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**Gordon Institute  
of Business Science**  
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## **Identifying leadership potential in the public sector from an intentional change perspective**

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## **Abstract**

The challenge of leadership in the public sector has far reaching implications for the entire society given its role in the regulation of the affairs of any society. The complexities of the public sector decision making and operations as well as their implications require good leadership. Therefore the identification of leadership potential at all levels is crucial in order to design the interventions to develop the potential further. Studies have shown that there is not a lot of research done in the area of leadership potential identification especially in the public sector. This is also because, until recently, there has been no widely accepted framework for identification of leadership potential that is applicable at all levels.

A model of identifying leadership potential has recently been published and this model has been applied in the identification of leadership potential in the Australian public sector. This study aims to assess the leadership potential of the public sector managers from an intentional change perspective. This was done through a determination of the relationship between the three concepts of ideal self, leadership potential as well as the current performance of managers in the public sector. Furthermore, an assessment of the required organizational support to improve awareness of ideal self by the employees and managers was done. 95 responses from a variety of middle and senior managers in the Department of Environmental Affairs, South Africa were collected and analysed. The analysis included Principle Component Analysis and Correlations to assess the relationships between these three constructs. Also 12 interviews with middle managers (level 11-12) across most departmental functions were conducted and analysed.

The results indicated that there does not appear to be any statistically significant relationship between performance scores and ideal self as well as performance scores and leadership potential. They, however, indicated that there is a statistically significant relationship between the ideal self and the leadership potential. Furthermore, the results showed that to improve the awareness of the ideal self by the employees and managers and thereby increase their leadership potential, the organization needs to consider a few things. Those are, training and organizational culture; conversations with managers; coaching and mentoring; clear succession planning and rotation; opportunity or space to innovate.

**Key Words:** Ideal Self; Leadership Potential; Performance; Public Sector; Leadership

## **Declaration**

I declare that this research project is my own work. It is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration at the Gordon Institute of Business Science, University of Pretoria. It has not been submitted before for any degree examination in any other University. I further declare that I have obtained the necessary authorisation and consent to carry out this research.

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Gcinumzi B. Qotywa

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Date

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## **1. CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE RESEARCH PROBLEM**

### **1.1 Introduction**

In spite of the identification of the leadership potential as a serious concern for a lot of organisations, until recently there has hardly been a criteria that organisations are (or should be) using in this assessment (Dries & Pepermans, 2012; Troth & Gyetvey, 2014). There is, however, an increasing recognition that the process of leadership potential identification is very crucial for the long-term organisational survival (Troth & Gyetvey, 2014) and that identifying outstanding performers or stars is an important aspect of managing talent (Bish & Kabanoff, 2014). Furthermore, there is an obvious growing need for well-designed leadership studies in the public administration (Tummers & Knies, 2013). This study hopes to explore the concept of leadership potential as opposed to leadership development; however, there will be a reference to how some aspects of leadership can be enhanced for high level leadership.

### **1.2 Problem Description and Background**

The need for public institutions to attend to numerous and at times conflicting demands and structures is rapidly increasing their complexity (Christensen & Lægreid, 2011) and therefore a need for high level leadership is becoming more relevant hence the focus on identifying leadership potential. This is compounded by the fact that there has generally been a loss of confidence in the public sector and this has led to an interest in studying a wide range of topics related to the leadership with specific focus on the areas of trust and credibility, ethical leadership, public service motivation, organizational culture (Van Wart, 2013).

The implications of a weak leadership in the public sector cannot be over-emphasized given its role in regulating the affairs of the society. Often whenever leadership issues are considered in the public sector there is a focus on the elected politicians and at times they are given credit or blamed for far more than they can humanly affect (Raffel, Leisink, & Middlebrooks, 2009) given the bureaucracy in the public sector. The reality is that

managers in the public sector have a huge responsibility in determining the environment within which business operates through the establishment of the necessary regulatory framework. These managers are equally tasked with a huge responsibility of managing the ever increasing government spending in the provision of the necessary goods and services for the citizens of the country. Research reveals a general sense that the public sector is less efficient, in fact public managers in the United States and many other countries are often criticized and they are viewed as if they are not creative, talented or even autonomous (Chen & Bozeman, 2014).

This study is relevant in that it attempts to identify the leadership potential in the public service using some of the established theories such as the ideal self as developed by Boyatzis (2006) as well as the newly established leadership potential model by Dries & Pepermans (2012). The need for this research is underlined by the fact that, there is currently “a small but growing body of empirical work in the area of leadership potential” (Troth & Gyetvey, 2014, p. 2) and most of it is mainly conducted in the profit or defence sector and very limited in the public sector. This is supported by Van Wart & Dicke (2008) who argue that leadership in the public administration is very elusive mainly because it has been under researched as most studies have been based on theories and practices of the private sector. Furthermore, investigating this topic is of relevance because, as Van Wart (2013) puts it, as a result of the loss of confidence in the public administration, governments have lost a sense of contribution as well as their role in the future of the society.

### **1.3 Research Objectives and Focus**

The study is intended to assess the leadership potential of the managers in the public sector and suggest a model of enhancing the knowledge of ideal self and thereby increase leadership potential. In this regard the study will utilise a combination of the Boyatzis (2006) model of ideal self as well as leadership potential identification model by Dries & Pepermans (2012). This will include consideration of the performance review information of managers in the public sector. It appears that the public sector is generally considered as a weak institution when it comes to leadership especially at the administrative level as opposed to the political level. Important to note is that some of the blame for the weak administrative leadership is attributed to political interference in the recruitment processes.

