea that you create what you want to be (Elaati, 2016). As such, postmodernism basically questions all forms of theories, grand narratives, meanings, concepts and realities. In the context of mentoring, postmodern thinking questions the assumption that there are established theories and universal best practices for effective

mentoring applicable across board. Further, it casts doubts on the authority of mentors and promotes a pluralistic knowledge discourse around the mentoring theory and practice (Irby, 2011).

This research therefore addressed itself to the question of how mentoring works among university student leaders, who espouse postmodernism as a worldview and therefore do not affirm the existence of any frame of reference for the mentoring endeavour. To this end, the research sought to analyse the influence of the five themes of postmodernism; pluralism, non-objectivism, deconstruction, cynicism and community on mentoring as a leadership development strategy among university student leaders in Kenya. The goal is to explore how postmodernism influences the experiences and preferences in the practice of mentoring among university student leaders.

Kenya has 74 accredited universities with a total student population of over five hundred thousand (Commission of University Education, 2019). All these universities have various student bodies which represent or serve different interests of students ranging from student governing councils, faith based groups, sports clubs, welfare groups to student professional groups among others. Each of the student bodies have student leaders that coordinate their activities and provide a link to the university administration. The student leaders go through various forms of capacity development in leadership with mentoring as one of the programs.

Over the years, University student leaders have played a key and leading role in facilitating social and political changes in Kenya (Luescher-Mamashela & Mugume, 2014). It is perhaps for this reason that various institutions and organizations are now investing in mentoring university student leaders in Kenya for enhanced positive impact.

Statement of the problem

Research on mentoring as a leadership development strategy clearly indicates that student leaders' involvement in mentoring relationships has a significant contribution to their academic, social, professional and leadership development (Kibore et al., 2014; Crip & Alvarado-Young, 2019). Effective mentoring for university students should always put into consideration their unique context and the dynamic nature of the world around them (Mbogo, 2019). It has however been observed that whereas there is a significant shift in worldview towards postmodernism among youth, uncertainty on how to structure and model various leadership development and mentoring programs to fit this reality remains a challenge (Bonilla & Samacá, 2020).

Studies on mentoring conducted among university students in Kenya indicate that most of the existing programs do not achieve optimal results characterised by low level of student participation and low satisfaction levels on the effectiveness of the programs (Muola & Migosi, 2012; Oluchina & Gitonga, 2016). While the study by Oluchina and Gitonga (2016) gives some of the hindrances to effective mentoring such as mismatch between mentors and mentees, roles of mentors and mentees not clear, and unfit personality traits, heavy workload for mentors, the scope of the other studies did not capture the underlying reasons. Further, the hindrances captured here reflect a fairly traditional view of the mentoring process that puts emphasis on a dyadic one-on-one and face to face involving a senior and junior person. Other structures such as group mentoring, peer mentoring, mentoring over the electronic media, reverse mentoring and co-mentoring are not sufficiently engaged. Yet, according to Green and Roberts (2012), the youth who uphold postmodernism do not fit comfortably with traditional mentoring models.

It is therefore possible that the influence of postmodernism is one of the underlying factors for the low success rate of mentoring among students. With increasing evidence that

postmodernism is influencing various aspects of university students life such as spirituality, religion, workplace behaviour, philosophy, arts and literature, it is highly possible that it is also affecting mentoring as a leadership development strategy (Akaranga & Ongong'a, 2013; Ongong'a, 2013). Engaging young people in the context of postmodernism, therefore, requires that there be a critique of the accepted assumptions about what is true, existing meta narratives, theories and practices (Gonçalves, 2016). This research sought to find out how postmodernism influences mentoring as a leadership development strategy among university student leaders. It is envisioned that this will be a step forward in exploring relevant approaches for effective mentoring of student leaders who espouse or uphold postmodernism.

Objectives of the Study

The main purpose of this research was to explore the influence of postmodernism as a worldview on mentoring as a leadership development strategy among university student leaders in Kenya. The research therefore sought to achieve the following specific objectives:

1. To find out how pluralism influences mentoring among university student leaders in Kenya.
2. To examine the relationship between non-objectivism and mentoring among university student leaders in Kenya.
3. To find out how deconstruction influences mentoring among university student leaders in Kenya.
4. To examine the relationship between cynicism and mentoring among university student leaders in Kenya.
5. To find out how community influences mentoring among university student leaders in Kenya.

Research Questions

The research questions were:

1. How does pluralism influence mentoring among university student leaders in Kenya?
2. In what ways does non-objectivism influence mentoring among university student leaders in Kenya?
3. How does deconstruction influence mentoring among university student leaders in Kenya?
4. How does cynicism influence mentoring among university student leaders in Kenya?
5. In what ways does the community influence mentoring strategy among university student leaders in Kenya?

Assumptions of the Study

One key assumption of this study was that postmodernism is one of the worldviews becoming prevalent among the young people in Kenya, and thus the university student leaders in Kenya are also increasingly embracing postmodernism. The second assumption was that mentoring has been and continues to happen among university student leaders in Kenya. The last assumption is that most of the mentoring programs and approaches still apply mentoring approaches that do not effectively meet the needs of those who are significantly influenced by postmodernism.

Justification

Research in the field of leadership and mentoring demonstrates that there is a positive association and intersection of mentoring and leadership development among university students (Campbell et al., 2012; Dugan & Komives, 2010). For effective and relevant mentoring of university student leaders, it is necessary to understand their culture and worldview (Chhokar et al., 2013). One model of such a leader and mentor is Apostle Paul of the Bible. He made it his habit to understand the varied cultures and worldviews of the people he sought to impact in order to present the gospel in a relevant way (1 Corinthians 9:19-23; Acts 17:16-33).

Similarly, mentors among university student leaders today need to appreciate the dynamic nature of the students world, and in following Paul's example, seek to understand their worldview, identify their unique needs and preferences and develop mentoring models and programs that are relevant and effective (Hicks, 2011). This study has contributed to the body of literature by providing useful data that can help deepen the understanding of how postmodernism influences mentoring among university student leaders in Kenya and thus help in the process of exploring the best models, approaches and programs for effective mentoring as a leadership development strategy among university student leaders and any other mentors and mentees who uphold postmodernism.

Significance of the Study

Many university student leaders desire mentoring relationships, as projected by the great clamour for mentorship among the younger generation (Zachery, 2009). This study is potentially resourceful for enhancing the capacity for development of effective mentoring programs and initiatives as a strategic tool for leadership development in a postmodern context. Developing university students into highly effective leaders helps them excel both in their present leadership roles in their universities and future roles as leaders in their professions and the wider society.

The study sheds some light on how the various forms of expression of postmodernism among university student leaders in Kenya affects their experiences and, preferences in the practice of mentoring. This can help their mentors to understand them better and design appropriate mentoring programs and initiatives for them. The findings of the study can also help in evaluating the existing mentorship programs and initiatives in order to make them more effective. This study is not only a repository of knowledge for mentoring of university student leaders, but also for mentoring other younger leaders in other spheres of life in the

context of postmodernism. This can in turn foster creativity and innovation in the field of mentoring among young people in Kenya.

Scope of the Study

Mentoring is a wide area practiced in many disciplines including but not limited to education, business, medicine, academics, management and leadership (Crisp et al., 2017). This study therefore recognizes that the student leaders could be in various mentoring relationships. The study focuses primarily on mentoring for leadership development among university student leaders. This is because since university students are a very strategic group, those who are leaders among them would by way of natural selection be among the best and with high potential for learning, growing and making great impact in society.

This research limits itself to five key themes of postmodernism outlined by Kelm (1999) namely: pluralism, non-objectivism, deconstruction, cynicism, and community. It further explores how the five themes influence mentoring experiences and preferences among university student leaders in Kenya. The concept of postmodernism in this study is viewed as a worldview rather than an epoch (Akuul, 2010). The five themes are chosen because they provide a good summary of postmodernism as a worldview characterised by questioning (Green & Roberts, 2012).

Limitations

There were a number anticipated limitations in this study. First, even though the research sought to explore how postmodernism influences mentoring among university students, it was not easy to point out who among the student leaders upheld this worldview. As such, some of the respondents did not necessarily have postmodernism as their predominant world view. To address this challenge, a section of the questionnaire used in the survey was dedicated to establishing the student leaders' beliefs and preferences in mentoring that would point to expression of postmodernism. Further, additional open-ended questions

were provided to gather opinions of respondents on how postmodernism influences mentoring, which in some cases may have been subjective.

The second limitation was the possibility that respondents may have given what they wanted to be seen as, rather than who they really were. This is especially because part of the data collected involved asking respondents to give an honest evaluation of their experiences in mentoring programs, where they may be contributors to either the success or failure thereof. To address this, the research methods and instruments were designed employing appropriate techniques to ensure reliability and validity captured in the research methodology in Chapter 3.

Thirdly, mentoring and postmodernism have multiple definitions and thus the respondents may have given feedback based on their own understanding rather than the operational definitions. The research instruments provided clear operational definitions of terms in the quest to ensure a common understanding of the terms used in the research in collecting data.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has provided the general contextual background to the study, capturing the concept of mentoring as a leadership development strategy among university students as well as postmodernism as a worldview characterised by five themes: pluralism, non-objectivism, deconstruction, cynicism and preference of community over individual identity. This is followed by the statement of the problem which in a nutshell is the question of how mentoring as a leadership development strategy among university students works in the context of postmodernism. The chapter also provides a description of the specific research objectives, research questions and assumptions. It then ends with the justification, significance of the study, the scope, limitations and delimitations. The next chapter presents a review of the relevant literature for the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter covers two main areas. First is a summary discussion of relevant literature on the subject of mentoring as a leadership development strategy, postmodernism and the influence of postmodernism on mentoring among university student leaders. This formed the basis for the definition of the research problem and variables used in the research. The second part is the theoretical and conceptual framework, where the summary of the theories informing the research are discussed. The theoretical and conceptual frameworks provide the basis for the development of research objectives and questions defined in Chapter One. They also inform the research methodology and instruments detailed in Chapter Three.

Mentoring

Overview of the Concept of Mentoring

There are many definitions of mentoring due to the increased interest in the area but there exists no unifying definition (Crisp et al., 2017). Kram (1985) in her classical study on mentoring in the workplace, described mentoring as a relationship between two individuals whereby the more experienced person is committed to provide developmental support to the other, less experienced person. According to Kram (1985), mentoring seeks to achieve two functions: career development and psychosocial support. Similarly, in other early scholarly works, mentoring is defined as a relationship between an older, more experienced mentor and a younger, less experienced protégé for the purpose of helping and developing the protégé (Blackwell, 1989; Levinson, 1978).

Kram's (1985) theory and others associated with it are largely considered as traditional mentoring theories and have been found not sufficient because they fail to address other important aspects of mentoring as professional support, emotional support, learning and

development of leadership capabilities (Fowler & O’Gorman, 2005; Jacobi, 1991). Besides, they are seen to create an imbalance of experience between mentor and mentee with the mentor as one holding the power in the relationship (Jones & Brown, 2011; Ragins & Kram, 2007). It has, however, been observed that in the recent years, power has been shifting from being the domain of leaders to the domain of followers, where followers demand more from leaders thus pushing leaders to act more towards follower’s demands as opposed to their preferred course of action (Kellerman, 2012). This shift could also be playing out in the mentor and mentee power relationship and thus should be considered in the definitions.

According to Xu and Payne (2014), mentorship is a purposeful, goal oriented, intentional relationship, where the mentor seeks to challenge and support the mentee by intentionally getting involved in their lives and walking with them through various experiences. In a study involving scholars from Makerere University and the United States of America, a mentor is defined as an experienced and empathic person who walks alongside the mentee and creates opportunities for guidance, knowledge and support in a way that enables the mentee to discover, learn, develop and examine their own ideas in the process of personal and professional development (Ssemata et al., 2017). These two definitions capture the view that a good mentoring relationship should be holistic, engaging every aspect of life, but still uphold the mentor as one holding the power in the relationship.

Another category of mentoring theories, largely referred to as reciprocal theories, include mutual liking, identification, and attraction as key interpersonal processes associated with the development and sustenance of mentoring relationships (Yip & Kram, 2017). Mentoring should therefore help mentees to grow and at the same time provide mentors with a sense of fulfilment and purpose. This view aligns with Haggard *et al.* (2011) assertions in their analysis of mentoring literature in which they identified three core attributes of mentoring; reciprocity, developmental benefits and consistent interaction. Based on the

various definitions, one can argue that mentoring is intentional, relational, developmental and reciprocal (Baker & Griffin, 2010). It should further be noted that mentoring is a dynamic relationship that gets affected by external factors and thus it should be adaptive (Jones & Brown, 2011).

According to Haggard et al. (2011), the concept of mentoring overlaps with, but is distinctly different from, other developmental relationships such as role model–observer, teacher–student, advisor–advisee, supervisor–subordinate and coach–client. The distinguishing features of mentoring include: primary focus on the growth and development of mentees that can be constructed in various forms, experiences can be specific or broad, serves a wide range of purposes, and relationships are personal and reciprocal. Further, mentors are largely considered to have more experience, influence, or achievement (Allen & Eby, 2010; Crisp et al., 2017). Mentoring relationships are therefore intense and demand commitment of people involved.

Mentoring relationships can be formal or informal, dyadic or in other structures such as group mentoring and peer mentoring, face to face or over electronic media in the virtual space, and it can also involve collaborative and reverse mentoring (Crips & Cruz, 2009). According to Baugh and Fagenson-Eland (2007), formal and informal mentoring programs generally differ on four dimensions: relational intensity, visibility, focus, and duration. Relational intensity of is in most cases much greater in informal mentoring than formal mentoring because of factors such as mutual liking, identification, and attraction that are key interpersonal processes associated with the development and sustenance of mentoring relationships (Allen, Eby, & Lentz, 2006). Informal mentoring programs can therefore be less visible than formal mentoring programs where mentors and mentees are clearly designated (Desimone et al., 2014). Formal mentoring is usually more focused because there are clearly prescribed goals with clearly defined timelines (Wang et al., 2010).

Increasingly, the idea of mentoring being limited to older and more experienced people mentoring younger and less experienced has been challenged, thus providing room for other structures such as peer mentoring and even other concepts like co-mentoring and reverse mentoring (Crisp & Cruz, 2009). Co-mentoring involves a communal, reciprocal and mutual mentoring relationship where both the mentee and mentor become co-learners in a mutual process of discovery (Kochan & Trimble, 2000). According to Kochan and Trimble, in co-mentoring, both the mentee and mentor should from the onset assume responsibility for their own growth and development, take it upon themselves to assess their own strengths and weaknesses, set their own goals and seek to learn together in the development process. Co-mentoring can therefore be harnessed to promote the development of synergistic relationships especially in an environment where people with varied skills can mentor each other.

Reverse mentoring involves having younger or less experienced persons to act as mentors and to share expertise with older or senior persons as mentees (Murphy, 2012). It represents a total reversal of the traditional approaches to mentoring where mentors were the older and senior and mentees the younger and junior. By allowing this reversal in the concept of mentoring, opportunities for younger and junior people to influence and develop strong work relationships with organizational leaders are created (Hewlett et al., 2009).

Mentoring University Student Leaders

Crisp and Cruz (2009), in their study that analysed mentoring definitions from 1990 to 2007 proposed a four-function framework for conceptualizing mentoring among university students. The functions proposed are: (1) psychological and emotional support, (2) support for setting goals and choosing a career path, (3) academic subject knowledge support aimed at advancing a student's knowledge relevant to their chosen field, and (4) specification of a role model. Notably, since this framework focuses largely on academic mentoring, it does not address itself to leadership development as a function in the mentoring process.

Dawson (2014), rather than give one definition, went further to propose sixteen mentoring design elements following a critical analysis of two mentoring models widely practised in schools and colleges in the United States. The elements are: objectives, roles, cardinality, tie strength, relative seniority, time, selection, matching, activities, resources and tools, role of technology, training, rewards, policy, monitoring and termination. According to Dawson, the sixteen elements serve two purposes. The first is a framework that is detailed yet concise, helpful in communicating what exactly is meant when using the word mentoring. The second is a useful set of key elements to be considered in designing new mentoring interventions. The study by Dawson also focused largely on academic mentoring. Whereas the skills gained in academic mentoring add to the processes of leadership development, a focus on development of leadership skills as a possible objective in the mentoring endeavour is not covered in the scope of this framework.

According to Crisp et al. (2017), the review of literature from 109 research studies on various mentoring initiatives among university students in the United States of America indicated that different student populations in different contexts construct the meaning of their mentoring process depending on their unique needs, perceptions and lived experiences. However, the same research also observed that information on conditions in which mentoring is most effective has not been well documented and thus recommended the need to find out the role of context on various mentoring roles, activities, and experiences in the quest to generate the best outcome.

Other studies among university students have attempted to address the role of context in mentoring. According to Lunsford et al. (2017), there has been a significant attention to mentoring outcomes among university students resulting in growing knowledge on how, and under what conditions, mentoring can be more effective among university students. Some of the outcomes considered include better academic performance, capacity for socially

responsible leadership, better learning approaches and self confidence in professional skills and abilities.

Various other research findings point to the fact that mentoring is an effective means to develop undergraduate students and support their success in various areas of life such as academics, career and leadership development (Chiroma, 2015; Crisp et al., 2017; Muola et al., 2011). As such, mentoring can be seen as developmental process for raising student leaders where mentors share their experiences and support the student leaders to grow in their leadership capacity. Mentoring as a leadership development strategy among university student leaders contributes to enhanced sense of identity and belonging, increased capacity for responsible leadership, enabling deep and strategic learning approaches and building confidence (Lunsford et al., 2017; Muchiri, 2013).

Hastings et al. (2015) in seeking to establish the relationship between generativity and socially responsible leadership observed that mentoring of student leaders results in more positive social change in the lives of both the mentors and mentees. According to Kouzes and Posner (2018), university students should be supported to examine their own leadership actions and aspirations. This will help them take the concrete actions to become exemplary leaders, with great self-awareness, clarified values and able to recognize others' contributions in the context of teamwork.

Mentoring for university student leaders should not only involve mentor-mentee relationships, but also peer mentorship among the student leaders themselves (Walters & Kanak, 2016). According to Hastings and Sunderman (2019), peer mentoring is a great avenue for mentoring younger students for leadership, where more experienced student leaders support the younger and less experienced ones. It has also been established that student leaders involved in mentoring their peers also experience growth in their own leadership abilities as a result of mentoring others (Connolly, 2017).

A study conducted among nursing students in three universities in Kenya revealed that students prefer formal mentoring programs (Amayi & Oluchina, 2017). According to this study, the qualities of mentors that led to effective mentorship programs include: being supportive, helpful, knowledgeable, experienced, enthusiastic and committed. Since student leaders are part of the student population, it can be argued that these factors would also apply to the student leaders. This study, however, does not capture how external factors such as prevalent worldviews influence students' perspectives, experiences and preferences in mentoring relationships.

It is therefore critical that mentoring for university student leaders puts into consideration the dynamic nature of the world today, marked by globalization and rapid technological advancements. Further, societal development is increasingly demanding leadership that is responsive to complex and daunting problems that are often systemic in nature and require innovative solutions (Campbell et al., 2012). Mentoring initiatives among university students have attempted to bridge the observable gap between leadership needs. However, most university student leaders are not usually adequately equipped to handle the various unforeseen challenges that emerge in such a dynamic context (Muthoni, Njagi & Wambugu, 2018). There still remains more to be done to ensure the mentoring processes are responsive to the unique contexts the student leaders are in.

Postmodernism and Mentoring

The concept of Postmodernism

According to Westhuizen (2008), postmodernism cannot be defined, because not defining is what postmodernism espouses. In the same manner, Green and Roberts (2012) argued that postmodernism is “a philosophical term with a cultural context” (p. 80). Researchers therefore agree that it is very difficult to define postmodernism in a straightforward way and thus consider the term too relative to be defined. The concept of

postmodernism is however not beyond comprehension, and thus attempts to define it are not invalid (Mangena, 2016). Akuul (2010) defines postmodernism as a type of intellectual thought that is often considered a critique of (or reaction to) modernism. Postmodernism has also been defined as a crisis of presentation where traditional standards no longer apply, and where present conditions of knowledge and experience are defined not so much in themselves, as by what they come after (Dickens & Fontana, 2015). This then begs the question, what then is modernism?

