

**THE ROLE OF LEADERSHIP IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION WITHIN
THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN KENYA: A CASE OF THE NAIROBI
CITY COUNCIL**



BY

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ABSTRACT

Leadership is regarded as a critical factor in the initiation and implementation of the transformations in organizations. With respect to the management of transformation processes in organizations, there is a strong need for leaders who are more change-centred. These leaders place value on the development of a clear vision and inspire followers to pursue the vision. In this way they provide a strong motivational force for change in followers. This study sought to establish the role of leadership in conflict resolution in local authorities. The scope of the study was the Nairobi City Council. The focus was further narrowed down to the executive and policy arms of leadership. This study adopted a case study design. A case study approach was necessary considering the nature of the target respondents. The primary data for the study was collected from the key informants drawn from both the executive and policy arms of the Nairobi City Council. Two methods of data collection were applied. They included: in-depth interviewing and self administered questionnaires methods. Qualitative data was analyzed through content analysis. Quantitative data was analyzed through factor analysis. Factor analysis was applied in establishing the level of transformational leadership skills using the Multi-Factor Leadership Assessment questionnaire. The findings were presented through narratives and tables.

First, the findings showed that the leadership style at the Nairobi City Council from both the political and the executive arms of governance is largely democratic/ participative. Secondly, the findings indicated that the sampled leaders score very highly on “*idealized influence*” and “*individualized consideration*” transformational leadership attributes. Idealized influence showed the ability of the leaders to inspire power and pride in their followers, by going beyond their own individual interests and focusing on the interests of the group and of its members. Individualized consideration indicated the degree to which the leaders show interest in others’ well being, assign projects individually, and pay attention to those who seem less involved in the group. Thirdly, the findings revealed that the nature of conflicts experienced at the Nairobi City Council can be grouped into three categories namely organizational conflicts; operational conflicts; and structural conflicts. Finally, the findings revealed a link between leadership and conflict resolution at the

NCC. The study showed that leadership is an important aspect of conflict resolution. The study recommended the need for a policy framework to be developed to guide on how to sensitize the leadership from both the executive and political arms of the council on how they can be able to enhance their practice on the five aspects of transformational leadership that recorded moderate or low ratings. There is need for future research to investigate the construct validity of transformational leadership as it embraces direct consequences for effective conflict resolution tendencies.