This study will therefore focus on the administrative level, in particular, the middle management as well as the first level of the senior management

The study will therefore seek to establish a three way relationship between the awareness of the ideal self, the performance scores, as well as the leadership potential of managers in the public sector. Even though a model for identifying leadership potential exists (Dries & Pepermans, 2012), there is a need for a framework that incorporates objective measures such as performance review results (Bish & Kabanoff, 2014), hence this study. Troth & Gyetvey (2014) support this notion as they argue for more research in identifying reliable, valid and theoretically meaningful methods of increasing the quality of leadership identification and development in the organisations. It is the intention of this study to examine the three variables of ideal self, leadership potential as well as performance review information in order to suggest a model of increasing awareness of the ideal self of managers in the public sector with a view to enhance their leadership potential.

#### **1.4 Research Context**

The debate of whether leaders are born or made was put to rest some time ago and it has been widely accepted that leadership is learnable (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005; Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002). In fact, leadership is an individual capability as it is more about what a person can do, what he thinks and who they are (Benjamin & O'Reilly, 2012) and as a result leadership and management development has become a priority recently (Balakrishnan & Prathiba, 2011). Benjamin & O'Reilly (2012) argue that the acquisition of leadership skills may be partly dispositional, but much comes through learning and experience.

This is consistent with the view that people change in desired ways as a result of intentional efforts (Boyatzis, 2006, 2008) and therefore, the ideal self is seen as a primary source of positive affect and psycho-physiological arousal helping provide the drive for intentional change (Boyatzis & Akrivou, 2006). Van Wart (2013) supports this view arguing that the point of whether leaders are born or not is not only important for leadership but for recruitment and training as well. The author further states that “the underlying assumption of most of the applied leadership literature is that a substantial portion of leadership is

learned, and therefore significantly enhanced via developmental experiences, education, mentoring, and training”  
(Van Wart, 2013, p. 532)

## **1.5 Conclusion**

The role of leadership in any organization cannot be over-emphasized and the fact that leadership and management research in the public sector has been neglected has already been stated. This study is therefore considered very relevant in that it will contribute to the understanding of the identification of leadership potential in the public sector. Especially important is the fact that this will be examined from the intentional change perspective in keeping with the view that leadership is learnable and develops as a result of deliberate intentions to change. Secondly this study will also highlight the role of current performance in the determination or perception of the leadership potential of managers in the public sector. Lastly, the study will attempt to suggest a model that could be used in the public sector to assist managers and employees become aware of their ideal selves and thereby enhance their leadership potential.

## **2. CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE SUMMARY**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The theory discussed in this section is broken into five separate parts, that is, management and leadership development; management and leadership in the public sector; the ideal self; as well as the identification of the leadership potential. The first part explores few definitions of management and leadership development and some theories that have been advanced in that regard especially as they relate to advancing from a manager to a leader. The second part seeks to explore leadership and management practices in the public sector also taking into consideration some of the initiatives at government level to address this issue. The third part explores the ideal self as one of the discoveries of the intentional change theory (ICT). The ICT is explained and the ideal self is given prominence as the main area of focus within this theory. Fourthly, the theories relating to the identification of leadership potential are examined. The last section examines the concept of performance management and its relationship to the leadership potential.

### **2.2 Management and Leadership Development**

#### **2.2.1 Defining Management and Leadership**

Various definitions of management have been provided but the one that resonates with the theme of this study is that “management is the responsibility for the performance of a group of people” (Hill & Lineback, 2011, p. 14). In other words, this means a manager is someone who should take responsibility for the performance of the entire team or group within a particular unit (Drucker & Maciariello, 2008; Hill & Lineback, 2011; Hill, 2003). In essence, management involves planning, organising integrating, measuring and developing people (Drucker & Maciariello, 2008).

Additionally, Hill & Lineback (2011) offer three imperatives to becoming a great leader and those are, (a) manage yourself, (b) manage your network, and (c) manage your team. This is consistent with the belief by Drucker & Maciariello (2008) that the traditional way of management which focuses on ‘integrating downwards’, that is, only the work of the subordinates is no longer enough as managers have to integrate sideways.

In respect of leadership, a number of theories have been advanced and in this regard, there are the 'great person' theories of leadership, transformational leadership styles, contingency theories, *etcetera*. (Boyatzis, Smith, & Blaize, 2006). A study of the current leadership theories and the directions of the research in the field of leadership and management development has been undertaken (Avolio, Walumbwa, & Weber, 2009) with clear pointers. However, what tends to happen in an effort to understand leadership, as Buckingham (2012, p. 88) puts it, is that "we convene top performers, pick their brains for their best techniques and practices, and codify those techniques into a leadership competency formula". Buckingham (2012) criticises this formulaic model, as he calls it, for suggesting a generic way of training leaders. His view is that leadership development should be tailored to individuals if two conditions exist. Firstly, if leadership is not generic, that is, there is no best practice even for the majority. Secondly, if it is feasible to build a system that delivers appropriately different training content to different types of leaders. What is clear though is that whether one is examining the narrower public sector arena or the entire organisational universe, leadership is an extremely complex subject with a number of perspectives that add value (Raffel et al., 2009).