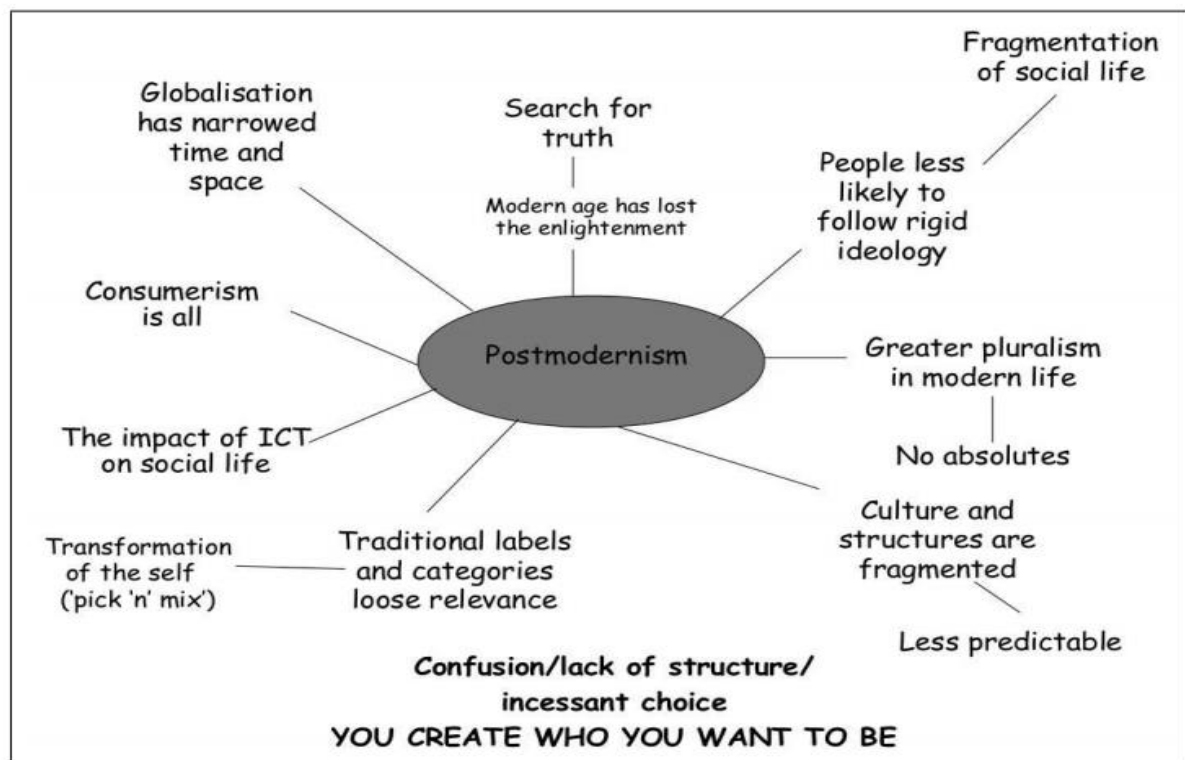
Modernism is characterized by the ascendancy of science and reason as means for both understanding and explaining the world (Akuul, 2010). Afoloyan (2010) suggested the following array of concepts that characterize modernism: autonomy, transcendence, certainty, authority, unity, totalization, system, universalization, continuity, teleology, closure, hierarchy, homogeneity, uniqueness, among others. According to Akuul (2010), the concepts are embodied in the ideas and ideals of modernism such as progress, objectivity, reason, certainty, personal identity and grand narrative in general. Another perspective of looking at modernism is that it seeks knowledge outside religious revelation (Boisot & McKelvey, 2017). It is this array of concepts and ideals that postmodernism criticizes and challenges.

This criticism of some of the modernism concepts is reasonably valid. For instance, the claim that human reason alone is sufficient to arrive at all truth independent of divine revelation is unfounded and similarly the assumption that technological advancement and mere human goodness can solve all social problems is being unrealistic (Leffel, 2019). Green and Roberts (2012) observed that modernism attempted to place man at the centre of reality by utilizing science to explain the meaning of life thus elevating man to the place of God. On the other hand, postmodernism places no one at the centre of reality and has no core explanation of life thus trying to destroy the place and attributes of God.

According to Pardeck et al. (2012), postmodernism rejects the existence of objective and absolute truth. It stresses pluralism thus accommodating tolerance for multiple truths, and acceptance of relativism asserting that in all things, it always depends. Pardeck et al. further postulated that postmodern perspective challenges and tends to reject old theories, especially those grounded in the modern world and calls for new paradigms. At the heart of postmodernism therefore is the idea that you create what you want to be (Elaati, 2016). This is illustrated in a diagram as shown in Figure 2.1 below.

Figure 2.1

Structure of Postmodernism



According to Elaati (2016), as depicted in Figure 2.1 above, postmodernism is characterised by endless search for truth and denial of existence of grand narrative thus leading to fragmentation of cultural structures and social life. It promotes rejection of absolutes leading to embracing pluralism and deconstruction of words and concepts rendering traditional labels irrelevant. This openness to new ways of looking at things is promoted by

the diversity of information accessible through the ever-advancing information and communication technology. Postmodernism is therefore productively understood when considered not only as a transitional reaction to modernism, but also as a culmination of the ongoing proliferation of popular narratives and rejection of a meta narrative (Collins, 2013).

Postmodernism as a Worldview

It is worth noting as Afolayan (2009) observed, that those opposed to postmodernism concept tend to interpret the concept as a periodising concept, as an epoch, thus only see postmodernism as meaning “after modernism”. With this view, it obviously goes that if one holds the view if one has not fully achieved modernism there cannot be such a thing as postmodernism. This argument assumes that modernism too was an epoch. However, other scholars such as Gyeke (1997) defined modernism as a continuing enlightenment stage whose characteristics, some if not all, will continue to become more sophisticated in response to new ideas about human progress. According to Afolayan, it is therefore valid to conceptualize postmodernism not as a fixed epoch after modernism, but rather as a new worldview that makes a complete break with modernism. Andreotti (2009) proposed two ways of looking at the ‘post’ in postmodernism, one as ‘after’ and the other as ‘questioning’. Postmodernism can therefore be considered as a worldview characterised by questioning.

Influence of Postmodernism among University Student Leaders in Kenya

While it is clear that researchers from various fields do not agree on exact meaning of postmodernism, most of them agree that postmodernism has had a great impact on philosophy, critical theory and culture in the 20th and 21st century (Akuul, 2010). Studies on the influence of postmodernism among students in Kenya point to the fact that it has made students to be less responsive to religious rules and less concerned about their view of self and spiritual connection to God (Akaranga & Ongong’a, 2013). Other studies show that postmodernism promotes pluralism and inclusivity resulting in more cases of students

switching religions (Ongong'a, 2013). There is however limited research on the extent and specific ways this phenomenon influences mentoring as a leadership development strategy. It is on this basis that this research study sought to address itself to postmodernism as growing worldview among young people and how it influences mentoring as a leadership development strategy.

Key Themes of Postmodernism and their Influence on Mentoring

According Kelm (1999), the five themes in postmodernism philosophy are: pluralism, non-objectivism, deconstruction, cynicism and preference for community over individual identity. Each of these themes influences mentoring in different ways.

Pluralism and mentoring. According to Kelm (1999), philosophical pluralism means the denial of any one universal, central and unifying truth. Truth is therefore seen as relative and thus knowledge is only relevant to specific contexts (Green & Roberts, 2012). The consequence of this according to Kelm is openness to and tolerance to all beliefs, values, traditions and lifestyles. Further, this creates high suspicion for truth claims (Green, 2017). Green further observed that closely associated with pluralism is relativism which insists on denying the existence of absolutes and asserts that truth, right, and reality depend on the situation, the society, or the self, thus promoting relativistic morality as a replacement of traditional moral values.

According to Long (1997), pluralism renders heretical any suggestion of superiority of some values or beliefs and considers it fantasy to believe in moral argument. It submits that acknowledging any judgment as sounder than your own is enslavement, thus asserting that people should have freedom of choice and that there should be a liberal approach to morality. On the other hand, most leadership and mentoring theories and models are largely informed by ideals such as progress, objectivity, reason, certainty and existence of absolute truths (Akuul, 2010; Ntini, 2014; Nwagbara, 2011). Postmodern thinking rejects the

preservation of one concept or theory of mentoring, promotes a plural knowledge discourse around mentoring and further suggests that such discourse should be engaged through multiple lenses (Irby, 2011).

This emphasis on moral relativism and situational ethics challenges the need for moral and ethical standards in mentoring relationships. However, according to Rhodes et al. (2009), lack of moral and ethical standards has potential to create harm to parties involved in mentoring relationships. While a certain level of flexibility is healthy to allow due appreciation of varied perspectives on issues in the mentoring process, lack of common ground on issues of morality, ethics and basic principles of engagement would pose significant limitations to the success of mentoring relationships.

Non-objectivism and mentoring. Non-objectivism conveys that all facts are not hard facts and therefore science and rationale have limited application (Green & Roberts, 2012). It also refers to rejection of reason as the only and inevitable path to gaining knowledge, thus creating room for intuition, emotions, faith and other factors (Kelm, 1999). In this case, postmodernism does not affirm any meta-narratives but rather advocates for multi-narratives whereby truth is seen as subjective and not objective. This implies that there cannot be objective reasoning since all facts are not hard facts. According to Moreland (2005), this postmodern view asserts that there is no such thing as objective reality, truth, value, reason, and so forth. This makes all that claims to be clear, uniform, and free of contradiction unreliable, and instead, it espouses ambiguity, paradox, chance and arbitrariness (Ntini, 2014).

Non-objectivism therefore questions the assumption that there are established theories and universal best practices for effective mentorship applicable across the board. It also promotes questioning or rejection of the authority of mentors over the mentees (Irby, 2011). According to Mangena (2016), matters of power relationships in the way truth is construed is

critical to postmodernism. One person or a group of people cannot therefore, claim an objective view point on any matter. In most cases however mentoring relationships for leadership development seek not only to impact knowledge and skills, but also to pass on certain core beliefs, values and attitudes. It is therefore expected that challenges are likely to arise when the beliefs, values and attitudes of the mentor do not align with those of the mentee. This would generate the challenge of power relationships between the two, especially where the mentee does not consider the mentor's views as objective or therefore not reliable.

Deconstruction and mentoring. Deconstruction teaches that meaning is through the interpreter rather than the text or object being interpreted (Green & Roberts, 2012). According to Zacharias (2010), postmodernism asserts that language is culturally conditioned and subjectively understood and therefore words have no universal meaning. This implies that to properly understand anything, we must 'deconstruct' its cultural assumptions and philosophical nuances to 'free' it for one to interact with it in their own way and context (Kelm, 1999). This creates freedom to rationalize and re-interpret things at one's convenience.

Craige (2010) outlines five points that help capture the concept of deconstruction. First, that things and events do not have intrinsic meaning and therefore have no inherent objectivity. Making meaning of the world is therefore a continuous and ever-changing process. Second, is that this continuous interpretation of the world requires a contextual examination of things, but we ourselves are part of that context and therefore tend to be subjective. Third, the interpretation of any text depends on the relative viewpoint and the particular values of the interpreter. Interpretation therefore does not depend on the external text or its author, but rather on the interpreter. Fourth, language as a medium through which we do our thinking is not neutral. Instead, it is relative and is value-laden. Five, language and discourse convey ideology, and a society's intellectual discourse rests on political values and

affects society in political ways. These five points can be useful when applying meaning of texts and objects in their context, but they pose a challenge when everything is subjected to the interpreter's perception.

In the context of mentoring, the concept of deconstruction would imply that meaning of concepts shared in the mentoring process is with the interpreter and thus people have freedom to deconstruct and construct their own meanings of concepts and ideas at will. If everyone is entitled to their meaning, then right interpretation of texts, objects and concepts is left to individual's opinions, feelings and tastes and no one can be mistaken thus making it very difficult for people to learn from others (Elaati, 2016). This would hinder growth and development which is one of the key goals of mentoring relationships. Viewed positively, deconstruction can be understood as honest and critical review and evaluation of meanings in the light of context, in which case it can promote reciprocity and adaptability in mentoring relationships (Caputo & McLaren, 2007).

Cynicism and mentoring. Cynical pessimism is an inevitable outcome in a case where there is absence of absolute truth, no universal purpose in life, and no possibility of arriving at certain knowledge of anything (Kelm, 1999; Green & Roberts, 2012). Cynicism is fuelled by the belief that too many regimes of truth and promise have not delivered as expected and reinforced by emergence of new technologies and cultures that do not seem to satisfy the expectations of people (Mikkonen et al., 2011). According to Green (2017), postmodernism also promotes cynicism about institutions such as Church, law, and government. These institutions are core to society and thus lack of trust in them can lead to a state of despondency.

Elaati (2016) advanced the notion that people with postmodern thinking are less likely going to follow rigid ideologies rendering traditional approaches and concepts to mentoring less relevant. In the quest to find their own truth and pursuit of freedom to create who they

want to be, what would otherwise be a good spirit of exploration can degenerate into confusion, lack of structure and disorder leading to disillusionment and failure of mentoring initiatives. People who uphold postmodernism tend to live for the present only, expressing impatience with the past and high uncertainty of the future, making it difficult for them to consider long term perspectives, which significantly influences their view of mentoring outcomes (Green, 2017).

Community and mentoring. Postmodernism advocates for meaning and understanding to be determined through a tribal or community setting (Green & Roberts, 2012). Because of rejecting universal truth or meaning to life, and further rejection of nationalism and globalism, the need for some basis for understanding self and life results in seeking for a communal identity where each individual finds meaning (Kelm, 1999). Each community creates its own beliefs, myths, traditions, experiences and language that form the basic parameters of understanding life and meaning of life (Kelm, 1999). Life therefore becomes more relational and experiential than rational.

In a study among post-modern women in the United states, it was observed that women who upheld postmodernism preferred a more flexible environment, freedom to choose their mentors based on natural connection and desire to have the mentoring process as experiential as possible (Neumann, 2011). The quest for mutual identification and acceptance is indicative of the desire for communal identity by people with postmodernism as their worldview. Crutcher and Naseem (2016) identified collaboration as one of the effective approaches to mentoring and observed that mentees learn and work more effectively where collaborative opportunities, supportive and collaborative attitudes are modelled, nurtured and expected from all involved in the mentoring relationships. Whereas this may not have been a direct consequence of postmodernism, it affirms the need for people to find identity,

acceptance and meaning in the context of community as expressed in postmodernism preference for community over individual identity.

One of the key challenges in mentoring within the context of postmodernism therefore is in how best to communicate what non-postmodern thinking considers absolute and universal truth, in the context of a caring community where people find identity and meaning (Fendler, 2006). High relational intensity therefore becomes one of the critical factors in effective mentoring in the context of postmodernism. If it is true that the quality of the relationship between the mentor and the mentee contributes to greater satisfaction and mentoring outcomes as postulated by Amah (2017), then appreciation of mentoring as relational and experiential process is critical in this context.

Theoretical Framework

Establishing a sound theoretical framework is essential for the construction or selection of variables to be used in exploring and testing for causal relationships in any study (Nora & Crisp, 2007). To effectively examine how mentoring as a leadership development strategy works in the context of postmodernism, this research drew from two theories; the view of postmodernism as worldview characterised by ‘questioning’, and the complex adaptive systems theory in mentoring. The three theories are explained herewith to demonstrate how they inform the study.

Behavioural Theory of Leadership

According to Northouse (2019), behavioural theory of leadership focuses on how leaders behave. The theory underscores two key dimensions of leadership behaviour; task and relationship. Based on this theory, leaders’ behaviour can be learned by observing and copying other leaders. This therefore implies that formal and informal developmental processes and experiences contribute to leadership effectiveness (Seibert *et al.*, 2017). Effective leadership therefore is a learned behaviour that can be developed. This perspective

that leaders can be made anchors the concept of mentoring as a leadership development strategy. This is because mentoring assumes that effective leadership can be learnt and hence mentoring can be harnessed as a leadership development strategy.

The Complex Adaptive Systems (CAS) Theory for Mentoring

One of the theories of mentoring is the Complex Adaptive Systems (CAS) approach (Jones & Brown, 2011). According to Jones and Brown, mentoring is a complex and dynamic relationship within a perceived flexible structure that is always responding and adapting to its own inputs as well as the inputs of the wider environment. Mentoring relationships therefore operate effectively in a dynamic and emergent context, where both the predictable and unpredictable as well the stable and the unstable factors in the relationship are well balanced in the process (Jones & Brown, 2011). This theory is chosen for two reasons. First, is the lack of a unifying definition and theory of mentoring as expressed in various studies analysed earlier, which clearly renders mentoring as having a measure of complexity and diversity in expression that makes it difficult to define or conceptualize in one specific way (Crisp & Cruz, 2009; Dawson, 2014). Second is because mentoring even when viewed as a reciprocal model rather than emergent model is affected by contextual realities (Kram & Ragins, 2007).

In placing mentoring relationship as a complex adaptive system that operates in an emergent and adaptive context, this theory incorporates the key factors identified in the traditional and reciprocal mentoring models and yet still leaves space for the flexibility for occurrence of unpredictable factors. This model is more applicable in the context of postmodernism because it allows for the conceptualization of mentoring that is more dynamic allowing for complex, unpredictable, and nonlinear realities that fit fairly well with postmodern thinking (Jones & Corner, 2012). For the purpose of having a defined scope for meaningful analysis, and in appreciation of mentoring as a complex adaptive system, the

researcher selected five key characteristics of mentoring relationships. The five characteristics are: intentionality, relational intensity, developmental benefits, reciprocity and adaptability. These five are selected because they integrate perspective from the three categories of mentoring theories identified in the study of literature; traditional, reciprocal and emergent.

Postmodernism as Worldview Characterised by ‘Questioning’

According to Elaati (2016), the framework of postmodernism consists of four perspectives; the philosophical, historical, political and strategic perspective. From the philosophical point of view, postmodernism is evidence of vacuum in the absence of modernity characterized by questioning everything established by modernity. This creates room for rejection of grand narratives and encourages the rendering of all truth and facts as relative (Zacharias, 2010). The historical perspective sees postmodernism as a turn away from the modernity movement, or as a rejection of some aspects of it. The political perspective sees postmodernism as erosion of the illusions of Western ideology that was centred of scientific discovery and enlightenment, which supports the characterization of postmodernism as promoting cynicism (Kelm, 1999). Lastly the strategic perspective believes that postmodernism is the approach to the texts that does not comply with methodological standards, and hence there is not a single reading, instead there open and multiple reading, thus placing meaning with the interpreter.

