

CULTURE AND LEADERSHIP IN KENYA

by

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DEDICATION

To my husband Petra,
and children, Tyler Anaya, and Kyle and Julia Anaya,
whose love for Kenya and its people has been seen in their sacrifice
throughout this study,
and whose commitment to future endeavors is an inspiration to me.

I offer this study to those who selflessly will give of themselves
to causes greater than their own success,
to Kenyan communities beyond their own affiliation,
and will do so for the good of all.

ABSTRACT

This dissertation investigates managerial leadership and its cultural foundations in Kenya. It discusses the theoretical underpinnings of culturally contingent leadership theories, and examines Sub-Saharan African leadership through existing literature, cultural metaphors, and qualitative and quantitative methodologies. The study replicates the Global Leadership and Organisational Behaviour Effectiveness (GLOBE) methodologies with 267 respondents – managers in the finance and food processing sectors, and the civic sector (education and health). The literature review focuses on leadership issues impeding socio-economic development, complexities such as ethnic heterogeneity, colonial history, customary practices, instability in governance, conflict, corruption, and poverty. The cultural domain is also examined in terms of ethno-linguistic groups and major historical and geo-political influences on these groups. Additional aspects of culture that pose persistent problems to Kenyan leadership are explored: paternalism and patronage, and the legacy of entitlement and bureaucracy — negative influences on work-related relations, and managerial and political leadership. Findings on organisational culture and societal culture indicate that Kenyan values and practices are not congruent, thereby creating a unique profile of Kenyan leader attributes and leadership styles. The study identifies *Bwana Kubwa* (Big Boss) managerial leadership as a norm, political leadership as “a dirty game,” and an “inspirational idealist” as the preferred leader. Lastly, survey results for Kenya are compared against GLOBE dimensions of culture and leadership for Sub-Saharan Africa, as well as against West Africa.

Key Terms: leadership, management, Sub-Saharan Africa, Kenya, GLOBE study, culture dimensions, ethnicity, leadership cultural metaphors, social development, organisational behaviour, industry sectors

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ACRONYMS

AEO	Africa Economic Outlook
AFDB	African Development Bank
CCI	Country Co-Investigator
CCK	Communication Commission of Kenya
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
COMESA	Common Market for East and Southern Africa
CPI	Corruption Perceptions Index
CLT	Culturally Endorsed Leadership Theory
D.I.E.	Describe, Interpret, Evaluate
EABI	East African Bribery Index
EAC	East African Community
EFW	Economic Freedom of the World index
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
GDP	Gross domestic product
GIA	Global Integrity Alliance
GII	Gender Inequality Index
GLOBE	Global Leadership and Organisational Behavior Effectiveness
GOK	Government of Kenya
GNI	Gross National Income
HDI	Human Development Index
HDR	Human Development Report
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Syndrome
IBM	International Business Machines (a US computer company)
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IEBC	Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IHDI	Inequality Adjusted Human Development Index

IMF	International Monetary Fund
KACC	Kenya Anti-Corruption Commission
KNBS	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
LDC	Least Developed Country
LPI	Legatum Prosperity Index
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MP	Member of Parliament
MPI	Multidimensional Poverty Index
NEPAD	The New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PPP	Purchasing Power Parity
RMS	Royal Media Service
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SME	Small to medium enterprises
SMS	Short Message Service
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNCAC	United Nations Convention Against Corruption
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WB	World Bank
WEF	World Economic Forum
WHO	World Health Organisation

GLOSSARY and FOREIGN WORDS

<i>baraza</i>	A community meeting
<i>Bwana Kubwa</i>	Kiswahili meaning “big man;” refers to senior authority figures
clientelism	Political loyalty to leaders who provide patronage
familism	A form of social organisation whereby the family group is the reference point for all decisions
<i>Gemeinschaft</i>	German word for close in-group affiliation; fellowship.
<i>Hakuna matata</i>	Kiswahili for “no worries;” popular phrase meaning not to worry
<i>Harambee</i>	Swahili word meaning “let’s all pull together;” it became a Kenyan national theme for nation-building
<i>Inshallah</i>	Arabic term meaning “God willing”
<i>jua kali</i>	Kiswahili phrase meaning “hot sun” and refers to the informal sector of Kenya’s economy
<i>Karibu</i>	Kiswahili for “welcome”
<i>Kiswahili</i>	The language of the Swahili people, and one of the two national languages. Generally, <i>Swahili</i> is used for both people and language
<i>matatu</i>	Kenya mini-van that functions as public taxi
M-Pesa	Mobile money
<i>Mzee</i>	A Kiswahili term of respect for a male elder
nepotism	The practice of favouring family (or friends), particularly in giving them benefits as in giving them jobs
<i>Nyayo</i>	Kiswahili word for “footsteps;” it became a national philosophy following Kenya becoming independent of its colonial rule
parastatal	Companies that are either state-owned or serve the state indirectly
paternalism	The practice, for the benefit of leaders, to restrict subordinates’ freedom to make their own decisions
patrimonialism	A system of governance in which a male leader maintains authority through others being personally loyal to him
patronage	The power to give privileges, particularly access to political office
<i>teranga</i>	Senegalese word meaning “hospitality”
<i>Ubuntu</i>	South African worldview or philosophy of community engagement
<i>ujamaa</i>	Kiswahili for family; a Tanzanian approach to developing rural communities through villagisation
<i>umoja</i>	Kiswahili for solidarity, unity, and oneness; it refers to coming together for meetings and demonstrate commitment to a shared purpose
<i>wako-niwako</i>	Kiswahili for “your own is your own” and refers to one’s responsibility to kinfolk