### **2.2.2 Transition from a Manager to a Leader**

The transition from a manager to a leader has been a subject of extensive investigation, and to this extent, various theories have been suggested. For instance, a theory on seven seismic shifts of perspective and responsibility for managers to leaders has been offered (Watkins, 2012). According to this theory managers have to shift from specialists to generalists, analyst to integrator, tactician to strategist, bricklayer to architect, problem solver to agenda setter, warrior to diplomat, and lastly, from supporting cast member to lead role.

On the other hand, Buckingham (2012) has offered five steps of what he calls leadership development in the age of algorithm. This model is meant to acknowledge the differences that exist within human beings instead of prescribing a generic solution. These steps are (a) choose an algorithmic assessment; (b) give the assessment to the company's best leaders; (c) interview a cross-section of leaders to discover their techniques; (d) use the algorithm to target techniques to the right people; and (e) make the system dynamically

intelligent. Miller & Desmarais (2007) on the other hand believe that there are five best practices for leadership development, referring to aligning leadership development with strategic initiatives; getting the support of key stakeholders; assessing the impact of culture; linking leadership development to other HR processes; as well as sustaining development through support or to others. There is also a belief that successful leadership development programmes and processes must be designed to address three features: (1) personal growth, (2) conceptual ability, and (3) skill development (Kark, 2011).

There is an agreement though, on the fact that management and leadership skills are both essential for the success of any organisation (Drucker & Maciariello, 2008; Hill & Lineback, 2011; Hill, 2003; Watkins, 2012). However, with all of this, organisations continue to foil the appointments of leaders and thereby compromising their performance. As a result leadership and management development is seen to have a direct contribution in the improvement of organisational performance and productivity hence hiring and training of new managers to become leaders will determine the organisation's success (Balakrishnan & Prathiba, 2011; Buckingham, 2012; Yawson, 2012).

## **2.3 Leadership in the Public Sector**

### **2.3.1 Leadership & Staff Motivation**

Leadership, especially in the public sector, is an elusive concept and any studies in this area have mainly been based in the private sector (Van Wart & Dicke, 2008). As such it has been under researched as a practice and in theory (Tummers & Knies, 2013; Van Wart & Dicke, 2008). The importance of leadership in enhancing staff motivation, self-esteem and commitment has been documented even though in some cases when comparisons are made between the private and public sector employees, the latter are less positive about management (Lindorff, 2009). Staff motivation is seen as a major factor that contributes to performance both in the private and public sector (Anderfuhren-Biget, Varone, Giauque, & Ritz, 2010) and therefore with poor leadership, it can be inferred that performance would suffer. In fact, a study conducted in the United Kingdom public sector concluded that leadership does play a significant role in staff motivation, self-esteem and commitment of the workers (Lindorff, 2009).

### **2.3.2 Initiatives for Leadership Identification and Development in South Africa**

In 2009 the South African government adopted 12 outcomes and these became the blue print on which the government performance was to be measured for the five year term until 2014. One of these outcomes, that is, outcome 12 was 'an efficient, effective and development oriented public service and an empowered, fair and inclusive citizenship' and it was to be led by the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) with the support and contribution of various government departments. This was a clear realisation that in order to have an effective public service there was a need to focus on a variety of areas including leadership and management.

Published in 2011, the National Development Plan (NDP) has become the main document guiding the kind of a society the government envisages for South Africa. The challenge of service delivery was identified in the diagnostic report, a precursor to the NDP, and the capacity of the state to deliver on these services was fingered (South Africa & National Planning Commission, 2011). This led to the dedication of a full chapter, chapter 13, of the NDP to 'building a capable state'. In this regard the National Planning Commission had identified in the diagnostic report that there is uneven performance in the public sector institutions across the country.

"The uneven performance of the public service results from the interplay between a complex set of factors, including tensions in the political and administrative interface, instability of the administrative leadership, skills deficits, the erosion of accountability and authority, poor organisational design, inappropriate staffing and low staff morale"(South Africa & National Planning Commission, 2011, p. 364). Recruitment in the public sector has been an interesting phenomenon and as such the senior management level has been dogged by too much political interference. This has led to a lot of changes which resulted in the low morale and lack of direction. On the other hand, the lower level has not had a focus on developing clear career paths and provision of relevant skills to enhance professionalism in the public sector. The NDP concludes that the state lacks a clear vision of where the next generation of leaders will come from and blames this on poor leadership and management (South Africa & National Planning Commission, 2011).