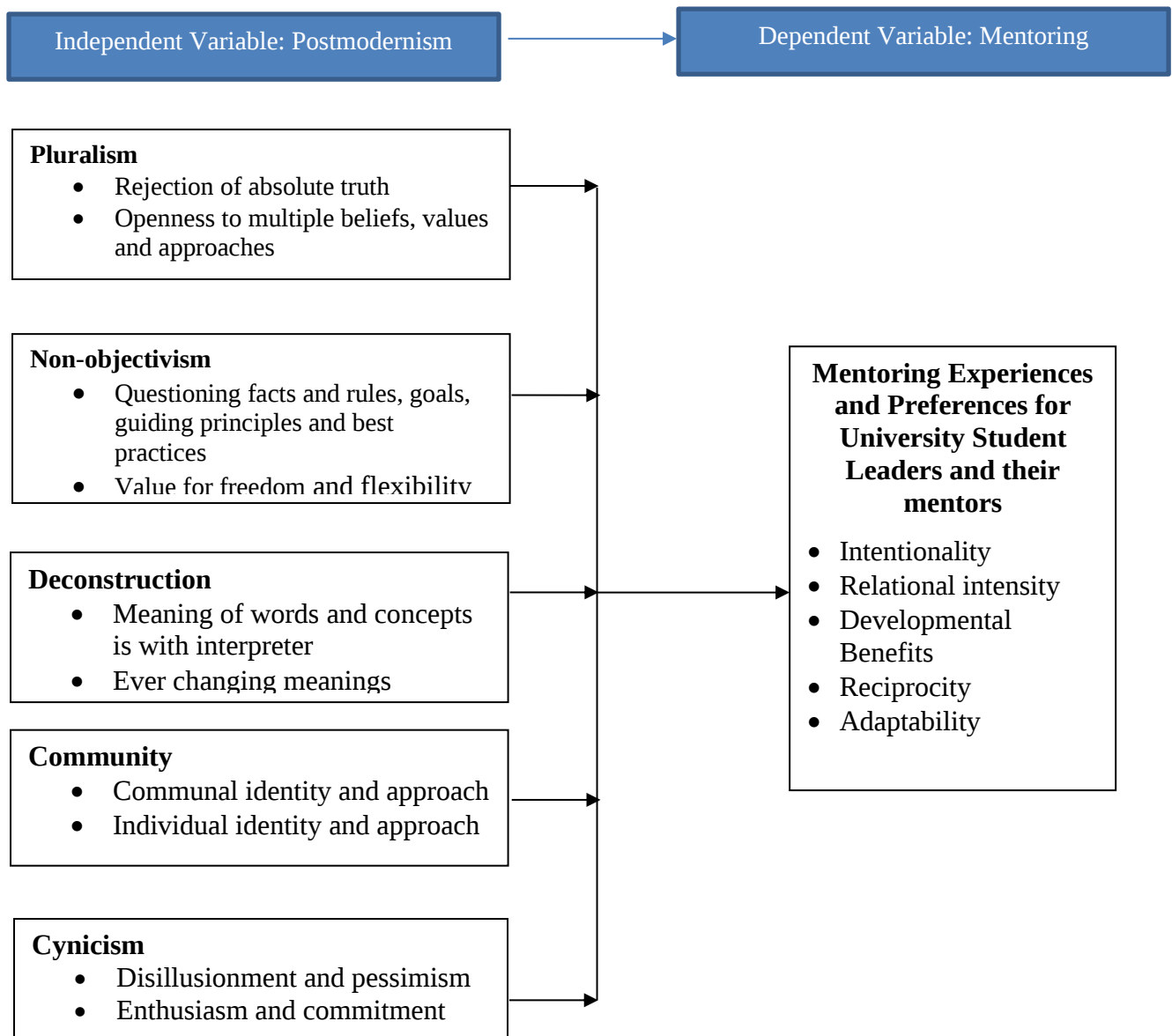
These four perspectives show that postmodernism as the word implies is largely a response to modernism, questioning the veracity of science, technology and enlightenment (Best & Kellner, 1997). According to Best and Kellner, at the centre of this questioning arose the critical question of truth that then shaped postmodernism into a worldview that tends to reject the idealised view of truth and replaces it with dynamic and changing view defined by context – time, space and perspective. This research is therefore anchored on the

conceptualization of postmodernism as worldview rather than an epoch (Akuul, 2010; Gyeke, 1997). Hence, the focus is on the five themes that characterise postmodernism as a worldview; pluralism, non-objectivism, deconstruction, cynicism and community (Kelm, 1999; Green & Roberts, 2012). The five themes provide a fairly clear way of evaluating various expressions of postmodernism and thus make it easier to assess how it influences the experiences and preferences of university student leaders in mentoring.

The Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework helps to present a summary of the researcher's synthesis of literature on how to explain a phenomenon being studied (Regoniel, 2015). According to Regoniel, it helps to map out the actions required in the course of the study based on the literature review and researcher's observations on the subject of research. The literature review and the following conceptual framework contributed to the development of the objectives and research questions outlined in the first chapter. The diagram below presents the conceptual framework for this study.

Figure 2.2

The conceptual Framework

The independent variable is postmodernism, broken down into five variables based on the five themes identified namely: pluralism, non-objectivism, deconstruction, cynicism and community. Under pluralism, the research explored student leaders' view of truth, openness to multiple beliefs, values and ethics as well as openness to multiples perspectives on mentoring. On non-objectivism, the research investigated the student leaders' attitude towards the concept of purpose, goal setting, guiding principles and best practices in

mentoring. The study also reviewed their value for freedom and flexibility in the mentoring process. Under deconstruction, the research seeks to investigate student leaders' perception on meaning of texts and objects exploring the extent to which affects the mentoring process. For cynicism, the study assessed whether the student leaders are largely positive and optimistic about life and mentoring initiatives or disillusioned and pessimistic about it. In relation to community, the study sought to establish if the student leaders prefer individual or communal approach to mentoring and seek to establish the reasons for their preference.

The study then sought to establish how all the five variables one by one and collectively influence the mentoring experience and outcomes for university student leaders and their mentors. There were six aspects of the mentoring experiences and outcomes to be studied which include: intentionality which relates to purpose and goals, the quality and intensity of relationships, reciprocity which entails acceptance and mutual liking, developmental benefits and adaptability which encompasses flexibility and dynamism in the mentoring process.

Synthesis of Research Gaps

According to Miles (2017), research gaps can be categorised into seven core areas namely; evidence gap, knowledge gap, practical-knowledge conflict gap, methodological gap, empirical gap, theoretical and population gap. The research identified two key gaps in the relationship between the research variables in this study. First, the researcher identified a knowledge gap. Knowledge gap occurs where desired research findings do not exist (Müller-Bloch & Kranz, 2015). While there exists several studies on the influence of postmodernism on various areas of interest such as religion (Ongong'a, 2013), literature, policy studies (Ntini, 2014), education and social work (Payne & Askeland, 2016), the research did not find adequate studies on the prevalence of postmodernism themes among university student leaders. In addition, most of the studies on mentoring among university students in Kenya focus heavily

on academic mentoring and do not adequately cover leadership development as one of the critical outcomes of mentoring initiatives (Muola et al. 2011; Muola & Migosi, 2012; Mwaura et al., 2015; Oluchina & Gitonga, 2016). Further, even for the research studies on academic mentoring, very few focused on how worldviews such as postmodernism influence mentoring preferences and experiences.

Second, the researcher identified a population gap. According to Miles (2017), there is a population gap when a section of the population has not been adequately represented or researched in previous studies. In relation to mentoring in the context of postmodernism, the researcher observed that the few studies conducted in this area were carried out among university students in general, but there has been limited focus on student leaders in particular. This could partly be as a result of the gap identified earlier relating to little focus on leadership development as an outcome for mentoring among university students in Kenya.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented a review of literature on mentoring as a leadership development strategy with emphasis on mentoring among university students and student leaders, the concept of postmodernism and how the five key themes of postmodernism influence mentoring of university student leaders. The aim was to establish the knowledge gap on how postmodernism influences mentoring among university student leaders. This informed research objectives and questions, the theoretical and conceptual framework for the study. The next chapter presents the research methodology.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter presents the description of the research philosophy, design and the corresponding research methods that were used in the study. Details of the procedures and approaches that were followed in carrying out the study are described. These include: the target population, sampling techniques and the data collection methods and instruments, as well as the techniques that were used for data analysis and presentation. The reliability and validity of the measurements and operationalization of the research variables are also discussed.

Research philosophy

A research philosophy is a worldview or system of belief that informs the way research is conducted based on one's ideas about reality and the nature of knowledge (Collins & Hussey, 2014). According to Tamminen and Poucher (2020), there are three main philosophies in research; positivism, interpretivism and pragmatism. Positivism holds that there exists a tangible reality that can be identified and measured and thus knowledge can be discovered objectively without undue bias from the researcher (Park *et al.*, 2020). Interpretivism on the other hand is based on the belief that reality is subjective and socially constructed and thus knowledge is realized through observing and questioning people's experiences (Ryan, 2018).

This research adopted a pragmatism paradigm which holds that there are diverse ways of interpreting reality and thus conducting research works best with a combination of different approaches to gain broad understanding of the phenomena being studied (Morgan, 2014). This was adopted because the researcher sought to apply mixed methods to enable broad understanding of the phenomenon being investigated.

Research design

Research design can be defined as scheme, outline or plan that is that holds the research together and is used to generate answers to research problems (Asenahabi, 2019). This research employed a descriptive case study design, with mixed method approach where both qualitative and quantitative data were collected and analyzed at the same time. According to Nassaji (2015), descriptive research design is most appropriate when the study seeks to describe a phenomenon and its characteristics. A descriptive study design was chosen because the researcher sought to establish and describe how the various expressions of the five themes of postmodernism influenced mentoring as a leadership development strategy among university student leaders in the selected universities.

According to Baxter and Jack (2008), case studies are used when the research endeavour involves analysing phenomenon within its real life context, when the study seeks to answer the questions of “how” and “why”. This served this study well because the researcher sought to explore how mentoring was influenced by postmodernism among university student leaders. One of the concerns commonly raised about case studies is generalizability of the research findings (Punch, 2013). According to Punch, the challenge of limited generalization happens in cases where the case under study is so important or is so unique in some critical aspects that it disserves its own study. The other situation is where the case under study is remarkably different from the general pattern of other cases. In this study, the two factors were considered not critical because university student leaders in Kenya largely share most characteristics across the universities.

According to Leedy and Ormrod (2019), quantitative research involves assessing quantities of variables of interest using numerical values while qualitative research on the other hand involves looking at the characteristics using words. Qualitative research approaches are therefore used to know more about a phenomenon, how and why it occurs, or

to describe experience of an individual or a group of individuals (Fetters et al., 2013). This was essential for the variables considered in this study because they were largely social constructs relating to characteristics and behaviour of human beings. The researcher also sought to provide space for multiple perspectives held by the respondents with the goal of learning and understanding the population more (Marshall & Rossman, 2014).

Moreover, this study intended to capture opinions and reflections using open ended questions that allow for subjective answers, best dealt with by qualitative methods (Creswell, 2009). There were also Likert-scaled questions for effective assessment of the influence of the various themes of postmodernism on mentoring hence the need for quantitative analysis (Bryman, 2016). The mixed method paradigm was therefore preferred because it allows for different perspectives thus giving room for more information and learning about the area of research area (Creswell, et al., 2013; Leedy & Ormrod, 2019).

Target Population

A population refers to an entire group of individuals, events or objects with similar observable characteristics (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). The target population for this study were the university student leaders in executive positions of leadership of two selected universities. The selected universities were Kenyatta University and Daystar University. Kenyatta University was selected to represent a public university while Daystar University was selected as private university. The two universities were selected on purpose because the researcher had prior information that they had some form of established mentorship initiatives for student leaders.

The number of student leaders in executive positions were selected because the positions are well spelt out in the constitutions of the various student clubs and societies. The researcher identified actual numbers of executive positions in the students' governing councils and religious groups and used an average number of five for the other active clubs

and societies. The average of five was used because it represented the five key positions noted across most clubs and societies; chairperson, vice chairperson, secretary, organizing secretary and treasurer. The table below provides the details of the number of student leaders in executive positions for the groups in the three broad categories.

Table 3.1

Target Population

Registered group	Kenyatta University	Daystar University	Total
Registered Religious Groups	56	34	90
Student Governing Councils	46	24	68
Other Active Clubs and Societies	265	95	360
Total			518

The Sampling Methods and Sample Size

A sample is a sub-group obtained from the accessible population, usually carefully considered to ensure the target population is fairly represented (Signh & Masuku, 2014). This study employed purposive and snow ball sampling techniques. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique where a researcher decides the phenomenon to be studied and sets out to find participants who can and are willing to provide the information needed based on their experience and knowledge (Etikan, *et al.*, 2016). Purposive sampling was therefore used to select participants in this study because the targeted respondents in the population needed to be knowledgeable and to have a high likelihood of having experience in mentoring.

The student leaders selected were those in executive positions of leadership in the student governing councils and registered religious clubs and societies. This is because religious societies have the largest membership and leaders having risen to top leadership positions of these societies would most likely have gone through some form of leadership development and mentoring processes. In a previous study conducted among student leaders in five public universities in Kenya, it was established that 82% of the students in leadership

in the university have a background of having served in leadership at High School level (Bosire, Chemnjor & Ngware, 2008). Besides, the religious groups tend to have fairly established mentoring programs for developing those in positions of leadership (Fellowship of Christian Unions, 2016). It is therefore highly likely that those in top leadership positions have held other leadership roles before.

Snow ball sampling technique is used in cases where it is hard to reach the population, in which case the known participants help to identify and reach out to other participants (Goodman, 2011). Where some student leaders could not be easily identified, the researcher therefore worked with known student leaders to identify their colleagues.

Based on the purposive sampling criteria specified for student leaders, four key religious societies were considered: the Christian Union, the Catholic Community, the Seventh Day Adventists and the Muslim Students Association. Kenyatta University had all the four registered religious societies (Kenyatta University, 2017). Daystar University had the Daystar Christian Fellowship as the only registered religious society. Combined with the student governing council, the sampling frame for the two Universities was as presented in Table 3.2 below. The sample size for the student leaders was therefore 158 student leaders. This represented 31% of the estimated target population.

Table 3.2

Number of Student Leaders in key leadership positions

Registered group	Kenyatta University	Daystar University	Total
Student leaders in registered religious Groups	56	34	90
Student leaders in Student Governing Councils	46	24	68
Total			158

Data Collection Methods

The researcher used questionnaires as the tools for collection of data. According to Kothari (2009), questionnaires make it possible to reach a large number of people easily and economically, and they provide adequate time for respondents to give well thought out answers. Questionnaires were used to collect both qualitative and quantitative data from both the student leaders and the mentors. To achieve this, the questionnaire had both structured and unstructured questions (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Having both open and closed ended questions allowed participants to give answers to not only the already determined responses, but also to give their own personal opinions, reflections and explanations.

The questionnaire had three sections. The first section sought data on the demographics of the University Student Leaders. The second section collected data on the dependent variable, the University Student Leaders' experiences and preferences in mentoring relationships. The third section collected data on the independent variable focusing on the expressions of the five themes of postmodernism in mentoring among the Student Leaders. Two sets of Five Point Likert Scales were used. For experiences in mentoring relationships and expressions on the five themes of postmodernism, the Likert Scale was ranging from 1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree. For preferences in mentoring relationships, the Likert Scale was ranging from 1-Least Preferred to 5=Most Preferred. This was to help get either favourable or unfavourable perception towards the various aspects of mentoring and postmodernism that were under consideration in the study.

Instrument Pre-testing

Data collection instruments need to be tested in the field to a select sample that is similar to the actual sample the researcher plans to use in the study (Mugenda, 2008). According to Kothari (2009), conducting a 'pilot study' aimed at collecting data from

respondents who are similar to the ones to be engaged in the main research is essential to identify any weaknesses in the questionnaires and the survey techniques. Pre-testing also helps in assessing the reliability of instruments and the validity of a study (Creswell, 2009). The researcher pre-tested the instruments with ten student leaders from the University of Embu. Being a well-established university, the researcher believed the student leaders at the University of Embu had fairly similar characteristics as those of Kenyatta and Daystar University, and the University of Embu Students were readily willing to participate in the pilot study. The pre-testing sought to ensure the questionnaires were appropriate, and useful for the analysis that had been envisioned.

Research Reliability

Research instruments should be reliable, meaning they should be designed in a way that guarantees consistent results or data after repeated trials (Mugenda, 2008). The data obtained should therefore accurately represent the variables in the study. According to Noble and Smith (2015), in quantitative research, the focus for reliability is the consistency of the analytical procedures, while in qualitative research reliability relates to the ‘trustworthiness’ by which the methods have been undertaken, such that the researchers decisions are clear and transparent.

The researcher employed two techniques to assess the reliability of the research instruments: a pilot test and Cronbach’s alpha analysis. Cronbach’s alpha analysis is a technique for computing the internal consistency of a scale, thus it is used to assess how well the research instruments measure what they are designed to measure (Bonett & Wright, 2015). According to Hair et al. (2019) Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficient ranges between 0 and 1 and the closer it is to 1 the greater the internal consistency of the items being measured by the scale. A scale is considered to be internally consistent if the Chronbach’s alpha coefficient is 0.7 or higher (Adams & Lawrence, 2019). A pilot study that was

conducted among student leaders from Embu University was used to pre-test the instruments before they were used for the full-scale data collection.

The Cronbach's alpha analysis was used to check if the data collected from the multiple-question Likert Scale, based on the pilot study was reliable. Table 3.3 and Table 3.4 below show the Cronbach's alpha value for the dependent variable scales and independent variable scales which were 0.789 and respectively. The reliability test results were therefore acceptable.

Table 3.3

Cronbach's alpha value for dependent variable, mentoring

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.761	.789	15

Table 3.4

Cronbach's alpha value for independent variable, postmodernism

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.743	.739	10

Data Validity

The research results obtained from the research should be valid, which means they should have a high degree of accuracy, trustworthiness, authenticity and credibility in representing the phenomenon under study (Creswel, 2014). The researcher worked to improve the validity by ensuring the research instruments were reviewed by experts in the field of research, particularly the supervisors and external reviewers.

Further, participant checking was also used to ensure data validity. Participant checking involved involves taking data or results back to the participants to check for accuracy and resonance with their actual experience (Birt et al., 2016). Participant checking

was used to corroborate the findings with the participants' actual experiences and preferences in mentoring. To this end, data collected from questionnaires was subjected to review by 30 of the respondents. A presentation of the findings was made to these select participants and their feedback helped to enrich the analysis, conclusions and recommendations.

Operationalization of the study variables

The independent variable in the study, postmodernism, was broken down into five expressions or themes; pluralism, non-objectivism, deconstruction, cynicism and community. The dependent variables were mentoring, focusing on experiences and preferences with five key factors of consideration; intentionality, relational intensity, developmental benefits, reciprocity and adaptability. Table 3.5 and Table 3.6 below provide the description of each of the variables and their indicators.

Table 3.5

Description of the independent Variable in the study

Variable	Variable indicator	Experience measured on Likert Scale ranging from 1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree	Preference Measured on Likert Scale ranging from 1=Least Preferred to 5=Most Preferred
Postmodernism	Pluralism	There is no universal and absolute truth about mentoring, all truth is relative depending on context	Room for tolerance of multiple beliefs, values and ethical standards in mentoring
	Non-objectivism	Ambiguity and arbitrariness in engaging issues of various kinds is ok in mentoring relationships	Trusting own judgment, feelings and intuition more than the advice of mentors
	Deconstruction	Every person in a mentoring relationship is entitled to create their own meaning of terms and objects based on their context	Being independent to create meaning and purpose for things by oneself, rather than follow pre-set definitions, traditions by others
	Cynicism	Most of the approaches and promised benefits of mentoring are often corrupted by partisan interests and therefore are not reliable	Being sceptical rather than optimistic about mentoring because most mentoring relationships tend to fail and do not always produce the desired outcomes
	Community	Mentoring is more relational and experiential and less rational and ideological	Group mentorship over one-on-one mentorship

Table 3.6

Description of the dependent Variable in the study

Variable	Indicator	Experience in Mentoring Measured on Likert Scale ranging from 1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree	Preference in Mentoring Measured on a Likert Scale ranging from 1=Least Preferred to 5=Most Preferred
Mentoring Experiences and Preferences	Intentionality	Mentoring relationship has Goals, Structure and Timelines.	Mentoring relationships should have well defined goals with clear timelines and action plan from start to end as opposed to an open program with flexible goals and timelines.
	Relational Intensity	There is Frequent and Regular Interactions between mentor and mentee	The interactions between Mentors and Mentees should be frequent and regular rather than irregular on need basis
		There is Mutual Acceptance and Liking between mentor and mentee	Mentorship relationship flows from mutual acceptance and liking rather than obligation.
	Developmental Benefits	There is Measurable Growth experienced by mentee or both mentor and mentee with engagements stimulating critical thinking and creativity	The mentoring relationship generates visible growth for both mentor and mentee and stimulates critical thinking and creativity
	Reciprocity	The mentor and mentee are Equal and Mutual Partners in the relationship and learning is for both mentor and mentee	Mentor and mentee are equal and mutual partners learning together rather than the case where the Mentor is the primary source of influence in the relationship.
	Adaptability	The mentoring relationship accommodates Flexibility and Responsiveness with openness to new ideas and approaches as need arises	The mentoring engagements are flexible in approach and content and thus adaptive to new ideas and situations rather than having a highly structured and rigid approach.