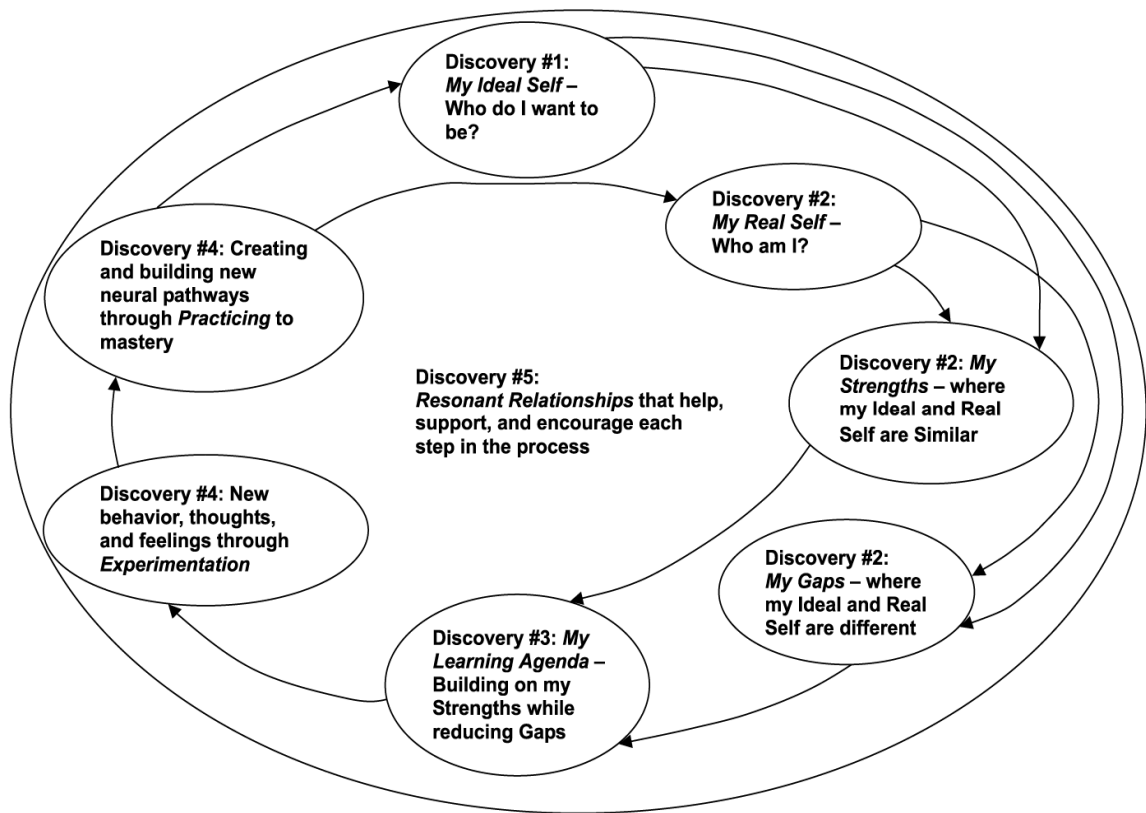
Furthermore, in October 2013 the Minister of DPSA launched the National School of Government (NSG), a successor to the South African Management Development Institute (SAMDI) and Public Administration Leadership and Management Academy (PALAMA) which were formed in 1996 and 2008 respectively ("Fact Sheet," 2013). The NSG is responsible for education, training and all development programmes within the public sector with a view to develop a professional, responsive and capable public service. A Government Leadership Programme, a programme for political and administrative leadership from all three spheres of government, has been designated as the first programme to be offered by the NSG ("Fact Sheet," 2013). This appears to be a clear realisation by the government that, focussed leadership development at all levels of government is essential for the functioning of this huge institution. It is therefore important to have a mechanism of identifying leadership potential for any development processes to succeed.

## **2.4 The Intentional Change Theory**

### **2.4.1 The Ideal Self**

The ideal self is the first of the five discoveries of the Intentional Change Theory which is based on the notion that a process of leadership development involves desired change and this change often appears discontinuous (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005; Boyatzis, 2006, 2008; Goleman *et al.*, 2002). The theory of self-directed learning, later renamed as the Intentional Change Theory (ICT), "was developed by Richard Boyatzis during three decades of work in leadership development as a consultant to organisations and as an academic researcher" (Goleman *et al.*, 2002, p. 109) (see figure 1). At an individual level ,the ICT basically explains the most important and essential components and processes of this desirable and sustainable change in one's behavior, thoughts, feelings, and perceptions (Boyatzis, 2006).

**Figure 1. Intentional Change Theory (Boyatzis, 2006)**



The idea of smooth and continuous change is not necessarily consistent with the reality that is experienced by many people (Boyatzis, 2006). In fact the complexity theory states that many processes are described better as abrupt changes more than as smooth transitions (Goleman et al., 2002). Therefore, Boyatzis (2008) argues that the ICT explains sustainable leadership development in terms of the essential components of behavior, thoughts, feelings, and perceptions related to effectiveness as a complex system. Leadership development therefore involves emergence of nonlinear and mainly discontinuous discoveries in an iterative cycle (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005; Boyatzis, 2006, 2008; Goleman et al., 2002) and the observed moments of emergence are:

- a. “the ideal self and a personal vision;
- b. the real self and its comparison to the ideal self-resulting in an assessment of one’s strengths and weaknesses, in a sense a personal balance sheet;
- c. a learning agenda and plan;

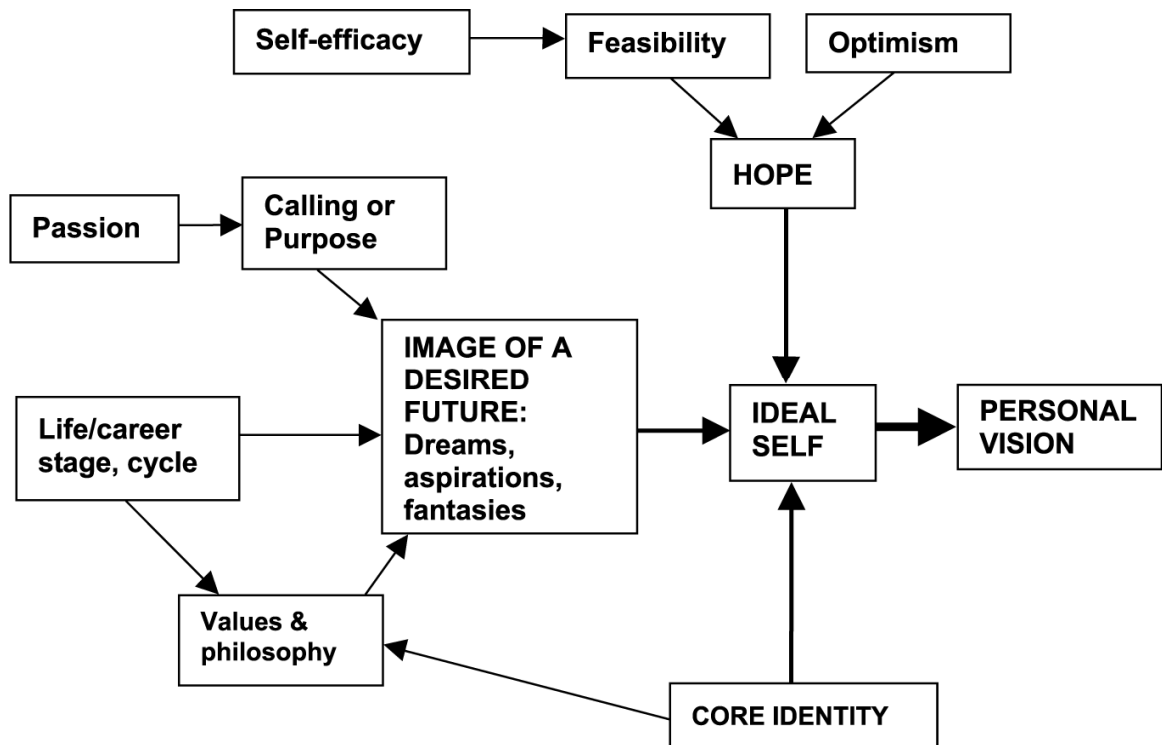
- d. experimentation and practice with the new behavior, thoughts, feelings, or perceptions; and
- e. trusting, or resonant relationships that enable a person to experience and process each discovery in the process”.

The ICT has been used in a variety of contexts such as clinical settings, educational contexts (in particular to understand the sustained development of leadership competencies) as well as in the sport contexts (Dyck & Lovelace, 2012) .

#### **2.4.2 The Elements of the Ideal Self**

The ideal self is the driver of intentional change in a person’s (or group) behavior, emotions, perceptions and attitudes (Boyatzis & Akrivou, 2006) in that in order to change, a person needs an image of a desired future and a sense of hope that it is attainable (Boyatzis, 2008). Boyatzis and Akrivou (2006) further argue that the ideal self is made up of three major elements, that is, the image of a desired future, hope as well as a sense of identity (see figure 2).

Figure 2. Components of the Ideal Self (Boyatzis & Akrivou, 2006)



The image of a desired future is mainly the visualisation of the person's dreams, aspirations and fantasies. Boyatzis and Akrivou (2006) believe that this visualisation is of cognitive nature but fueled by the affect that emanates from the person's dreams and is a function of his/her purpose in life driven by their passion, values and philosophy.

Hope, on the other hand, is a function of the person's optimism (Boyatzis & Akrivou, 2006). The authors further argue that optimism and efficacy are the main constructs that determine and generate hope and therefore very key to the formation of the ideal self. On some of the original research on the concept of hope, Ludema (1996, cited in Boyatzis & Akrivou, 2006, p. 629) had concluded that hope has four main qualities, "(a) hope brought people together and built relationships; (b) hope assumes an openness to the future and imagination; (c) hope is an "ultimate concern" of human nature; and (d) hope feeds creativity".

The last element of the ideal self is the core identity and this is basically the compilation of the persons enduring attributes (Boyatzis & Akrivou, 2006). Boyatzis & Akrivou (2006) further contend that all the unconscious motives, roles and habits of a person become the core of their identity.

In a study conducted by Buse (2009) looking at the ideal selves of the women engineers who stayed in the engineering field, it was discovered that these individuals had high levels of hope in the profession, had a clear idea of how their career choice fits with their planned future and viewed the profession as part of their identity. Importantly, this study also found that those women engineers who left the profession experienced a tipping point in their careers that led to the decision to switch careers. It is therefore imperative, as Boyatzis & Akrivou (2006) reason, to have as clear an image of the person you want to be in the future as possible so that you can persist in trying to attain your dreams.

## **2.5 Identifying Leadership Potential**

### **2.5.1 Leadership Potential Defined**

The identification of the talent that exists within an organisation and employees that have a potential to take on more complex and broader responsibilities at a higher level is essential (Troth & Gyetvey, 2014). This has become a priority for most organisations given the realisation that in the past there has been very little to no investment in the fields of management and leadership development and this has impacted the ability of the organisations to perform and compete (Balakrishnan & Prathiba, 2011).