Data Analysis

This research employed a mixed method approach and thus used multiple data analysis methods. Thematic analysis was used for qualitative data, involving systematic identification, organization, and offering insight into patterns of meaning that emerged across the data sets (Braun & Clarke, 2012). The various themes and general patterns that emerged from the data collected were clustered into meaningful summaries that helped in drawing generalizations (Joffe, 2012). Thematic analysis approach was preferred because it allowed for flexibility in discovering and making sense of shared experiences and preferences of participants in mentoring processes in the context of postmodernism. Quantitative data was cleaned, coded, summarized and then presented using frequency tables, proportions and percentages (Mugenda, 2008).

Correlational analysis was used to measure the relationships and strength of association between the variables (Cohen et al., 2014). According to Punch (2014), correlation analysis can be used to establish causal relationship between two variables, where it is impractical, unethical, or too costly to conduct experimental research that manipulates one of the variables. Correlation analysis was therefore chosen to help establish causal relationships between the themes of postmodernism and the student leaders' experiences and preferences in mentoring.

Pearson's correlation coefficient is a measure of strength of association between two variables denoted by r , which is usually a number between -1 and +1 that indicates to what extent and the direction two variables are linearly related (Healey, 2015). A correlation of -1 indicates a perfect linear descending relation which means higher scores on one variable imply lower scores on the other variable. On the other hand, a correlation of 1 indicates a perfect ascending linear relation meaning higher scores on one variable are associated with higher scores on the other variable. A value near zero indicates that there is no correlation

between the two variables (Kothari, 2004). To test statistical significance of the relationships, 2-tailed test was used to determine the P value. According to Healy, significant relationship between two variables exists where p -value is less than 0.05. The analysis was done using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 26.0.

Data Presentation

Tables and graphs were used to present the data capturing descriptive statistics of frequencies, percentages and correlation analysis. The data comprised of demographic data, data on mentoring experiences and preference and data on correlation between the five themes of postmodernism and mentoring experiences and preferences. These descriptive statistics and presentation tools were chosen to ensure the data is presented in a precise, clear and easy to understand format (Healey, 2015). The structure of the presentation of the data is around the categories or themes that emerged in line with the five research objectives. The themes or categories have been presented as sections with relevant sub-sections.

Ethical Considerations

According to Bryman (2016), ethical considerations in research revolve around issues such as how we treat with people on whom the researcher conducts research, emphasizing the need to be clear on activities which the research should or should not engage the relationship with them. Other issues include how we handle confidentiality of data collected, upholding privacy, avoiding deception and ensuring safety (Punch, 2014). These are principles the researcher endeavoured to uphold in the research process. For this reason, permission was sought from the National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) for the research to be carried out. In addition to this, each participant received a personal consent letter in form of an email and registered their consent before the questionnaire was sent to them. All information collected from various respondents was treated with due confidentiality it deserves and has only been used for the stated purpose.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has described the research methodology that was employed in conducting the study. The research employed an exploratory case study research design, with a mixed method approach. The study focused on 158 key student leaders from Kenyatta University and Daystar University. The student leaders were identified through purposive sampling and snow ball sampling techniques. Data was collected using questionnaires and analysed using thematic and correlational analysis with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26. The structure of the presentation of the qualitative data was around the themes that emerged. To ensure high validity and reliability of data, a pilot test was conducted to pre-test the research instruments and Cronbach's alpha test technique was used to assess how well the research instruments measured what they are designed to measure. The researcher was committed to uphold requisite ethical standards throughout the research process. The summary of findings and resulting discussions are in Chapter Four.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter comprises of data analysis, presentation of results, interpretation of findings and discussion on the influence of postmodernism on mentoring among university student leaders, focusing on Kenyatta University and Daystar University. The data collection tools focused on how the five themes of postmodernism influenced the experiences and preferences of student leaders in mentoring. The findings are therefore predicated upon the five themes of postmodernism; pluralism, non-objectivism, deconstruction, cynicism and community. Under each theme, the influence on mentoring is discussed with a focus on experiences and preferences, putting into consideration the five key elements of a mentoring relationship highlighted in the conceptual framework; intentionality, relational intensity, developmental benefits, reciprocity and adaptability.

The response rate

The researcher administered questionnaires to 158 Student leaders. 112 student leaders responded to the questionnaire. The details of the respondents who participated in the research were as shown in Table 4.1 below. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), a response rate of 50% is adequate while that of 70% and above is very good for analysis and reporting. This response rate represented 71% of the sampled population and was therefore considered adequate for analysis.

Table 4.1

Response rate for various target participants

Kenyatta University		Daystar University		Total		
Target	Response	Target	Response	Target	Response	Percentage
102	81	56	31	158	112	70.8%

Demographic Information

The demographic information for student leaders was categorised in five areas. The five areas were; the university, leadership group, age, year of study and period of service in the various leadership positions.

University

The researcher sought to find out how the respondents were distributed across the two selected universities. The findings were as shown in Table 4.2 below indicates that 72% of the students were from Kenyatta University and 28% from Daystar University. The distribution of the target respondents envisaged 65% for Kenyatta University and 35% for Daystar University. This outcome can be interpreted to mean that the response rate was higher in Kenyatta University. The researcher was not able to establish any reasons for the higher response rate in Kenyatta university compared to Daystar University.

Table 4.2

Student leaders and Mentors by University

University	Student Leaders		University
Kenyatta University	81	72%	Kenyatta University
Daystar University	31	28%	Daystar University
Total	112	100%	

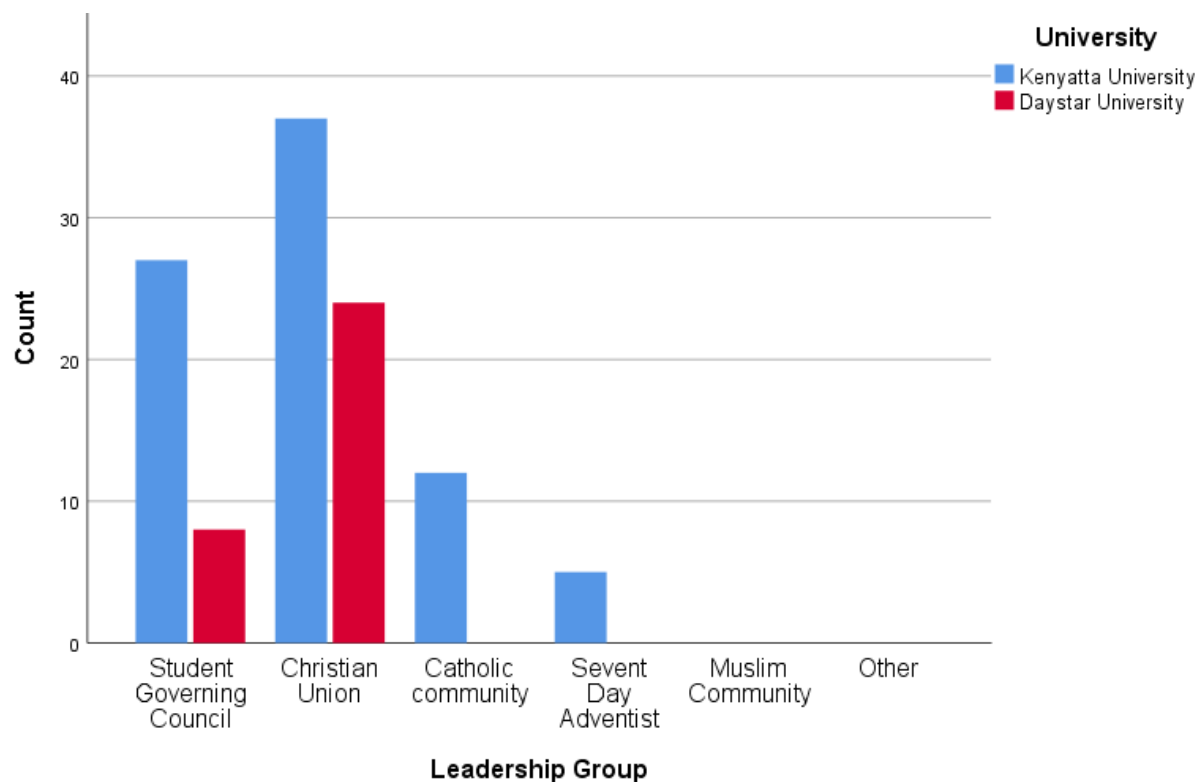
Leadership Group

Besides the university, the researcher also endeavoured to find out the distribution of the respondents in the various leadership groups that were identified in determining the sample for the study. From Kenyatta University, the respondents included 27 from Student Governing Council, 37 from the Christian Union, 12 from the Catholic Community and 5 from the Seventh Day Adventist Group. From Daystar University the respondents included 8 from the Student Governing Council and 23 from the Daystar Christian Fellowship. These findings were as shown in Figure 4.1. The largest number of the respondents were from the

Kenyatta University Christian Union and Daystar Christian Fellowship. According to Keusch (2015), some of the factors that determine response rate are perceived benefits for participating in the survey and the level of involvement and commitment of the respondents in the subject matter or researcher. The high response rate by the Christian Union leaders could have been higher because the researcher was known to majority of the student leaders in the Kenyatta University Christian Union and Daystar Christian Fellowship.

Figure 4.1

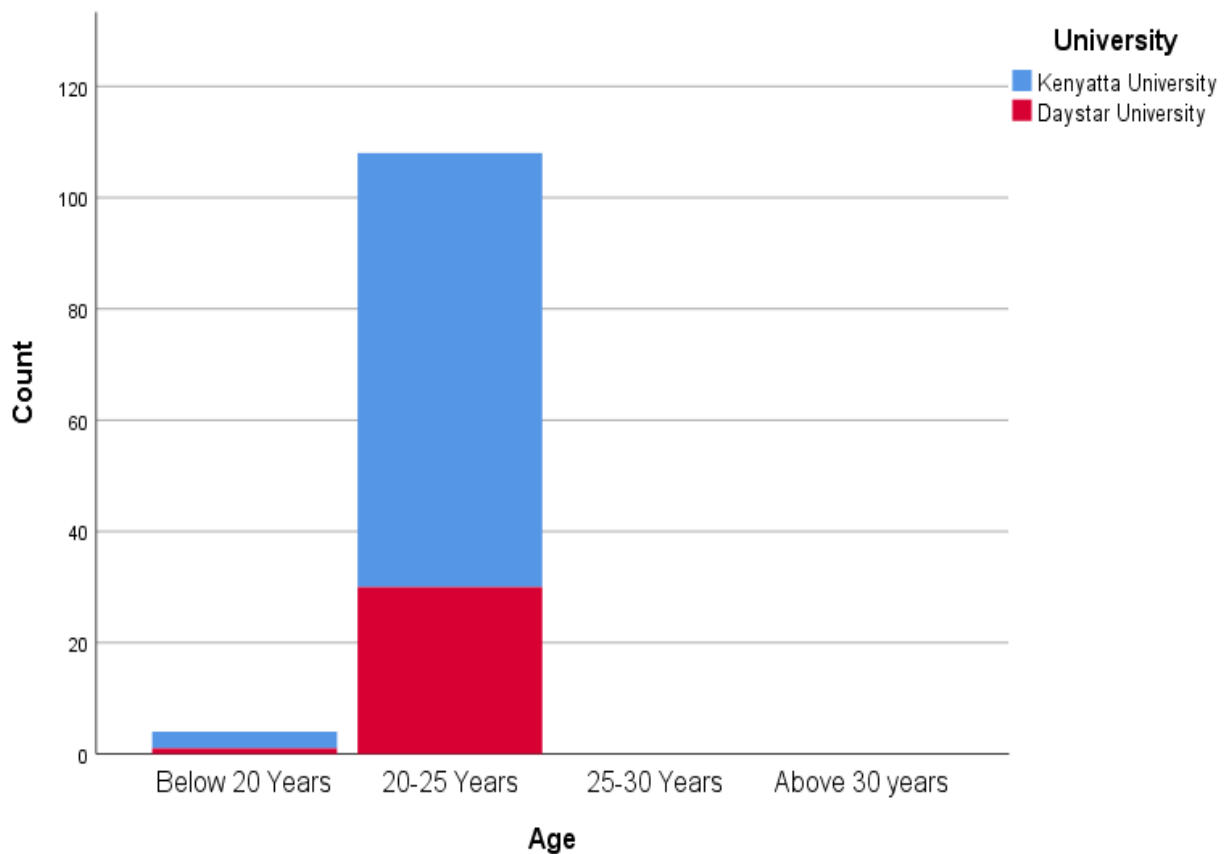
Student leadership group by university



Age

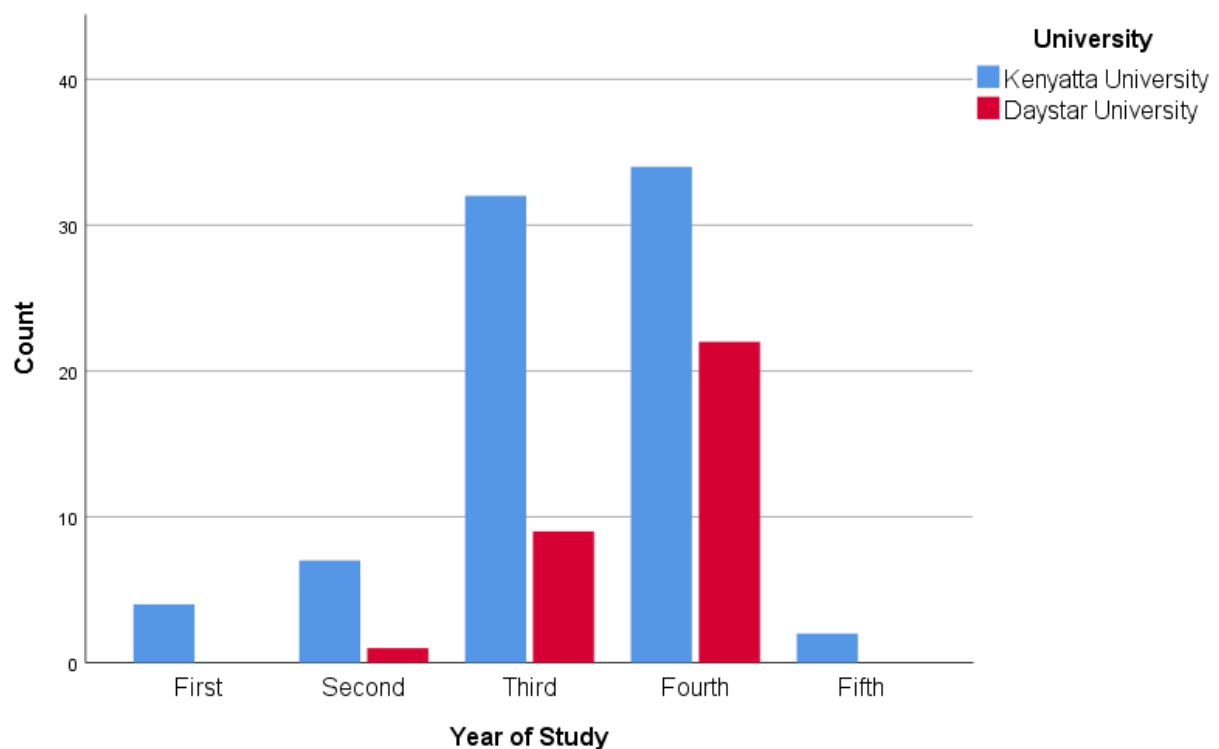
The researcher also sought to establish the age of the student leaders. From the results in Figure 4.2, 96% of the student leaders were within the age of 20-25 for both universities. This data for the age of the student leaders can be interpreted to affirm the assumption that university student leaders have similar characteristics across the universities.

Figure 4.2

Age by University***Year of Study and period of Service in leadership***

To further assess the assumption that university student leaders have similar characteristics across the universities, the researcher sought to establish the years of study of the student leaders who responded. The pattern is similar in both universities as shown in Figure 4.3. The findings show that the highest number of student leaders were in third and fourth year of study for both universities, with the percentages being 36% and 51% for third and fourth year respectively. This points to the possibility that since these were leaders in top executive positions, they most likely had served in other lower-level leadership positions or played key leadership roles in other ways during their time in first and second year.

Figure 4.3

Year of study by University

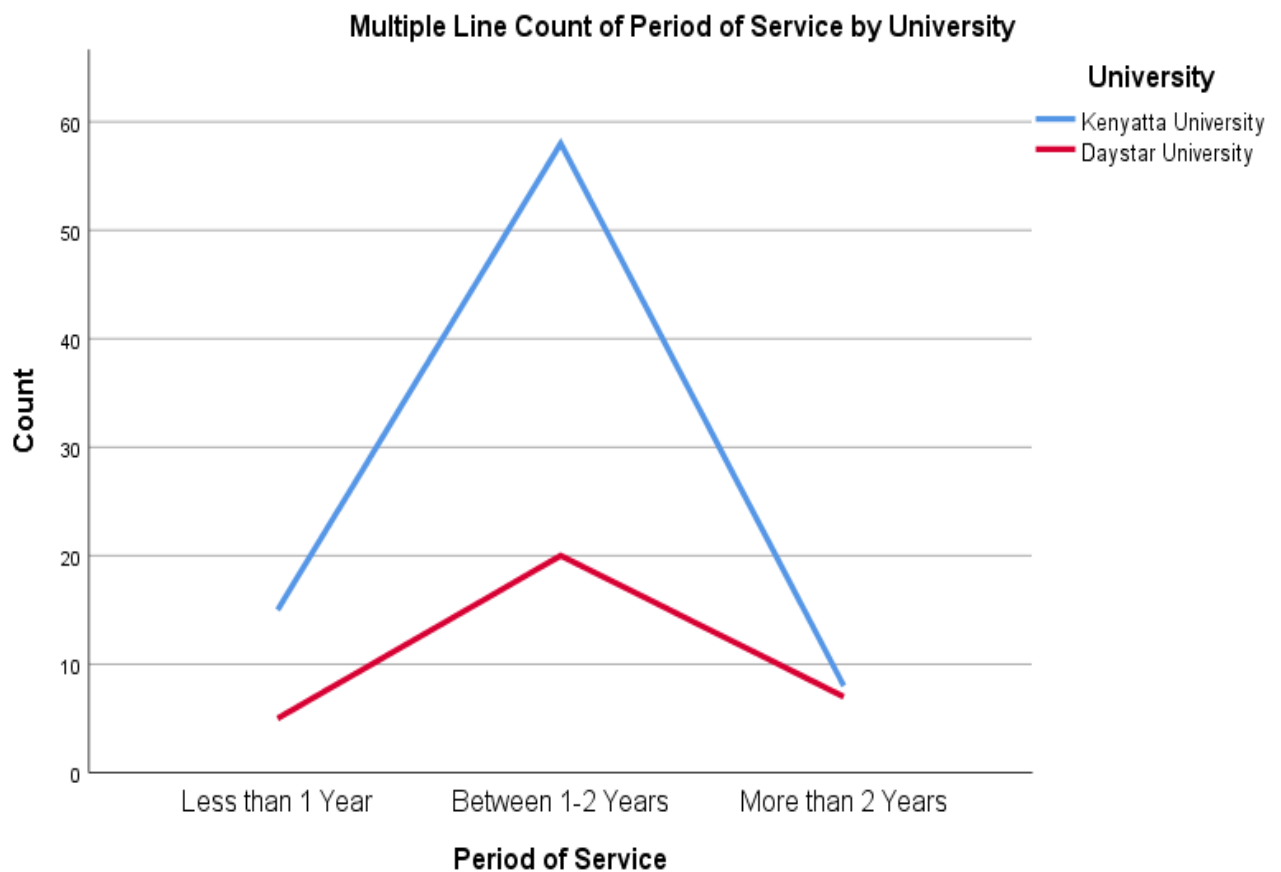
The researcher went further to establish the actual period the student leaders had been in leadership. The findings indicated that 69% of the student leaders had served for a period between one and two years as shown in Figure 4.4. Those who had served for more than two years represented 13% of the respondents, making the total of those who had served for more than one year to be 82%. Only 17% had served in leadership for less than one year. It is worth noting that the pattern for period of service is also the same for both universities just as was the case for age and year of study.

This can be interpreted to mean most student leaders ascent to top positions of leadership having served in other lower positions, aligning well with the researcher's desire to have respondents who had served long enough in leadership to gain some experience in mentoring relationships for leadership development. This is in line with earlier findings on university students that revealed that majority of students who serve in leadership positions at

university level would most likely have served in other leadership positions earlier either in high school or at the lower years in the university (Bosire et al., 2008).