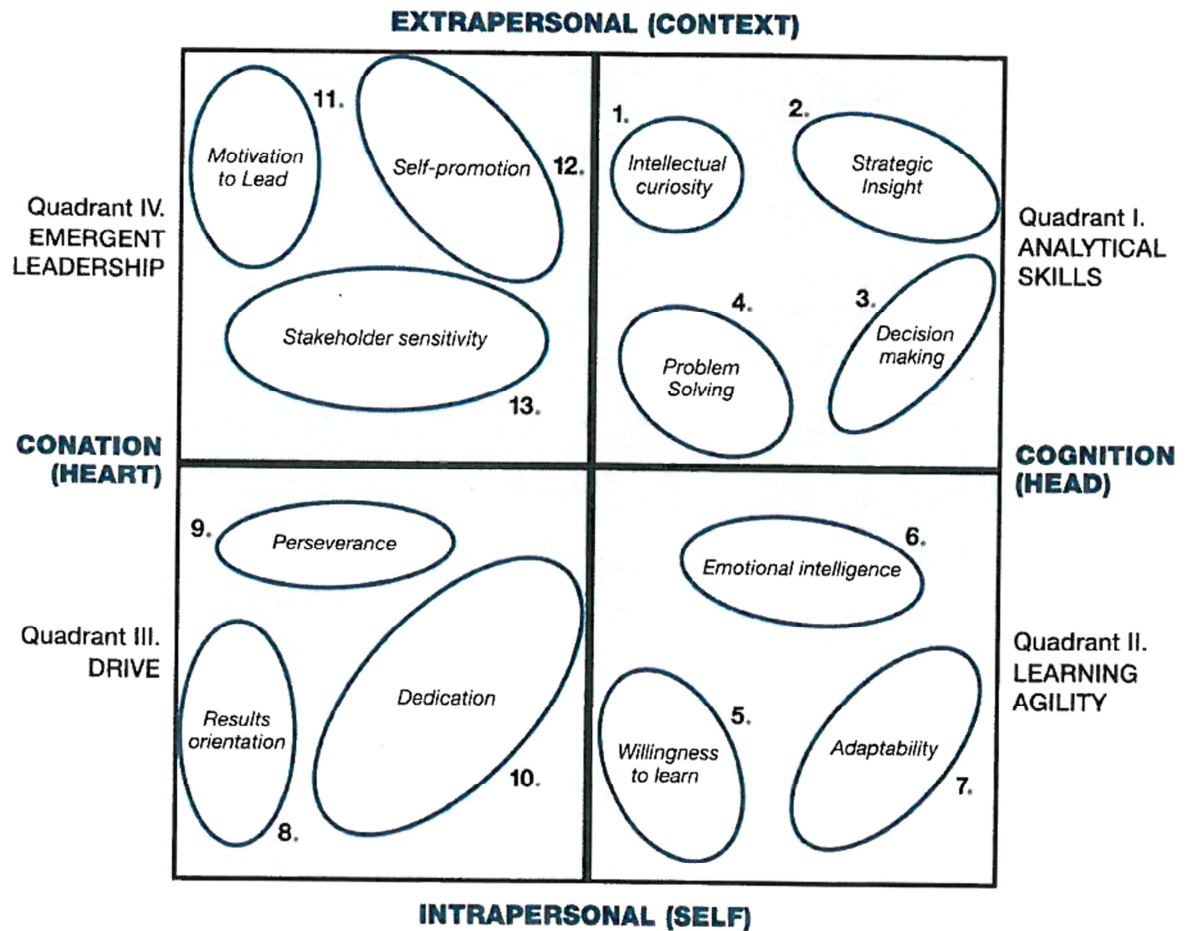
Leadership potential is also more than the current and previous job performance (Miller & Desmarais, 2007), even though it is crucial to understand and take cognisance of the role of the current and previous performance in determining the employees initial consideration for future leadership development in an organisation (Troth & Gyetvey, 2014). The use of the past performance as an indicator of potential is, however, discouraged due to the risk of halo bias (Dries & Pepermans, 2012) and the fact that a future leadership role requires a different and broader set of skills given the nature of the new role (Troth & Gyetvey, 2014). In fact it is important to underline the fact that identification and management of leadership potential goes far beyond the development for the current and the immediate

future jobs to long-term broader and highly strategic roles within the organization (Troth & Gyetvey, 2014).

### **2.5.2 A Framework for Identifying Leadership Potential**

Dries & Pepermans (2012) developed a two-dimensional framework to assist in the identification of the leadership potential at all levels (see figure 3). The focus of this model is on leadership potential rather than mature or successful leadership and as such it contains criteria that can be easily observed in junior staff who have no leadership experience (Dries & Pepermans, 2012). As a result this model steers clear of the well-established issues of performance and successful mature leadership as the authors believe that this tends to hinder valid assessment of the real leadership potential.

**Figure 3. Two-Dimensional Model of Identifying Leadership Potential (Dries & Pepermans, 2012)**



The first (and horizontal) dimension of this model is labeled as conation vs cognition (i.e. heart vs head) and the conation side focusses on drive, motivation and action, whereas the cognition side stresses the analytical skills of a person mainly focusing on intellectual curiosity, strategic insight, problem solving and decision making. The second (and vertical) dimension is labeled as extra-personal vs intrapersonal (i.e. context vs self). While the extra-personal side focusses on the criteria that relates to the interaction between the individual and the external environment, the intrapersonal side focusses on the person's internal life.

This model was developed out of an extensive literature review of 40 relevant articles drawn from the top journals in the period between 1986 and 2010. Initially a set of 545

leadership potential identification criteria was put together and four focus groups were organized with senior practitioners and senior academics in the human resources and leadership development fields to make sense of it. The entire process led to a final determination of 77 individual criteria across the 13 factors of leadership potential as observed in the four quadrants.

In a recent study conducted by Troth & Gyetvey (2014) seeking to identify leadership potential in the Australian public service, they examined the role of general mental ability, problem-solving, emotional intelligence, employee engagement and career aspirations of the potential managers. Among other things, they found that for employees to be regarded as having any leadership potential they had to demonstrate some elements of the analytical skills, drive and emergent leadership. This was therefore one of the validations of the applicability of the model by Dries & Pepermans (2012).

## **2.6 Performance Management & Identification of Potential**

### **2.6.1 Performance Management**

Even though there are significant differences conceptually between performance and leadership potential, Troth & Gyetvey (2014) hold that performance does play a role in the initial consideration of an employee for future leadership development. This is evidenced by the fact that “many organizations view performance as an important prerequisite for leadership potential identification”(Troth & Gyetvey, 2014, p. 6) and they rely mainly on performance reviews and specific competency models (Dries & Pepermans, 2012). Troth & Gyetvey (2014) further conclude that in determining leadership potential some managers utilise various sets of information including employee problem-solving, engagement and aspirations to make decisions. This is in line with the conclusion by Silzer & Church (2009, cited in Troth & Gyetvey, 2014) that the concept of “potential” incorporates foundational and growth dimensions together with indices such as performance, technical and functional skills.

However, this argument seems to contradict Greer & Virick (2008) who criticise the overreliance on performance evaluations to identify leadership potential. Their main argument is that an individual's knowledge and expertise as an engineer, for example, becomes less important in leadership positions where the individual would need greater

strategic and people management skills. Dries & Pepermans (2012) criticise the use of past performance to predict the future because there is an increased risk of the halo bias. They further argue that there is also a challenge in using competency frameworks that are based on successful leadership profiles because they are centred on the assumption that leadership potential and mature, successful leadership are almost identical.

### **2.6.2 Star Performers and Leadership Potential**

The concepts of star performers and high potentials have been used interchangeably with some authors (Church & Rotolo, 2013; Dries & Pepermans, 2008; Ready, Conger, Hill, & Stecker, 2010) preferring the latter while others (Bish & Kabanoff, 2014; Groysberg, Lee, & Nanda, 2008) favour the former. There is however some convergence in their definitions of these concepts. Companies define star performers as those employees who consistently perform at higher levels and are more productive and also generally more visible in the organisations than other employees (Bish & Kabanoff, 2014; Groysberg et al., 2008). High potentials on the other hand are defined by Ready et al. (2010) as those employees that consistently and significantly produce superior results when compared to their peers. In the process of performing they should also demonstrate some behaviors such as deliver strong results, credibly and not at others' expense; master expertise beyond technical; as well as behave in ways consistent with the company's values (Ready *et al.*, 2010).

One of the most interesting things about these definitions of star performers and/or high potentials is the conclusion in a study by Dries & Pepermans (2008) which indicates that the number one criteria which serves as input into the identification of the high potential is the current performance. The other aspects mentioned in this study are that working hard and being an excellent performer are some of the traits that will earn one the label of being a high potential. This confirms the importance of the current performance in identifying future state such as a potential of a person to either remain in that performance level or rise to higher levels.

The most important question raised by Groysberg *et al.* (2008) is whether the star performer can take their knowledge with them as they move from one organisation to another or as they rise up the corporate ladder. Their findings reflect that the hiring of stars is neither advantageous to the company hiring or the stars themselves given that the performance of the employee is not owned by the employee, it is a function of the

employee, firm capabilities and the relationship with colleagues. Therefore for these stars to succeed in other settings they should join companies with better capabilities than the current ones and take some human capital with them in the form of their current colleagues (Groysberg *et al.*, 2008). This is consistent with the view by Bish & Kabanoff (2014) that star performers have to be those that can comprehend task performance as well as contextual performance. They define task performance as more the technical aspects of the performance such as the application of skills and knowledge to perform the task, whereas contextual performance relates to the behaviors necessary for a thriving organisational, psychological and social context such as volunteering extra activities and helping others.

## **2.7 Conclusion**

As indicated in this literature review there are many studies of leadership and management that have been undertaken, but very few of those have been in the public sector administration. Equally, when it comes to leadership potential research, for some time there has been no objective way of identifying the potential rather than relying on the past performance and other competency based models. Also important to note is that even the leadership potential work done has mainly been focused on the private sector and very little on the public sector. In fact, there is not a single study that could be found that relates to the South African context, both for the private and public sector.

The ICT theory has been determined as one of the most useful models in explaining change both at individual and organisational level. Again, the role of performance management in the identification of leadership, albeit as an initial consideration, still exists in organisations and so it cannot be dismissed as irrelevant. Throughout the literature search no evidence exists of a study that combines the performance information, the ideal-self concept of ICT as well as the leadership potential model. Most importantly no study like this has been conducted in the South African public sector and there is a strong need for leadership in the public sector administration, given the complexity of the challenges experienced.

A study conducted in the education, health care and local government sectors in Netherlands by Tummers & Knies (2013) concluded that their findings demonstrated the

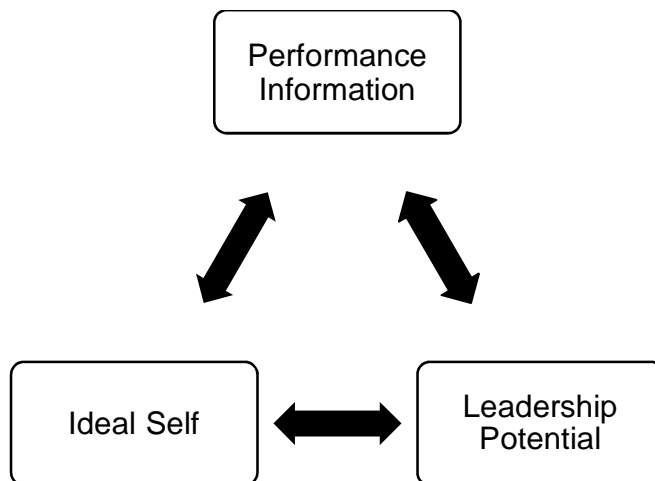
importance of continuously studying and improving leadership in the public sector. This is particularly relevant because there is not a lot known about the consequences and background of administrative leadership in public institutions given that most literature on these institutions tends to focus on variables such as employee satisfaction (Hansen & Villadsen, 2010).