Figure 4.4

Period of service by university



Experiences and Preferences in mentoring relationships

According to Creswell and Clark (2017), with mixed method approach, initial qualitative findings may influence the focus and kinds of quantitative data that will be collected and analysed. To examine the influence of postmodernism on mentoring relationships among university student leaders, the researcher first collected qualitative data on general experiences and preferences of the student leaders. The overview of experiences and preferences then informed the understanding and analysis of the influence of postmodernism on the mentoring experiences and preferences highlighted.

Forms of Mentoring Relationships by Student Leaders

The researcher sought to establish the percentage of student leaders that were involved in any form of mentoring relationship for leadership development at the time of survey. The findings revealed that 82% of the respondents were actively involved in mentoring relationships. These findings confirmed the researcher's assumption that most of the student in top leadership positions would most likely be involved mentoring relationships and thus most qualified for the study. The 18% that were not involved in any form of mentoring indicated various reasons for not being in a mentoring relationship including challenges in finding a mentor, lack of mentoring programs, unwillingness due to personal reasons and lack of intentionality towards getting involved in mentoring.

Details of the various forms of mentoring relationships the student leaders were involved in are shown in the Table 4.3. 63% of the student leaders indicated that they were involved in peer mentoring relationships and 23% indicated that they had mentors and thus in a mentoring relationship with an older more experience leader. The remaining 12% indicated that they didn't have mentors but were mentoring fellow student younger leaders.

Table 4.3

Forms of mentoring relationships by student leaders

<u>Mentoring Relationship</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage of total</u>
In a Peer Mentoring relationship with Fellow Student Leaders	58	63.0%
Have a mentor who is older and more experienced	23	25.0%
Don't have a mentor but mentoring younger student leader	11	12.0%
Total	92	100%

The findings showed that student leaders found it easier to be in a peer mentoring relationship than to develop relationships with more experienced leaders as their mentors. Some of the reasons cited for this phenomenon include; inadequate mentors, inadequate commitment and initiative by the student leaders to connect with older and more experienced

mentors, fear of higher accountability the older mentors demand and the desire for deep relationships which are much easier with fellow student leaders. Findings of a study done in Nakuru Kenya by Mwaura, Odero-Wanda and Mulu-Mutuku (2015) on youth mentorship revealed that informal mentoring with strong relationships that are significant to the mentees and the mentors contribute to higher participation in mentoring relationships, a factor that seems to come out from this study too. The study by Mwaura et al. also revealed that peer mentoring was the most common form of mentorship among the youth. The preference for peer mentoring over other forms of mentoring could be attributed to the fact that most peer mentoring relationships are informal and have higher relational intensity and the younger student leaders tend to naturally look up to their fellow older student leaders for advice and mutual support.

Importance of Mentoring for University Student Leaders

The student leaders underscored the importance and benefits of mentoring for university student leaders. The reasons outlined are as captured in Table 4.4. Notably, equipping with knowledge and skills and offering guidance and direction for leadership stood out as the highest benefits of mentoring to student leaders. The other key benefits highlighted were helping students avoid past mistakes by learning from experiences of those who have gone ahead of them and developing positive values and character. These findings support the findings a study on mentees experiences in nursing mentorship in public universities in Kenya in which it was observed that mentors were seen more as teachers, counsellors and source of guidance (Amayi & Oluchina, 2017). This also confirmed previous studies on mentoring that highlighted developmental benefits as a critical success factor in mentoring relationships (Lunsford et al., 2017; Crisp et al., 2017).

Table 4.4

Benefits of mentoring highlighted by university student leaders

Reason	Frequency	Percentage
Equip with skills and knowledge for leadership	46	45.5%
Clarify purpose and sense of direction	28	27.7%
Inspire and motivate younger leaders	8	7.9%
To help avoid mistakes done by previous leaders	7	6.9%
Impart values and develop good character	6	5.9%
Enhance accountability	3	3.0%
For effective succession planning	3	3.0%

Experiences in Mentoring Relationships

The researcher sought to establish the mentoring experiences of university student leaders with regard to the five factors of mentoring relationships that were being considered in the study. For each of the factors, the respondents indicated their experiences using a five-point Likert scale with Strongly Disagree =1 and Strongly Agree =5. The findings are as presented in Table 4.5. A mean for each of the factors was also calculated and is presented in Table 4.6. The findings are from the 92 student leaders who indicated to have been involved in mentoring relationships at the time of the study.

Table 4.5

Mentoring experiences based on the five factors of mentoring

<i>Mentoring Experience</i>	<i>Frequency</i>				
	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neither Agree not Disagree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
Intentionality- Relationship is purposeful – with clear goals and objectives	0	2	11	35	44
Relational intensity – There are meaningful interactions on regular Basis	0	8	16	37	31
Relational intensity – There is mutual acceptance and liking	1	3	13	32	43
Developmental benefits – There is visible growth for Mentor and Mentee	1	1	10	29	50
Reciprocity – There is mutual learning and growth	1	1	6	25	59
Adaptability – Process is Flexible and responsive to emerging situations	1	3	5	35	47

Table 4.6

Mean Scores for mentoring experiences based on the five factors of mentoring

<i>Mentoring Factor</i>	<i>Mean</i>
Intentionality- Relationship is purposeful – with clear goals and objectives	4.3
Relational intensity – There are meaningful interactions on regular Basis	4.0
Relational intensity – There is mutual acceptance and liking	4.2
Developmental benefits – There is visible growth for Mentor and Mentee	4.4
Reciprocity – There is mutual learning and growth	4.5
Adaptability – Process is Flexible and responsive to emerging situations	4.4

Notably, while the findings showed that all the five mentoring factors were prevalent in the mentoring relationships among university student leaders, relational intensity had the lowest mean and reciprocity had the highest. Having earlier observed that 63% of the mentoring relationships were informal peer mentoring relationships, one would have expected relational intensity to be among the factors with the highest mean scores. A cross tabulation of the nature of mentoring relationship with mutual acceptance and liking, and regular meaningful interactions was therefore done to determine the level of relational intensity in different forms of mentoring relationships. The results were shown in Table 4.7 and Table 4.8.

Table 4.7

Nature of mentoring relationship with mutual acceptance and liking

Nature of Mentoring Relationship	In Mentorship with mutual acceptance and liking					Total
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree	
In a Peer Mentoring relationship with Fellow Student Leaders	0	0	12	12	34	58
Have a mentor who is older and more experienced	1	2	1	17	4	23
Don't have a mentor but mentoring younger student leader	0	1	0	3	5	11
	1	3	13	32	43	92

Table 4.8

Cross tabulation of Nature of mentoring relationship with regular meaningful interactions

Nature of mentoring relationship	In Mentorship with Meaningful Interactions on Regular Basis					Total
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree	
In a Peer Mentoring relationship with Fellow Student Leaders	0	0	11	27	21	58
Have a mentor who is older and more experienced	0	8	4	6	5	23
Don't have a mentor but mentoring younger student leader	0	0	2	4	5	11
	0	8	16	37	31	92

It was observed that of those in peer mentoring relationships 20.5% agreed and 59% strongly agreed that they had mutual acceptance and liking in their mentoring relationship, making a total of 79.5%. The remaining 20.5% indicated they neither agreed nor disagreed. Further 83% of those in peer mentoring relationships also indicated that they had regular and meaningful interactions. None of the student leaders in peer mentoring relationships pointed to existence of low relational intensity in their mentoring relationships. On the other hand, 35% of those in mentoring relationships between student leaders and more older and experienced leaders did not have regular interactions, and 13% also indicated lack of mutual acceptance and liking. As such, even though relational intensity had the lowest mean, these findings affirm the point that higher relational intensity characterize most peer mentoring

relationships as compared to the dyadic mentoring relationships where the mentor is older and more experienced (Mullen & Klimaitis, 2021).

Preferences in mentoring relationships

The researcher also sought to capture key highlights of the preferences of university student leaders in mentoring relationships with reference to the five mentoring factors being considered in the study. The preferences were assessed using a five-point Likert scale with Least Preferred =1 and Most Preferred =5. The findings were as presented in Table 4.9 below. A mean for each of the factors was also calculated and is presented in Table 4.10. The results were from the all the 112 student leaders who participated in the study.

Table 4.9

Mentoring Preferences based on the five factors of mentoring

<i>Mentoring Preference</i>	<i>Frequency</i>				
	<i>Least Preferred</i>	<i>Less Preferred</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>More Preferred</i>	<i>Most Preferred</i>
Intentionality- Prefer mentoring relationship clear goals and plans	2	7	20	26	57
Relational intensity – Prefer irregular interactions on need basis over regular interactions	23	16	28	27	18
Relational intensity – Prefer formal pairing over mutual acceptance and liking	13	16	22	29	31
Developmental benefits -Prefer engagement that stimulate thinking, creativity and growth	0	1	8	24	78
Reciprocity – Prefer having mentor as lead partner rather than equal partnership	10	7	16	29	48
Adaptability – Prefers flexible and adaptive content and approach	1	4	20	36	50

Table 4.10

Mean scores for mentoring preferences based on the five factors of mentoring

<i>Mentoring Preference</i>	<i>Mean</i>
Intentionality- Prefer mentoring relationship clear goals and plans	4.2
Relational intensity – Prefer irregular interactions on need basis over regular interactions	3.0
Relational intensity – Prefer formal pairing over mutual acceptance and liking	3.4
Developmental benefits -Prefer engagement that stimulate thinking, creativity and growth	4.6
Reciprocity – Prefer having mentor as lead partner rather than equal partnership	3.9
Adaptability – Prefers flexible and adaptive content and approach	4.2

It was observed that the preferences were most varied for relational intensity signified by a near average mean score of 3.0 for preference of irregular interactions and 3.4 for preference of mutual liking and acceptance. The findings also indicated that the university student leaders had nearly similar preferences for developmental benefits with 92% of the student leaders having high preference for mentoring relationships that stimulate thinking, creativity and growth. Overall, reading from the mean scores in Table 4.10 above, majority of the students had a high preference for mentoring relationships with intentionality, developmental benefits and adaptability to emerging realities.

Influence of Postmodernism on Mentoring Preferences and Experiences

A detailed examination was conducted among university student leaders using two indicators for each of the five themes of postmodernism being considered in the study. The researcher sought to establish how each of the indicators influenced mentoring with reference to the five factors of mentoring relationships being considered in the study in line with the research objectives and questions. The findings are provided below.

How Does Pluralism influence mentoring of University Students in Kenya?

The research explored two key factors of pluralism in mentoring. The first one involved assessing the extent to which student leaders held the view that there is no one universal and absolute truth and principles about mentoring and that all truth is relative and depends on the context. The second focused on the level of openness to alternative worldviews other than the ones they uphold. Both factors were measured using a five-point Likert scale. The findings were as shown in Table 4.11, Figure 4.5 and Figure 4.6 below.

Table 4.11

Pluralism in mentoring among university student leaders

Pluralism Indicator/Scale	No universal and absolute truth and principles about mentoring		Tolerance to multiple beliefs, values and ethical standards in mentoring	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	9	8.0	5	4.5
Disagree	16	14.3	7	6.3
Not Sure	14	12.5	25	22.3
Agree	27	24.1	21	18.8
Strongly Agree	45	40.1	54	48.2
Missing	1	0.9		
Total	112	100	112	100

Figure 4.5

Responses on there being no one universal and absolute truth about mentoring.

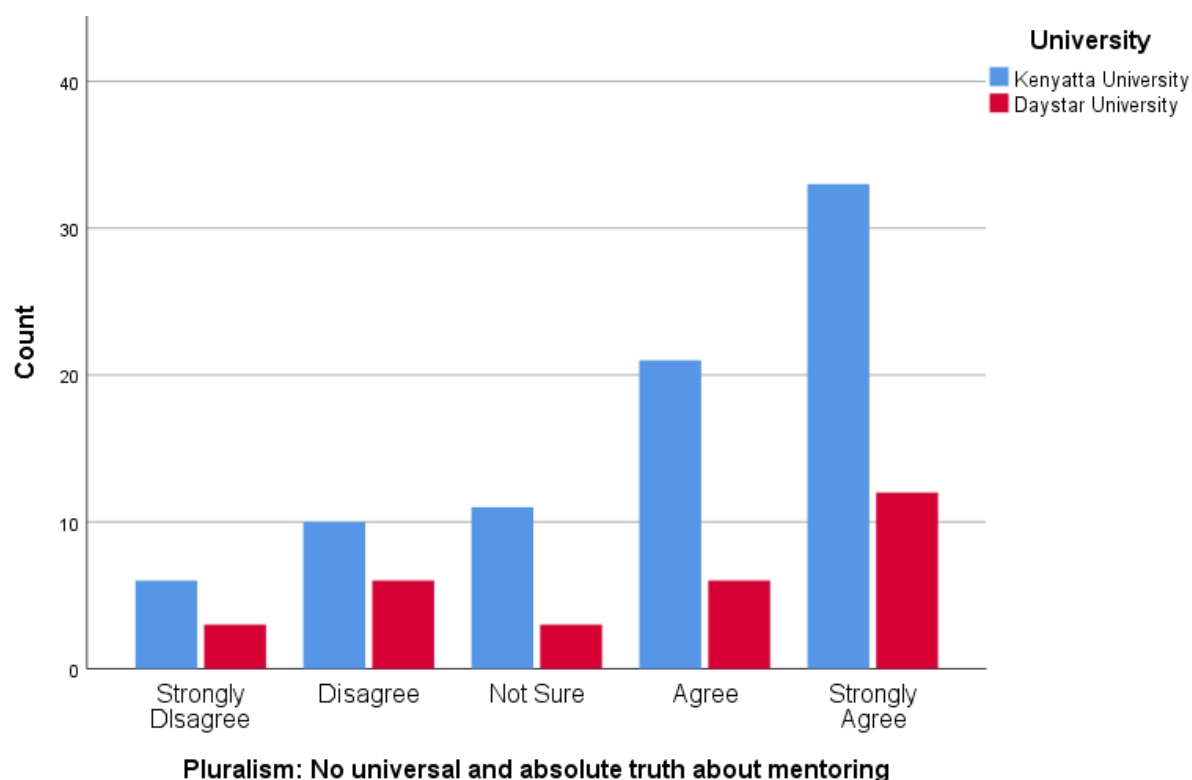
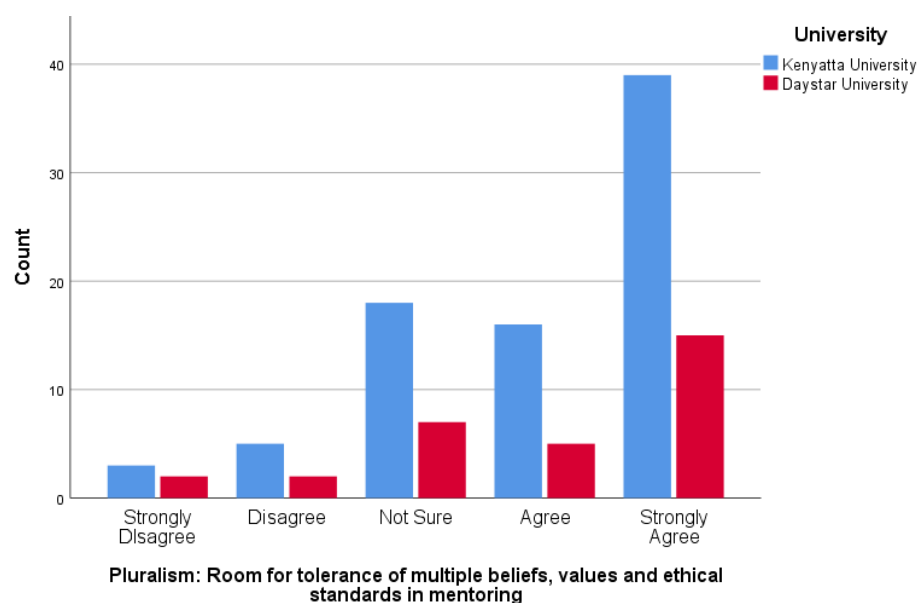


Figure 4.6

Responses on openness to alternative worldviews other than the ones they uphold.



Of the 112 student leaders who participated in the study, 64.2 % of the student leaders agree with the idea that there is no universal and absolute truth and principles that should guide engagements in a mentoring relationship. 12.5% indicated they were not sure and only 22.3% disagreed. Similarly, 60% of the university student leaders also expressed openness to multiple believes, values and ethical standards in the practice of mentoring. 22.3% were not sure and only 10.8% disagreed. These findings point to the possibility that a significant number of student leaders espouse pluralism in mentoring. This means that the student leaders tend to take in a lot of information from multiple sources and believe it is all true.

To examine the relationship between pluralism and students mentoring experiences and preferences, Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated for the each of the two factors of pluralism and the five factors of mentoring relationships being considered in the study; intentionality, relational intensity, developmental benefits, reciprocity and adaptability. The summary of the results is shown in Table 4.12.

Table 4.12

Pearson Correlation scores for pluralism and the five mentoring factors

Pluralism Variable	Mentoring Variables		Experience Correlation Coefficient score			Preference Correlation Coefficient score		
			Pearson	Sig (2-tailed)	N	Pearson	Sig (2-tailed)	N
No universal and absolute Truth or Principles in mentoring	Intentionality		0.068	0.491	105	0.132	0.168	111
	Relational intensity	Frequent Regular interact	-0.065	0.507	106	0.201	0.034*	111
		Mutual liking	0.123	0.210	105	0.106	0.262	0.006
	Developmental benefits		0.093	0.346	105	0.021	0.824	110
	Reciprocity		-0.170	0.081	106	0.195	0.042*	109
	Adaptability		0.079	0.425	105	0.112	0.244	110
Tolerance of multiple beliefs, values and ethical standards in mentoring	Intentionality		0.161	0.100	105	-0.022	0.816	112
	Relational intensity	Regular, Frequent interact	0.018	0.858	106	0.017	0.860	112
		Mutual liking	0.065	0.511	106	0.264	0.005*	111
	Developmental benefits		0.140	0.154	105	0.194	0.041*	111
	Reciprocity		0.045	0.649	106	0.042	0.665	110
	Adaptability		0.089	0.368	105	0.160	0.093	111

Based on the results above, it was established that the relationship between the student mentoring experiences and the two factors of pluralism was not statistically significant since all the P value (Sig (2-tailed) test) scores were greater than 0.05. This finding suggested that the student leaders' inclination to either of the two factors of pluralism did not significantly influence their experiences in mentoring relationships. However, as it relates to the preferences, it was established that preferences for relational intensity, developmental benefits and reciprocity had a statistically significant positive correlation with either of the two factors of pluralism.

The findings indicated that there was a positive, though weak, statistical association between student leaders' belief that there is no universal truth about mentoring and the preference for mentoring relationships based on mutual acceptance and liking. From these statistical results, it could be observed that student leaders who held the belief of pluralistic discourse and practice around the mentoring endeavour would likely prefer mutual acceptance and liking as the basis for pairing mentors and mentees. Irby (2011) observed that postmodern thinking questions the assumption that there are universal truths about mentoring that can be applied across board. In the context of such questioning, mutual acceptance and liking would be critical for meaningful interactions between mentors and mentees because it may result in higher trust and psychological safety in the mentoring relationship (Hu et al., 2016). This view is also supported by Utry et al. (2015) who opined that pluralism could be viewed as more than a quest for tolerance and relativism, but rather, as the pursuit of engagement with diversity and seeking understanding and dialogue beyond the lines of differences, in which case mutual acceptance and liking is crucial.

The findings also demonstrated that there is statistically significant linear relationship between the belief that there should be tolerance of multiple beliefs, values and ethical standards in mentoring and preference for reciprocity and development benefits in mentoring relationships. This could be interpreted to imply that the more the student leaders espoused tolerance for multiple beliefs, values and ethical standards, the more they preferred mentoring relationships where mentors and mentees were equal partners, learning from each other. Crutcher and Naseem (2016) posited that one of the effective approaches to mentoring is where collaboration and mutual learning is practised by all the parties involved in the mentoring relationships. This would seemingly apply well in the context of postmodernism where participants are seeking to accommodate multiple beliefs, values and ethical standards. However, caution must be taken so that the quest for mutual liking and acceptance emanating

from pressure for tolerance does not result in a state of moral ambivalence where there is no distinction between good and evil, which could undermined the desired developmental benefits (Lawson, 2021).

In what ways does non-objectivism influence mentoring among university student leaders?

Non-objectivism was assessed by two indicators. The first one was regard for ambiguity and arbitrariness in engaging issues, and the second was the student leaders' tendency to trust their own judgment, feelings and intuition more than the advice of mentors. Table 4.13 presents the findings for the student leaders combined while Figure 4.7 and Figure 4.8 capture the same results by university. There were no major variations between the student leaders from the two universities on the first indicator, regard for ambiguity and arbitrariness in engaging issues. However, on tendency to trust their own judgment, feelings and intuition more than mentor's advice, the percentage of students who strongly disagree was much higher for Kenyatta University than for Daystar University. Majority of the student leaders from Daystar were either not sure, agreed or strongly agreed that they value their own judgment, feelings and intuition more than mentor's advice.

Table 4.13

Non-objectivism in mentoring among university student leaders

Non-objectivism Indicator/Scale	Highly regards ambiguity and arbitrariness in engagements in mentoring relationships		Tends to trust own judgment, feelings and intuition more than the advice of mentors	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	20	18.2	22	19.6
Disagree	12	10.9	38	33.9
Not Sure	32	29.1	20	17.9
Agree	24	21.8	19	17.0
Strongly Agree	29	20.0	13	11.6
Total	110	100	112	100

Figure 4.7

Responses on openness to ambiguity and arbitrariness in mentoring relationship.

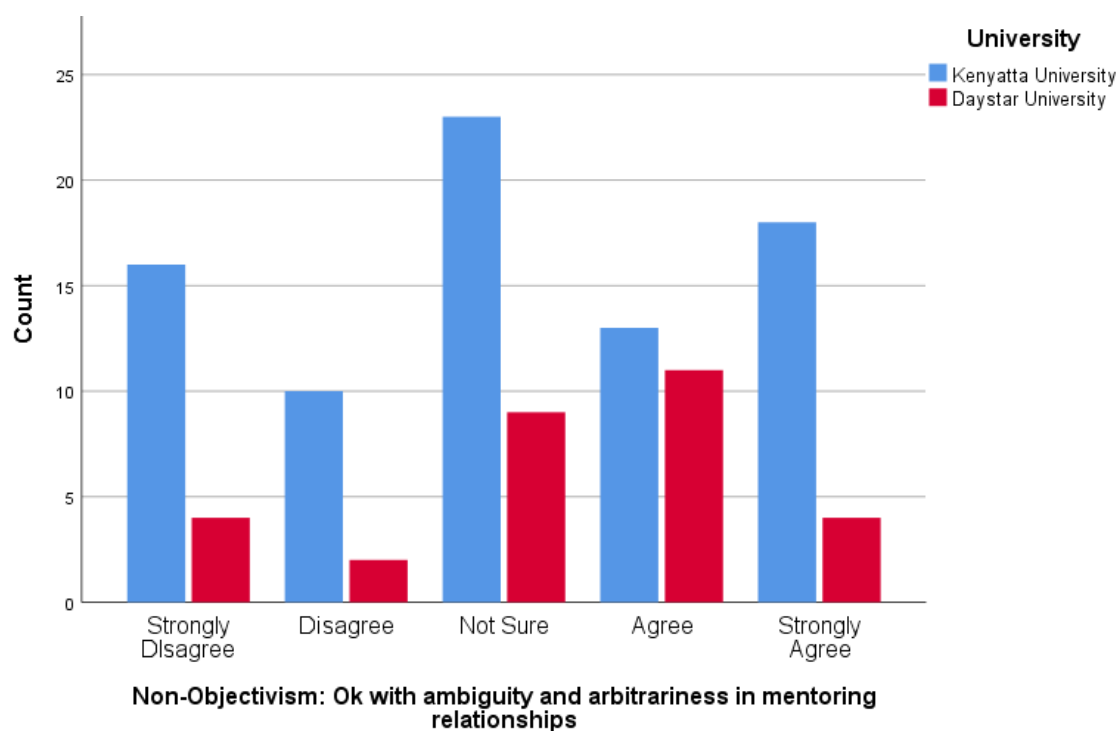
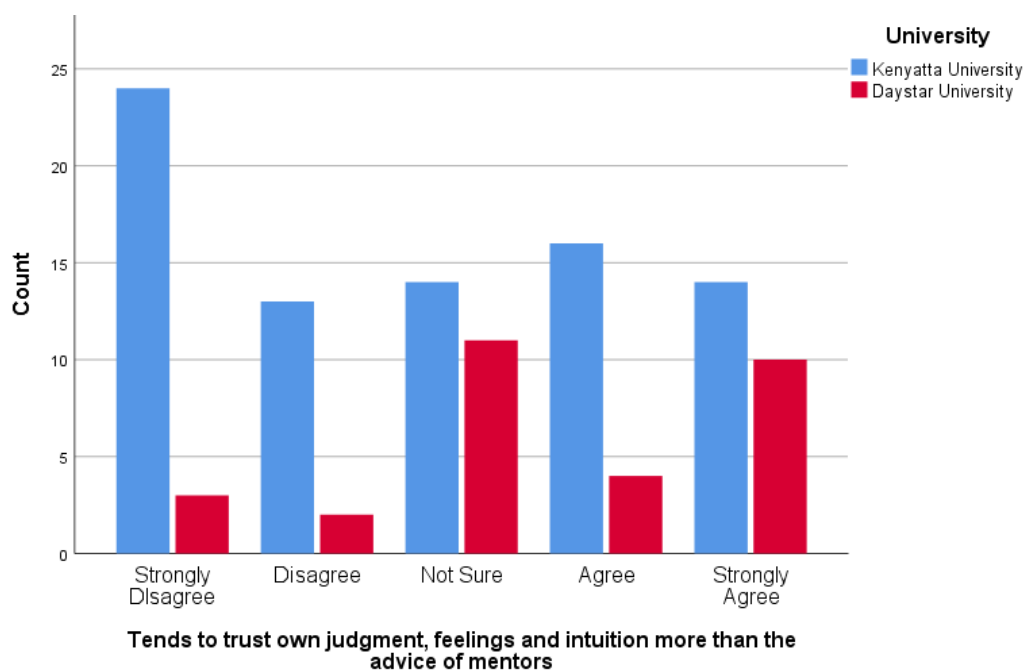


Figure 4.8

Student leaders' responses on tendency to trust their own judgment, feelings and intuition more than advice of mentors.



It was established that nearly half (41.8%) of the student leaders held the view that mentoring relationships should accommodate ambiguity and arbitrariness while 29.1% disagreed with this view. Notably, another 29.1% of the student leaders indicated they neither regard nor disregard the view. This could mean that nearly half of the student leaders held the view that most of what claims to be clear, uniform, and free of contradiction is unreliable and thus espouse ambiguity and arbitrariness. This would imply that some student leaders consider everything to be relative and subjective including mentoring itself.

On the other hand, the findings showed that 28.6% of the student leaders trusted their own judgment, feelings and intuition more than the advice of their mentors. Such student leaders question their mentors' authority or objectivity of their opinions. However, the majority, 53.5%, affirmed that they tend to trust the mentors more, and 17.9% neither agreed nor disagreed.

It is significant to note that while a significant 41.8% of the student leaders were ok with ambiguity and arbitrariness in mentoring relationships, a much higher percentage (53.5%) were keen to follow the advice of mentors. It could also be possible that the desire to accommodate arbitrariness and ambiguity in mentoring relationships is the reason some tend to trust their own judgments, feelings and intuition. A correlational analysis of non-objectivism and the five factors of mentoring generated the findings in Table 4.14 below.

Table 4.14

Pearson Correlation scores for non-objectivism and the five mentoring factors.

Non-Objectivism Factor	Mentoring Variables	Experience Correlation Coefficient score			Preference Correlation Coefficient score		
		Pearson	Sig (2-tailed)	N	Pearson	Sig (2-tailed)	N
Ok with ambiguity and arbitrariness in engaging issues in a mentoring relationship	Intentionality	-0.061	0.540	103	-0.028	0.773	110
	Relational intensity (Regular Interactions)	0.086	0.388	104	0.083	0.387	110
	Mutual Liking	0.227	0.021	104	0.239	0.012	109
	Developmental benefits	0.006	0.951	103	-0.030	0.758	109
	Reciprocity	-0.100	0.313	104	-0.031	0.750	108
	Adaptability	0.092	0.357	103	0.110	0.254	110
Tendency to trust their own judgment, feelings and intuition than the advice of mentors.	Intentionality	-0.036	0.716	105	-0.137	0.151	112
	Relational intensity	0.123	0.210	106	0.165	0.082	112
	Developmental benefits	-0.038	0.700	105	-0.211	0.026	111
	Reciprocity	0.034	0.732	106	0.110	0.254	110
	Adaptability	-0.088	0.373	105	-0.150	0.115	111

From the findings, relational intensity and developmental benefits were the only mentoring factors with a significant statistical correlation with non-objectivism. The results showed that the student leaders that affirmed ambiguity and arbitrariness in mentorship relationships also tended to prefer mentoring relationships with mutual acceptance and liking. Preference for ambiguity and arbitrariness largely arise from casting doubt over what could be considered as universal best practices for effective mentorship applicable across board, creating a situation where everything goes (Irby, 2011). It is therefore interesting to note that student leaders who would consider established mentoring content and approaches as more subjective than objective, were the same ones who would prefer high relational intensity with

mentors. This supports findings of a study among post-modern women in the United states, which established that women who upheld postmodernism preferred freedom to choose their mentors based on natural connection, mutual liking and acceptance (Neumann, 2011).

The findings also indicated a negative statistical correlation between student leaders' tendency to trust their own judgments and feelings rather than mentors' advice and preference for a mentorship relationship that stimulates learning, critical thinking and growth. This could imply that the more student leaders followed their own judgement rather than advice of their mentors, the less they preferred having measurable growth, critical thinking and creativity in mentoring relationships. This findings support the observation by Irby (2011) that non-objectivism promotes questioning of authority, in which case then, mentors cannot claim to be having objective opinion and understanding on any matter, and therefore have much less influence on the mentees. The potential disregard of authority and possibly influence of mentors could then be the reason for less preference for measurable growth in mentoring relationships. This less preference for measurable growth could also be attributed to the fact that non-objectivism also promotes preference for ambiguity and arbitrariness in mentoring relationships. Clear measurable growth would need to have an objective reference point, something that postmodernism tends to resist (Marshall, 2013).

How does deconstruction influence mentoring among university student leaders in Kenya?

The first indicator used for deconstruction was the view that every person in a mentoring relationship is entitled to create their own meaning of terms and concepts based on their context. The second was the tendency of university student leaders to be independent, create meaning and purpose for things by themselves rather than follow pre-set definitions, traditions and rules set by other people. The findings on how these two indicators of deconstruction are expressed among the student leaders were as shown in the Table 4.15.

Table 4.15

Deconstruction in mentoring among university student leaders.

Deconstruction Indicator/Scale	Every person in a mentoring relationship is entitled to create their own meanings of things based on their context		Tends to be independent, create own meaning and purpose for things rather than follow definitions and rules set by other people	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	11	9.9	27	24.3
Disagree	14	12.6	15	13.5
Not Sure	39	35.1	25	22.5
Agree	27	24.3	20	18.0
Strongly Agree	20	18.0	24	21.6
Total	111	100	111	100

The findings showed that 43% of the student leaders that responded either agreed or strongly agreed with the view that meaning of words and concepts lies with the interpreter and varies depending on context. Mentees and mentors are therefore entitled to have their own meaning of words and concepts applied in the mentoring processes. Only 22% either disagreed or strongly disagreed with this view, while a significant 35% neither agreed nor disagreed. Having 78% of the student leaders who responded either not sure or affirming this view points to the possibility that majority of the university student leaders would prefer having the freedom to deconstruct existing meanings of concepts and ideas in mentoring and establish their own. With this view, it would mean that there is no one standard way of looking at mentoring; things keep changing, there are always new ways of defining things, and thus meanings keep changing.

To investigate further whether the student leaders actually express this view that meaning is with the interpreter, the study sought to establish whether the student leaders who responded actually create their own meaning of things without making reference to established theories and concepts by other people. The findings revealed that 40% either agreed or strongly agreed that they are usually keen to create their own meanings of things

while 38% either disagree or strongly disagree. 22% of them indicated that they were not sure, a pointer that they possibly are not always keen to create their own meaning but wouldn't mind to if necessary. The specific numbers by university were as shown in Figures 4.9 and 4.10 below. The spread is similar for both Kenyatta University and Daystar University Student leaders.

Figure 4.9

Responses on the view that meaning of words and objects is always with interpreter

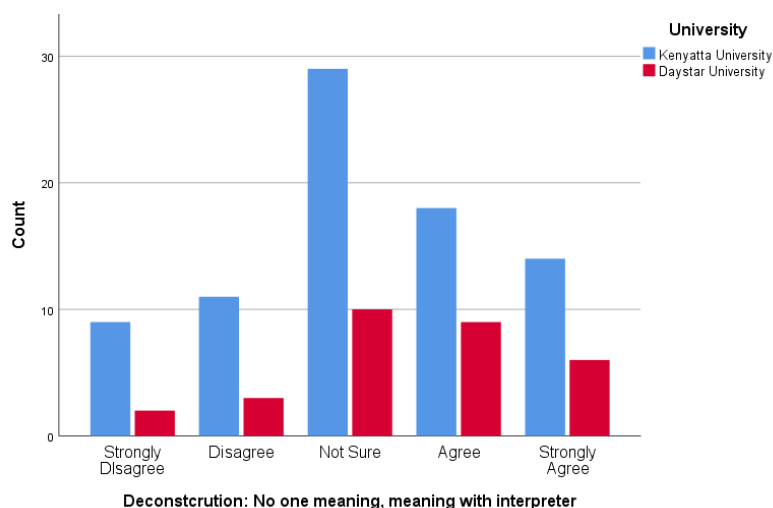
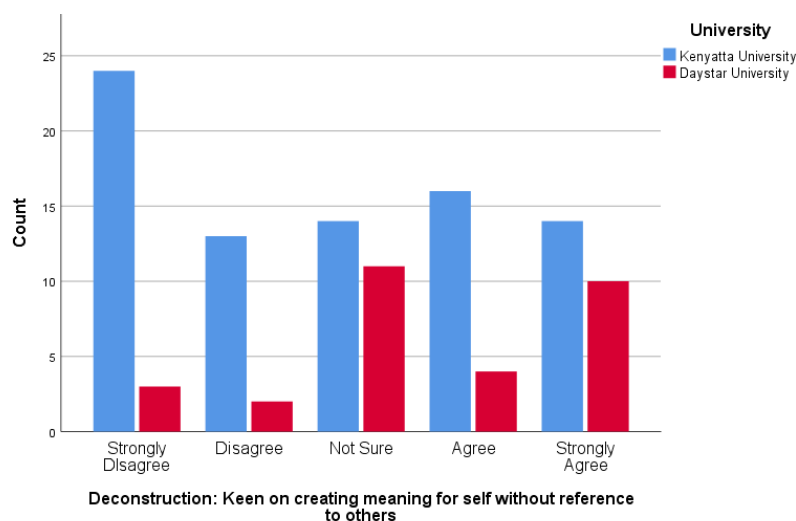


Figure 4.10

Student leaders' responses on keenness to create their own meanings without reference to existing ones or present rules.



Corelation analysis for deconstruction with the five factors of mentoring revealed a significant statistical relationships in two instances only as shown in Table 4.16 below.

Table 4.16

Pearson Correlation scores for deconstruction and the five mentoring factors.

Deconstruction Indicator	Mentoring Variables	Experience Correlation Coefficient score			Preference Correlation Coefficient score		
		Pearson	Sig (2-tailed)	N	Pearson	Sig (2-tailed)	N
No one meaning, meaning with interpreter	Intentionality	-0.107	0.279	104	-0.049	0.608	111
	Relational intensity (Frequent & Regular interactions)	0.084	0.392	105	0.156	0.102	111
	Mutual acceptance and liking	0.092	0.353	105	0.140	0.145	110
	Developmental benefits	-0.029	0.783	104	-0.083	0.387	110
	Reciprocity	-0.102	0.299	105	-0.052	0.589	109
	Adaptability	0.043	0.633	104	0.206	0.030*	111
Keen on meaning by self without references to others	Intentionality	-0.039	0.694	104	-0.035	0.718	111
	Relational intensity (Regular and frequent interactions)	-0.034	0.732	105	0.059	0.539	111
	Relational Intensity (Mutual Liking)	0.179	0.068	105	0.258	0.006*	110
	Developmental benefits	-0.088	0.373	104	0.013	0.892	110
	Reciprocity	-0.051	0.608	105	-0.075	0.440	109
	Adaptability	-0.008	0.940	104	0.801	0.991	110

The first statistical positive correlation was observed between the view that there is not one meaning and that meaning is with the interpreter, and preference for adaptability in mentoring relationships. This could mean that the more the student leaders affirmed the view that there is no one meaning for things and thus meaning is with the interpreter rather than the text or object being interpreted, the more they preferred a mentoring relationship that is flexible and open to new ideas and ways of doing things. This finding supports the complex adaptive systems approach, where mentoring is seen as a dynamic and flexible process that is always responding and adapting to both internal and external, predictable and unpredictable factors in an emergent and fluid context (Jones & Brown, 2011). This however differs with the findings of a study on peer mentoring as a transition strategy in the university by Egege and Kutieleh (2015), in which it was observed that whereas there is no standard practice for mentoring and therefore diversity does matter, an established framework for reference would be very helpful in facilitating effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

The second positive correlation was observed between the student leaders inclination to generate meaning by themselves without reference to others and preference to have mentoring relationships that are anchored on mutual acceptance and liking. This implied that the students who indicated having an inclination to generate their own meanings also indicated preference for mutual acceptance and liking between mentors and mentees.

In a study on identity undoing and power relationships in leadership development programs, Nicholson and Carroll (2013) observed that part of what happens in the leadership development process both between participants and facilitators, who in the case of mentoring relationships would be mentees and mentors, is the undoing or re-shaping of people's identity. This involves loss, shaking up and letting go of key identity markers as language and culture and at the same time building and acquiring new ones. On one hand the observations of Nicholson and Carroll would seem to contradict the posture of student leaders who were

inclined to generate meaning by themselves without references to others, because it would mean they are opposed to identity undoing. On the other hand the observation could explain why such student leaders would prefer mentoring relationships with mutual acceptance and liking, because that would guarantee some level of trust needed in engaging discourse on meanings and interpretations in the mentoring endeavour to accommodate possible loss, shaking up and letting go with relatively lower doubt and uncertainty about the source of influence.

How does cynicism influence mentoring among university student leaders in Kenya?

To explore the influence of cynicism on mentoring among university student leaders, the study considered two parameters. The first was the extent to which the student leaders held the view that most of the approaches and promised benefits of mentoring were often corrupted by partisan interests and therefore not reliable. The second was student leaders' position on the view that most mentoring relationships tend to fail and do not always produce the desired outcomes. The responses on the two parameters of cynicism were as shown in Table 4.17 below.

Table 4.17

Cynicism in mentoring among university student leaders

Cynicism Indicator/Scale	Most approaches and promised benefits of mentoring are often corrupted by partisan interests and therefore not reliable		Most mentoring relationships tend to fail and do not always produce the desired outcomes.	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	19	17.1	31	28.2
Disagree	24	21.6	24	21.8
Not Sure	23	20.7	21	19.1
Agree	29	26.1	18	16.4
Strongly Agree	16	14.4	16	14.5
Total	111	100	110	100

From the findings above, at least 40% of the student leaders who responded seemed to be cynical about mentoring initiatives and relationships. 40.5 % indicated that they thought that most approaches and promised benefits for mentoring were often corrupted by partisan interests and therefore not reliable and 30.9% indicated that they thought most mentoring relationships tend to fail and do not always produce the desired outcomes. Another about 20% of them neither agreed nor disagreed, which also points to some level of cynicism about mentoring initiatives. The implication of this is that one needs a lot of explaining and practical observation before any point is considered as true. Details of the spread between the two universities is as captured in Figures 4.11 and 4.12 below.

Figure 4.11

Student leaders' responses on the view that approaches and promised benefits to mentoring are not reliable.

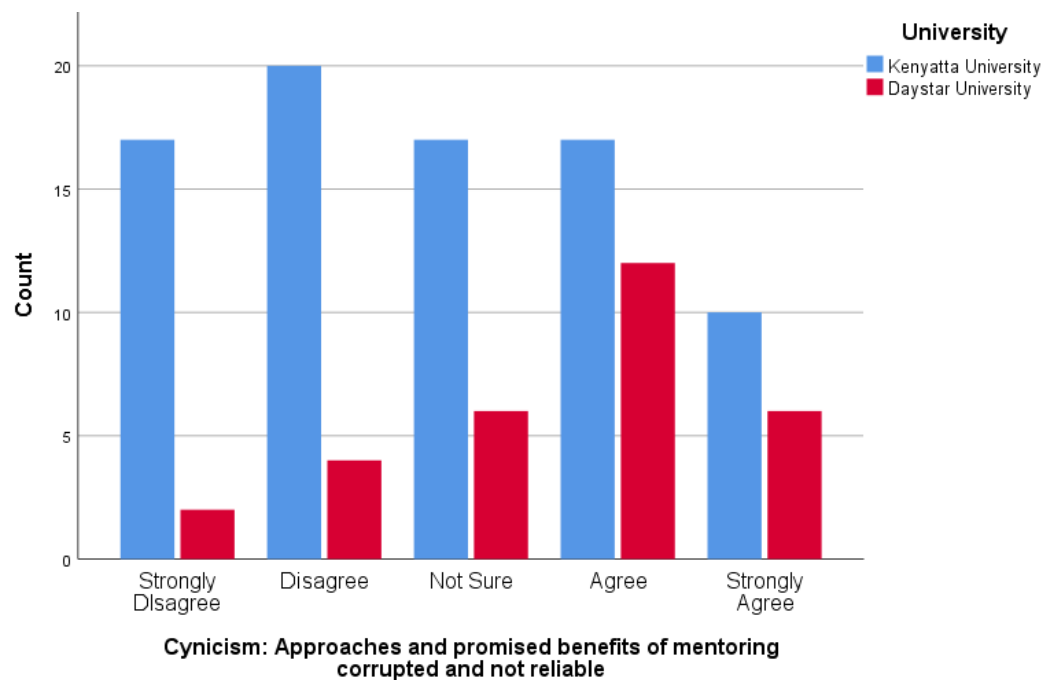
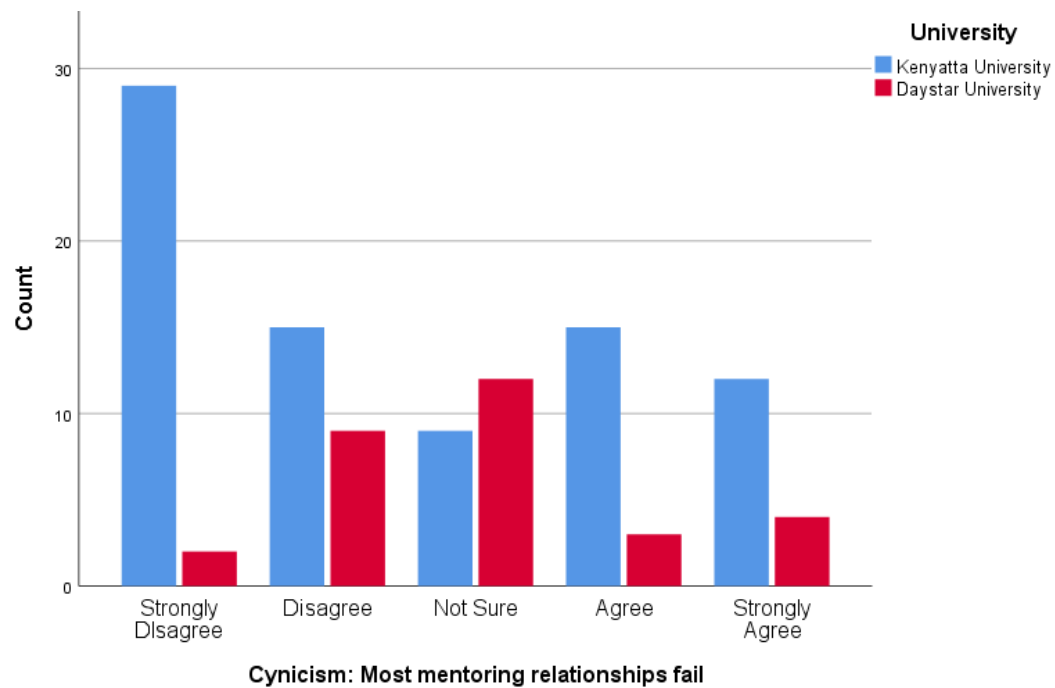


Figure 4.12

Student leaders' responses on the view that most mentoring relationships fail.



Pearson's correlation coefficients calculated between the two views and the five factors of mentoring being considered in the study revealed two significant relationships emerged as shown by the results in Table 4.18 below.

Table 4.18

Pearson Correlation scores for cynicism and the five mentoring factors.

Cynicism Factor	Mentoring Variables	Experience Correlation Coefficient score			Preference Correlation Coefficient score		
		Pearson	Sig (2-tailed)	N	Pearson	Sig (2-tailed)	N
Approaches and promised benefits of mentoring corrupted by partisan interests thus not reliable	Intentionality	-0.034	0.732	105	-0.07	0.458	111
	Relational intensity (Regular Interactions)	-0.073	0.459	106	0.156	0.103	111
	Relational intensity (Mutual Liking)	0.067	0.493	106	0.220	0.021*	111
	Developmental benefits	-0.153	0.119	105	-0.14	0.136	110
	Reciprocity	-0.212	0.029*	106	-0.150	0.120	109
	Adaptability	-0.058	0.559	105	0.039	0.687	110
Most mentoring relationships fail after all	Intentionality	0.017	0.867	104	0.082	0.395	110
	Relational intensity (regular interactions)	-0.018	0.321	105	0.110	0.251	110
	Relational intensity (Mutual liking)	-0.006	0.958	105	0.045	0.640	110
	Developmental benefits	-0.159	0.107	104	-0.122	0.205	109
	Reciprocity	-0.079	0.426	105	-0.101	0.297	109
	Adaptability	0.156	0.575	104	-0.095	0.324	109

The first statistically significant correlation was a positive correlation between the view that most of the approaches and promised benefits of mentoring are often corrupted by partisan interests and therefore are not reliable and the student leaders' preference for mutual

acceptance and liking in mentoring relationships. These findings pointed to the possibility that the more students were cynical about mentoring approaches and the promised benefits, the more they preferred mentoring relationships with mutual acceptance and liking between mentors and mentees. This could be interpreted to mean high relational intensity with mutual liking and acceptance could help mentoring relationships to thrive in the context of cynicism about mentoring approaches and promised benefits. This finding was in harmony with the arguments by Starr (2015) in an article on when mentoring fails in which it was pointed out that mentoring thrives in a context where there is mutual trust and openness and where the approaches and promised benefits focus on mentees needs. Mentoring therefore fails to thrive if the relationship is limited to predetermined approaches and goals which people who uphold postmodernism tend to be more cynical about.

The second was another positive correlation between this same view that most approaches and promised benefits of mentoring are not reliable and the experience of reciprocity in mentoring relationships. This indicated that the students who held the cynical view that mentoring approaches and promised benefits were not reliable seemed to agree more that they experienced reciprocity in mentoring relationships where mentors and mentees were equal partners learning and growing together. These findings could be attributed to the fact that 63% of mentoring relationships were peer mentoring relationships among the university student leaders. Reciprocity tends to be higher in peer mentoring relationships because both participants learn from each other (Frith et al., 2017). Reciprocity can also be perceived to exist when mentors are intentional to listen, learn and grow from the mentees in reverse mentorship (Raymond et al., 2021).

In what ways does community influence mentoring among university student leaders in Kenya?

The first indicator for community was the extent to which students thought that approach and content in mentoring should be more relational and experiential than rational and conceptual, and the second was belief that mentoring is best accomplished in group setting compared to by one-one-one approach. The range of responses were as presented in the Table 4.19. The spread between the two universities is as shown in Figures 4.13 and 4.14.

Table 4.19

Community in mentoring among university student leaders

Community Indicator / Scale	Content and approach in mentoring should be more relational and experiential than rational and conceptual		Mentoring is best accomplished in group setting as compared to one-on-one approach	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	1	0.9	25	22.3
Disagree	15	13.6	27	24.1
Not Sure	20	18.2	27	24.1
Agree	36	32.7	16	14.3
Strongly Agree	38	34.5	17	15.2
Total	110	100	112	100

Figure 4.13

Student leaders' responses on the view that content and approach in mentoring should be more relational and experiential than rational and conceptual.

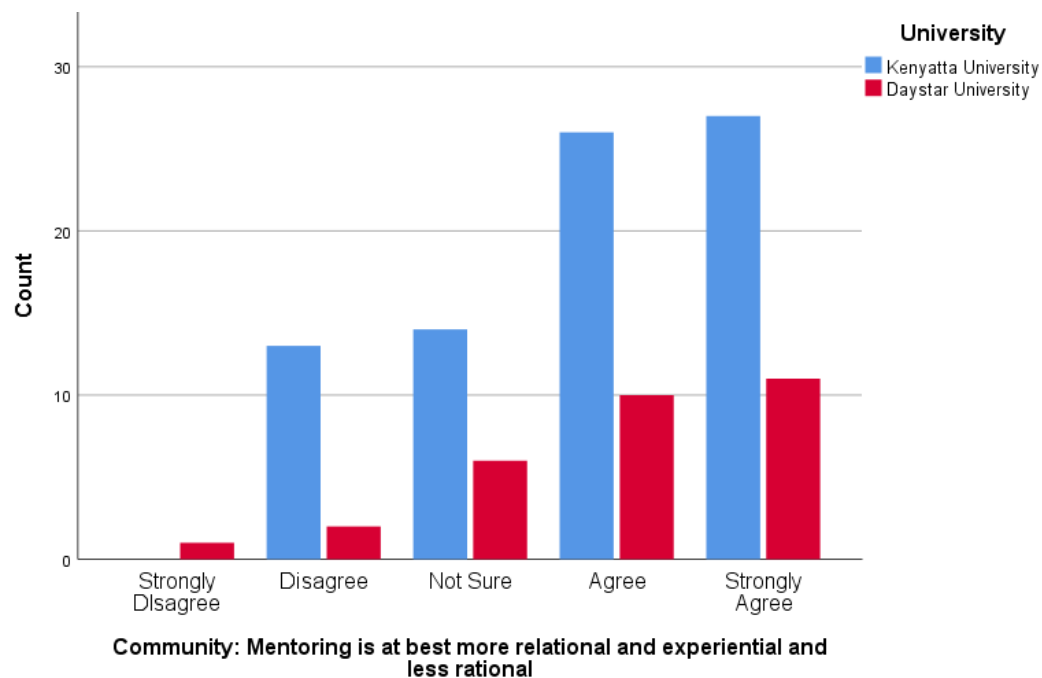
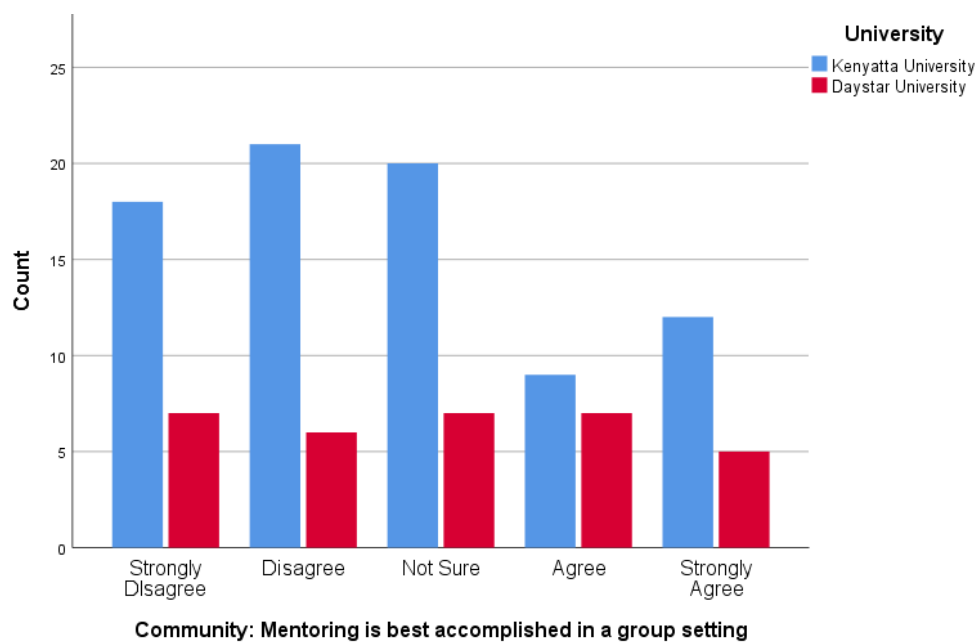


Figure 4.14

Student leaders' responses on the view that mentoring is best accomplished in group setting than in one-on-one approach



Notably, 67.3% of the student leaders who responded indicated that they either agreed or strongly agreed that a more relational and experiential approach to engaging issues in mentoring relationships was better than a more rational and conceptual approach. Only 14.5% indicated that they agreed that a more logical and rational approach was better and 18.2% indicating they neither agreed nor disagreed. With regard to group versus one-on-one mentoring relationships, the findings indicated that 29.5% agreed or strongly agreed that mentoring is best accomplished in group setting. On the other hand, 46.4% held the view that one-on-one mentoring approach was better than group approach and 24.1% were neutral.

Based on these findings, it was clear that more student leaders affirmed a more relational and experiential approach to engaging issues in mentoring than rational and conceptual approach. According to Rugnetta (2013), postmodernism shuns universal grand narratives in favour of local and small narratives. Such local narratives are constructed within small local communities where people can relate to each other's experiences. This finding thus conforms with the postmodernism view of mentoring where people's unique experiences developed within a community of shared perspectives are more preferred as the frame of reference rather than universal grand narratives. However, relatively fewer student leaders affirmed group mentoring as compared to one-on-one mentoring approach. This could be associated with the postmodern inclination to communal identity while at the same time striving to see the identity maintained as rather fluid and fragmented (Elaati, 2016).

Pearson's correlation analysis between community and the five mentoring factors revealed that there was significant statistical relationship between two indicators of community with three of the five factors of mentoring relationship that were considered in the study; relational intensity, reciprocity, and adaptability. Table 4.20 provides the details of Pearson's correlation coefficient analysis.

Table 4.20

Pearson Correlation for community and the five mentoring factors.

Community Indicator	Mentoring Variables	Mentoring Experience Correlation Coefficient			Mentoring Preference Correlation Coefficient		
		Pearson	Sig (2-tailed)	N	Pearson	Sig (2-tailed)	N
Mentorship is more relational and experiential and less logical	Intentionality	0.034	0.735	103	-0.096	0.318	110
	Relational intensity (regular interactions)	-0.004	0.967	104	0.077	0.427	110
	Relational intensity (Mutual liking)	0.204	0.037	104	-0.008	0.924	109
	Developmental benefits	0.080	0.423	103	0.105	0.276	110
	Reciprocity	0.089	0.488	104	-0.192	0.046*	108
	Adaptability	0.115	0.246	103	0.185	0.054*	109
Mentorship is best accomplished through groups than one on one	Intentionality	-0.018	0.856	105	0.022	0.817	111
	Relational intensity (Regular interactions)	0.068	0.486	106	0.233	0.014**	111
	Relational intensity (Mutual liking)	-0.015	0.879	106	0.269	0.005**	111
	Developmental benefits	-0.105	0.288	105	-0.047	0.627	110
	Reciprocity	-0.050	0.611	106	0.199	0.038*	109
	Adaptability	-0.020	0.838	105	-0.016	0.868	110

The findings showed a significant negative statistical correlation between the view that content and approach in mentoring should be more relational and experiential and the preference for reciprocity in mentoring relationships. This meant that the fact that student

leaders affirmed a more relational and experiential approach in mentoring did not mean they necessarily preferred mentoring relationships where mentors and mentees were equal partners learning from each other. A majority indicated that they still preferred to have the mentor as the leader in the relationship. These findings were in harmony with the findings of a study on experiences and perceptions of Makerere University student and faculty mentorship program in which the roles of a mentor were highlighted as providing guidance and helping the mentee make the most of their strengths and mitigate effects of their weakness (Ssemata et al., 2017). This view of mentors pointed towards having them as the leaders rather than equal partners in the relationship. The findings however are not consistent with the postmodernism inclination towards questioning of the authority of mentors over mentees (Irby, 2011).

A positive statistical correlation was established between the view that content and approach in mentoring should be more relational and experiential and the preference for adaptability in mentoring relationships. This finding indicated that the more the student leaders agreed that mentoring should be more relational and experiential the more they preferred a flexible and adaptive mentoring relationships. This is in harmony with the arguments of Jones and Brown (2011) that mentoring should be viewed as a dynamic relationship that is always responding and adapting to the changing factors within itself and the wider environment. The experiences of the participants in the mentoring relationships should form part of the factors influencing the mentoring process. Mentors should therefore adapt their approach and content to the mentees developmental level, experiences and preferences (Ralph & Walker, 2014).

A significant positive statistical correlation was also established between believe that mentoring is best accomplished through group setting than one on one approach, and relational intensity and reciprocity in mentoring relationships. This was interpreted to mean that the more the student leaders affirmed preference of group mentoring over one on one

approach, the more they preferred mentoring relationships with high relational intensity characterised by regular interactions and mutual acceptance and liking. The findings also pointed to the possibility that the more the student leaders agreed that mentoring is best accomplish in group setting as compared to one-on-one approach, the more they preferred mentoring relationships with high reciprocity where the mentors and mentees were equal partners.

According to Roberts and Green (2012), postmodernism advocates that meaning and understanding should be determined through community setting where each community creates its own system of beliefs and narratives, experiences and language that form the basic parameters of understanding reality. In view of this findings, it can be considered that preference for high relational intensity and reciprocity where group mentoring is affirmed as better than one-on-one approach could be attributed to the need to identify with each other's beliefs, narratives, experiences and language in the mentoring relationship. The desire to enjoy this group identity while at the same time affirming each person's unique contexts call for an engagement where the participants in the group are all considered equal partners and hence preference for reciprocity. Postmodernism therefore promotes more horizontal relationships where both mentors and mentees can learn from one another.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has provided the key findings of the study categorised in three main areas. The first part covered the demographic data. The second part captured the experiences and preferences of student leaders in the mentoring relationships. The third part focused on the research objectives where the assessment of various expressions of postmodernism in mentoring and how they influenced the mentoring experiences and preferences were captured. The summary of the findings is captured in the Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

This chapter is divided into four sections: the summary of findings, recommendations, proposed areas of research and conclusion. The summary of the findings of the study are organized as per the research questions and study objectives based on the five themes of postmodernism namely: pluralism, non-objectivism, deconstruction, cynicism and community and how they influence mentoring among university student leaders. The focus was on mentoring experiences and preferences with five factors being considered as presented in the conceptual framework namely intentionality, relational intensity, developmental benefits, reciprocity and adaptability.

Summary of findings

The majority of the student leaders involved in the research were within the age of 20-25, either in third or fourth year, and had served for a period of at least one year in leadership. Most of the respondents were also involved in mentoring relationships with more than half in peer mentoring relationships. It was observed that the mentoring preferences were most varied for relational intensity and that university student leaders had very high preferences for developmental benefits, intentionality and adaptability in mentoring relationships. With this background, the summaries of the findings under each of the research questions are provided hereunder.

How does pluralism influence mentoring among university student leaders in Kenya?

Majority of the student leaders indicated that they affirmed pluralism in mentoring, with 64.2 % of the student leaders indicating that they agreed with the idea that there is no universal and absolute truth and principles that should guide engagements in a mentoring

relationship and 60% expressed openness to multiple believes, values and ethical standards in the practice of mentoring.

Correlation analysis showed that the student leaders' inclination to pluralism did not significantly influence their experiences in mentoring relationships. However, as it relates to the preferences, it was established that student leader who held the belief that there is no universal truth about mentoring would most likely prefer mutual acceptance and liking as the basis for the relationship between mentors and mentees. Further, student leaders who affirmed tolerance for multiple beliefs, values and ethical standards, also had high preference for mentoring relationships where mentors and mentees were equal partners, learning from each other. It can therefore be argued pluralism promotes preference for higher relational intensity and reciprocity in mentoring relationships among university student leaders in Kenya.

In what ways does non-objectivism influence mentoring among university student leaders in Kenya?

It was established that 41.8% of the student leaders held the view that mentoring relationships should accommodate ambiguity and arbitrariness and 29.1% neither regard nor disregard the view. Further, 28.6% of the student leaders indicated that they considered mentors' advice as non-objective and therefore trusted their own judgment, feelings and intuition more than the advice of their mentors. However, 53.5% of the student leaders indicated that they see mentors' advice as objective and thus they tent to trust the mentors more.

The study established significant relationships between non-objectivism with preference for relational intensity and developmental benefits in mentoring university student leaders. Student leaders who affirmed the belief that what claims to be clear, uniform, and free of contradiction is not objective and therefore mentoring relationships should allow for

ambiguity and arbitrariness, also had more preference for high relational intensity in the mentoring relationships. Another key finding was that Student leaders who indicated that they trust their own judgement rather than advice of their mentors tended to have lesser preference for developmental benefits in mentoring relationships.

It follows then that nearly half of the university students espoused non-objectivism in mentoring relationships. Non-objectivism promotes higher preference for mentoring relationships with strong relational intensity. It however results in reduced focus on developmental benefits in mentoring relationships as both mentees consider knowledge to be subjective and thus not necessarily useful.

How does deconstruction influence mentoring among university student leaders in Kenya?

The study revealed that 78% of the student leaders either affirmed the view that meaning of words and concepts lies with the interpreter and context and thus mentees and mentors are entitled to have their own meaning of words and concepts applied in the mentoring processes, or would prefer having the freedom to deconstruct existing meanings of concepts and ideas in mentoring and establish their own. This was confirmed by further findings where 40% confirmed that they actually create their own meanings of things while 22% of them indicated that they were not sure, a pointer that they possibly are not always keen to create their own meaning but would not mind to if necessary.

A positive statistical correlation was established between the view that meaning is with the interpreter, and preference for adaptability in mentoring relationships. The more the student leaders affirmed the view that meaning is with the interpreter rather than the text or object being interpreted, the more they preferred adaptability in mentoring relationships. Another positive statistical correlation was established between the student leaders inclination to generate meaning by themselves without reference to others and preference to have mentoring relationships that are anchored on mutual acceptance and liking. Most of the

students who indicated having an inclination to generate their own meanings also indicated preference for mutual acceptance and liking among people involved in mentoring relationships.

With these findings, it was observed that majority of the student leaders would want the freedom to deconstruct meaning of words and concepts owing to the belief that meaning is with the interpreter and context. This makes mentors and mentees in the context of postmodernism to have a greater sense of entitlement to their own meaning of words and concepts applied in the mentoring processes. Adaptability and stronger relational intensity in mentoring relationships creates a conducive environment for expression of these preferences.

How does cynicism influence mentoring among university student leaders in Kenya?

The study showed that nearly half of the student leaders seemed to be cynical about mentoring initiatives and relationships. 40.5 % indicated that they thought that most approaches and promised benefits for mentoring were often corrupted by partisan interests and therefore not reliable and 30.9% indicated that they thought most mentoring relationships tend to fail and do not always produce the desired outcomes. Another about 20% of them neither agreed nor disagreed.

From correlation analysis, it was established that the student leaders who indicated that they were cynical about mentoring approaches and the promised benefits, also tended to have more preference for mentoring relationships with mutual acceptance and liking between mentors and mentees. Moreover, the student leaders who affirmed the cynical view that mentoring approaches and promised benefits were not reliable also seemed to agree more that they experienced reciprocity in mentoring relationships where mentors and mentees were equal partners learning and growing together.

As such, nearly half of the student leaders had a cynical view of mentoring characterized by the view that most approaches and promised benefits are not reliable that

most mentoring relationships tend to fail and do not always produce the desired outcomes.

This cynicism creates a greater desire to find meaning in mentoring relationships drawn from stronger relational intensity. It also promotes higher preference for reciprocity in mentoring relationships as the student leaders seek to experience growth and other promised outcomes of mentoring through mutual learning and growing together rather than a one-sided power relationship where the mentor is considered as the greater influencer.

In what ways does the community influence mentoring strategy among university student leaders in Kenya?

It was established that 67.3% of the student leaders affirmed that a more relational and experiential approach to engaging issues in mentoring relationships was better than a more rational and conceptual approach. Only 14.5% affirmed that a rational and conceptual approach was better and 18.2% indicated they were neutral on the two approaches. The study also showed that 29.5% held the view that mentoring is best accomplished in group setting, while 46.4% held the view that one-on-one mentoring approach was better than group approach. 24.1% of the student leaders indicated that they did not consider any as better than the other.

A negative statistical correlation was established between the view that content and approach in mentoring should be more relational and experiential and the preference for reciprocity in mentoring relationships. The student leaders who affirmed a more relational and experiential approach in mentoring indicated less preference for mentoring relationships where mentors and mentees were equal partners learning from each other. Another correlation was established between affirmation of a more relational and experiential and the preference for adaptability in mentoring relationships. Student leaders who agreed that mentoring should be more relational and experiential had higher preference for adaptive mentoring relationships. Additionally, student leaders who affirmed preference of group

mentoring over one on one approach, also seemed to have higher preference for high relational intensity in mentoring relationships.

This indicated that majority of the university student leaders preferred a more experiential and relational approach and content in mentoring than rational and conceptual one. This results in a higher preference for mentoring engagements that are adaptive to emerging environment both within their local communities with high relational intensity as well as the wider context. However, from a community point of view, majority of the student leaders still preferred one-on-one where the mentor mentoring for deeper engagement over group mentoring.

Recommendations

First, mentoring theories in the context of postmodernism should emphasize and explore more the concept of relational intensity. It has been observed in this study that postmodernism promotes high preference for relational intensity. According to Starr (2015), high relational intensity characterized by mutual liking and acceptance should be the basis for pairing mentees and mentors. This helps to cultivate openness and trust in an environment that seeks to affirm multiple perspectives, approaches and practices in the mentoring process. The resulting effect will be reduced cynicism and scepticism about the promised benefits and thus enabling mentoring relationships to thrive.

Second, university leaders and other facilitators of mentoring programs among university student leaders should have more regular and meaningful engagements with participants to clarify the desired mentoring goals, approaches and content. A participatory process should therefore be adopted in designing, running and evaluating the mentoring programs among university student leaders. This should also involve affirmation of both mentors' and mentees' needs and goals in the mentoring endeavour to assure the participants that their interests and preferences matter in the mentoring process. This is because student

leaders influenced by postmodernism will largely base their conclusions on their own experiences and personal relationships instead of what is considered universal truth accepted by their mentors or established institutions such family, church, institutions or government (Farhan, 2019). Involving them in the entire process will help build trust and establish basis for them to be objective in engaging with their mentors.

Third, a collaborative approach to mentoring that promotes reciprocity, where both mentors and mentees have shared power in the relationships could be adopted. This is in view of the finding that postmodernism promotes higher preference for reciprocity in mentoring relationships. Various expressions of postmodernism can be seen as part of the expressions of power relationship dynamics that happen in mentoring as a leadership development strategy (Nicholson & Carroll, 2013) . Since it is not useful for either mentees or mentors to be passive participants in the relationships without influence on each other, then a collaborative approach will allow constructive discourses over what is considered truthful and objective, and in defining content and approaches in the mentoring relationships and programs. This is because with high reciprocity in mentoring relationships, mentors and mentees are seen to be mutual partners in the relationship sharing power equitably and thus open to influence each other.

Fourth, to promote adaptability in mentoring relationships, facilitators and participants in mentoring programs among university student leaders should take a more flexible approach. They should explore multiple available alternatives and pursue the options that give the best outcomes. To make this possible, the best of traditional and emergent theories of mentoring should be harnessed to achieve best results depending on context. Highly structured, formal and inflexible programs should be replaced by more informal and adaptive programs. The mentoring content and approach should be generative and responsive to emerging realities. However, this should be engaged with caution so that the mentoring

process is not devoid of direction and measurable developmental benefits which could easily lead to general disillusionment of the participants (Elaati, 2016).

Fifth, adopting a combination of both group and one-one-one mentoring in the context of postmodernism is critical to allow expression of individual uniqueness within a context of local community where local narratives are defined and universal grand narratives are contextualized. This would also allow participants involved in the group setting to identify with each other's preferences and experiences in ways that allow openness in discourse and practice on issues being engaged in the mentoring process. In contexts where values and grand narratives are espoused, like religious groups, a stronger peer mentoring model combined with greater reciprocity between less experienced mentees and more experienced mentors in a group setting should be adopted to help create communities with shared experiences, values and beliefs. Mentoring programs among university student leaders in the context of postmodernism should therefore be dynamic, employing both large group, small group and individualized approach.

Areas for Further Research

This study acknowledges a couple of limitations and therefore recommends several areas for further research. First, whereas the main aim of the study was to establish the influence of postmodernism on mentoring, there was no clear data to establish the prevalence and various expressions of postmodernism among university student leaders. It became therefore apparent that a preliminary study on this is essential to provided necessary basis for future studies on mentoring in the context of postmodernism. The study focused on postmodernism as a worldview charactering by questioning. It would be great to explore other perspectives and how the related expressions affect mentoring.

Second, the research focused on two selected universities out of a total of 74 accredited universities in Kenya. A more expanded scope for the research reaching more

student leaders from a larger number of universities would provide more insight into the subject and form a stronger basis for generalizations.

Third, the study was cross-sectional in nature and thus the data collected only reflects a snapshot of the student leaders within the period of study. Future research work could adopt longitudinal research design to allow more comprehensive examining of postmodernism expressions and their influence on mentoring among university student leaders to allow for proper evaluation of causal models over a relatively longer period of time.

Furthermore, the researcher recommends a more detailed analysis of each of the themes of postmodernism where the indicators that were used are defined in more detail and multiple data collection techniques are used to enable triangulation to strengthen the validity and reliability of the findings.

Conclusion

Context experienced by university students significantly influences their learning and development in diverse ways (Weidman, Deangelo & Bethea, 2014). This study established that the context of postmodernism significantly influences mentoring experiences and preferences among university student leaders in various ways. It was noted that preference for relational intensity was the factor in mentoring that was most influenced by postmodernism.

The other factors influenced in order of significance were preference for reciprocity and adaptability. Developmental benefits was the least influenced. Intentionality was the only factor not influenced at all by the various expressions of postmodernism among university student leaders. Postmodernism promotes preference relational intensity, reciprocity and adaptability to achieve the desired developmental benefits. As such it was established mentoring university students in the context of postmodernism should be more relational, experiential, reciprocal and adaptive.

Chapter Summary

The chapter has demonstrated through the summary of findings, recommendations and the conclusion that postmodernism has significant influence on experiences and preferences in mentoring among university student leaders. The chapter also outlined the proposed areas of further research highlighting survey of expressions of postmodernism among university student leaders, expanded scope to include more universities, a longitudinal rather than cross-sectional approach and a more detailed analysis of each of the themes of postmodernism and their influence on mentoring university student leaders.

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APPENDIX 1: RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

Research Questionnaire

Dear Participant,

This questionnaire is part of a research project investigating the influence of postmodernism on mentoring among university and college students. The purpose of the research is to assess the expressions and prevalence of postmodernism and establish how it influences mentoring among university students. Ultimately, it is intended that the research findings will help to enhance the capacity for development of effective mentoring programs and initiatives as a strategic tool for developing university student leaders into highly effective leaders both in their present leadership roles in their universities and future roles as leaders in their professions and the wider society.

The questionnaire should take about 30 minutes and is completely confidential. Data will only be used for the purposes of this research, and no information that could lead to the identification of any individual will be disclosed in reports or to any other party.

If you have any questions, or would like any further information about the research, please contact the researcher at muganda.baraza@students.pacuniversity.ac.ke or 0720744100

Part 1: General Information

Please select your University

Kenyatta University ☐ Daystar University ☐ Other ☐ Specify _____

Please indicate your age bracket

Below 20 years ☐ 20-25 years ☐ 25-30 years ☐ Above 30 years ☐

Please indicate the year of Study

First ☐ Second ☐ Third ☐ Fourth ☐ Fifth ☐ Sixth ☐

Please indicate where you serve as a student leader

☐ Student Governing Council

☐ Religious Society (Christian Union, Catholic Community, Muslim Community, Seventh Day)

[] Other (Please Specify) _____

Part 2: General information and experience in mentoring

From your experience, do you think mentoring is necessary for university student leaders?

Yes [] No []

Kindly share some reasons for your answer.

Are you involved in any form of mentoring for leadership development?

Yes [] No []

If your answer is NO, kindly share the reasons why.

If your answer is YES, please tick the statements that best describe the mentoring relationship you are in from the list below

I am in peer mentoring relationship

Have a mentor, but not mentoring anyone nor in peer mentoring

I don't have a mentor but I am mentoring someone

I am not in any form of mentoring relationship

Kindly rate the following in the mentorship relationships you are currently involved in

Strongly Disagree - 1; Disagree - 2; Neither Agree Nor Disagree – 3; Agree-4; Strongly Agree - 5.

Area of Assessment	Rating	Reasons for your rating
There are clear goals and plan of action for achieving them		
Mentor and Mentee have frequent and regular interactions on regular basis.		
There is mutual acceptance, attraction and liking between Mentor and Mentee.		
There is visible and measurable learning and growth, as a result of the mentoring relationship		
The relationship stimulates creativity and critical thinking		
Mentors and mentee are equal and mutual partners learning together growing together		
The program is flexible and responsive, open to new ideas and approaches as need arises		
There is a good mix of both formal and informal engagements in the mentoring process		

Part c: Preferences in mentoring relationships

The list below gives various statements describing various aspects of mentoring relationships. Please rate your level of preference using the scale below:

Least Preferred - 1; Less Preferred - 2; Neutral – 3; More Preferred-4; Most Preferred - 5.

Area of Assessment	Rating	Reasons for your rating
Mentoring goals should be well defined with clear timelines and action plan from start to end as opposed to an open program with flexible goals and timelines		
Interactions between mentor and mentee are regular and frequent rather than irregular on need basis.		
Interactions between Mentors and Mentee are based on mutual acceptance and likeability rather than obligation out be being paired by third party.		
The mentoring relationship generates visible growth and stimulates critical thinking, creativity and innovation		
Mentor and Mentee are equal and mutual partners learning together rather than the case where the Mentor is the primary source of influence in the relationship.		
The mentoring engagements are flexible in approach and content and thus adaptive to new ideas and situations rather than having a highly structured and rigid approach.		
There is a good mix of both formal and informal engagements in the mentoring process		

Part 4: Postmodernism and mentoring

Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements

Pluralism

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
There is no one universal and absolute truth about mentoring, all truth is relative and depends on the context					
There should be room for tolerance of multiple beliefs, values and ethical standards in mentoring because there is no one correct way of looking at things					

Non-objectivism

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Ambiguity and arbitrariness in engaging issues of various kinds is ok in mentoring relationships, after all, we are not always objective					
When engaging in mentoring, I prefer to trust my own judgment, feelings and intuition more than the advice of mentors (leaders, experts, etc).					

Deconstruction

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Every person in a mentoring relationship is entitled to create their own meaning of terms and objects based on their context					
Being independent, create meaning and purpose for things by myself, and do whatever I enjoy rather than follow pre-set definitions, traditions and rules set by other people					

Cynicism

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Most of the approaches and promised benefits of mentoring are often corrupted by partisan interests and therefore are not reliable					
Being sceptical rather than optimistic about mentoring because most mentoring relationships tend to fail and do not always produce the desired outcomes					

Community

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Content and approach in a mentoring relationship should be more relational and experiential and less rational and conceptual.					

Mentoring is at best in a group setting as compared to one on one approach					
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How would you describe the attitude of university student leaders towards mentoring?

What do you think are the three main challenges university student leaders face in various mentoring relationships?

Kindly state at least 3 key qualities you consider most important for a Mentor in the area of leadership

Any other comment you have about the research

Thank you so much.

QUESTIONNAIRE QUESTIONS

Dear Mentor,

My name is Ezekiel Muganda Baraza. I am conducting an academic research titled;

“The Influence of postmodernism on mentoring among University Student Leaders.” The research is in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Arts in Leadership at Pan Africa Christian University. The study is intended to help enhance the capacity for development of effective mentoring programs and initiatives as a strategic tool for developing university student leaders into highly effective leaders both in their present leadership roles in their universities and future roles as leaders in their professions and the wider society.

Should you have any questions, or would like any further information about the research, please contact me at muganda.baraza@students.pacuniversity.ac.ke or 0720744100

Please indicate the institution where the students you mentor come from

Kenyatta University [☐] Daystar University [☐] Other [☐] Specify_____

As a person involved in mentoring university student leaders, why is mentoring in leadership necessary for university student leaders?

Postmodernism is a worldview characterized by among other things PLURALISM- rejection of absolute truth asserting that all truth is relative, NON-OBJECTIVISM - assertion that all knowledge is subjective, DECONSTRUCTION – assertion that meanings are determined by the interpreter and not the text or object being interpreted, CYNICISM– tendency to question everything thus leading to pessimistic view of reality, and COMMUNITY– preference for communal identity over individual identity. Do you think postmodernism in this sense affects or is likely going to affect the experiences, perspectives, preferences and outcomes of mentoring among university student leaders?

Yes [☐] No [☐] Not Sure [☐] Specify_____

If Yes in 3 above, please highlight some ways you see postmodernism affecting mentoring of student leaders either from your own experience or your reflection on experience of others.

If No in 3 above, please give reasons for your answer.

In your opinion, what should be done to enhance mentoring of University Student Leaders in a post-modern context?

Any other ideas or comments relating to the subject of mentoring University Student Leaders in the context of post-modernism?

Thank you for your timely assistance!

APPENDIX II: CLEARANCE LETTER



P.O. Box 56875 - 00200
 Nairobi, Kenya
 Lumumba Drive, Roysambu
 off Kamiti Rd, off Thika Rd
 Tel: 0734 400694/0721 932050
 Email: enquiries@pacuniversity.ac.ke
 website: www.pacuniversity.ac.ke

21st AUGUST, 2020

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION & ETHICS CLEARANCE LETTER FOR
 BARAZA MUGANDA EZEKIEL REG. NO: MALD/8243/0/16**

Greetings! This is an introduction letter for the above named person a final year student at Pan Africa Christian University (PAC University), pursuing a Master of Arts in Leadership.

He is at the final stage of the programme and he is preparing to collect data to enable him finalise on his Thesis. The thesis title is ***"Mentoring University Student Leaders in the Context of Postmodernism: A Case Study of Student Leaders in Selected Universities in Kenya"***.

We kindly request that you allow him obtain a research permit so as to proceed and conduct research at selected Universities in Kenya.

Warm Regards,  **PAN AFRICA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY
 REGISTRAR**
 P.O. Box 56875 - 00200
 TEL: 0721 932050/ 0734 400694
 NAIROBI KENYA

Dr. Lilian Vikiru
 Registrar Academic Affairs
 Pan Africa Christian University
 Lumumba Drive, Roysambu, off Kamiti Rd, off Thika Rd
 P.O Box 56875-00200, Nairobi, Kenya
 Tel: +254 721-932050/726-595863/734-400694
 Email: registrar@pacuniversity.ac.ke
 Web: www.pacuniversity.ac.ke

APPENDIX III: NACOSTI PERMIT

REPUBLIC OF KENYA
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Ref No: 336319

DATE OF ISSUE: 29/SEPTEMBER/2020

RESEARCH LICENSE

This is to Certify that Mr. Ezekiel Muganda Baraza of Pan Africa Christian University, has been licensed to conduct research in Nairobi on the topic: Mentoring University Student Leaders In The Context Of Postmodernism: A Case Study Of Student Leaders In Selected Universities In Kenya for the period ending : 29/September/2021.

License No: NACOSTI/P/20/6887

336319

Applicant Identification Number



Walter M...

Director General
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY &
INNOVATION

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