### 3. CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH QUESTIONS

#### 3.1 Aim

The main aim of this study is to assess the leadership potential of the managers in the public sector using the intentional change theory. It is hoped that this study will assist in determining the relationship between performance and ideal self as well as leadership potential of managers in the public sector respectively (see Figure 4). Furthermore, the study will assist in determining the relationship between the ideal self of a person as well as their leadership potential. Most importantly the study should be able to provide an indication of what could be done in the public sector to improve the awareness of the ideal self by the public sector managers and employees and thereby enhance their leadership potential.

**Figure 4. Three Way Relationship between Performance Information, Ideal Self and Leadership Potential**



#### 3.2 Objectives

The objectives of this research are:

- a. To assess the relationship between the managers' rating of their ideal self and their overall performance score.

- b. To assess the relationship between the manager's ratings of their 'ideal self' and their leadership potential.
- c. To assess the relationship between the manager's overall final performance scores and their leadership potential
- d. To develop a model to assist the public sector to enhance the awareness of the ideal self for managers and employees

### 3.3 Questions

The specific questions to be answered by this study are as follows:

**3.3.1 Research Question 1:** *What is the relationship between the managers' ratings of their 'ideal self' and their overall final performance scores?*

Having defined the ideal self in chapter two, this study will seek to understand if there is any relationship between the construct of the ideal self or the personal vision as well as the performance scores of the managers. The idea here is to make a determination of whether performance information plays any role in assisting a person to become aware of their vision or whether having a clear vision of where you want to be in the future necessarily means one will perform better than someone without a vision. In the literature review there is no evidence that being aware of your ideal self will improve your performance except where Boyatzis & Akrivou (2006) argue that, it is imperative for one to have as clear an image of the person they want to be in the future as possible so that they can persist in trying to attain their dreams.

**3.3.2 Research Question 2:** *What is the relationship between the managers' ratings of their 'ideal self' and their ratings of their leadership potential?*

If the Ideal-self discovery, as defined in the Intentional Change Theory, is about a person's vision, this research question will seek to find out if there is any relationship between the person's vision as well as their leadership potential. Boyatzis & Akrivou (2006) argue that the ideal self is the driver of intentional change in a person's (or group) behavior, emotions, perceptions and attitudes in that in order to change, a person needs an image of a desired future and a sense of hope that it is attainable (Boyatzis, 2008). Dries &

Pepermans (2012) developed a two-dimensional framework to assist in the identification of the leadership potential at all levels. This model has been applied in the Australian public service recently and it was found to be applicable in the public sector. What has not been found in the literature though is a study that combines the two models i.e. to determine if there is any relationship between the ideal self of a person and their leadership potential. This question will therefore help close that gap.

**3.3.3 Research Question 3:** *What is the relationship between the managers' overall final performance scores and their leadership potential?*

In defining a star performer and/or a high potential Dries & Pepermans (2008) conclude that the number one criteria which serves as input into the identification of the high potential is the current performance. This confirms the importance of the current performance in identifying future state such as a potential of a person to either remain in that performance level or rise to higher levels. The literature has demonstrated that there are varying views on the use of current performance to determine the leadership potential. Troth & Gyetvey (2014) hold that performance does play a role in the initial consideration of an employee for future leadership development. This is evidenced by the fact that "many organizations view performance as an important prerequisite for leadership potential identification" (Troth & Gyetvey, 2014, p. 6) and they mainly rely on performance reviews and specific competency models (Dries & Pepermans, 2012).

On the other hand Greer & Virick (2008) criticise the overreliance on performance evaluations to identify leadership potential. Their main argument is that an individual's knowledge and expertise as an engineer, for example, become less important in leadership positions where the individual would need greater strategic and people management skills. It is on that basis that this research question will be explored to make a clear determination of whether there is any relationship between the current performance and the leadership potential of a person.

**3.3.4 Research Question 4:** *What measures can be put in place to assist managers and employees to develop their 'ideal self' and thereby enhance their leadership potential?*

It is the intention of this study, through this question to ensure that there is an attempt to pull everything together. If for instance, there is a relationship between the ideal self and the leadership potential, the question is how organisations can assist in the development or awareness of the ideal self so that they can enhance the leadership potential of their employees and managers. This question will therefore explore those factors and possibly produce a model that could be used by the public sector organisations in this regard.

### **3.4 Conclusion**

The aforementioned research questions will help in understanding the relationships between the performance scores and ideal self and leadership potential respectively. As indicated earlier on, the questions will also help in the understanding of the relationship between the ideal self and the leadership potential of a manager in the public sector. Most importantly, the research questions will also assist in determining what could be done to assist employees understand and develop their ideal selves and thereby enhance their leadership potential.

## **4. CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 Research Design**

Saunders & Lewis (2012) differentiate between exploratory, descriptive and explanatory studies. They define an exploratory study as the one where the main purpose is about discovering some information about a topic that the researcher does not clearly understand. This type of study is mainly conducted through academic literature search, expert interviews, as well as interviews in general. A descriptive study on the other hand is viewed by Saunders & Lewis (2012) as the one merely describing, with high levels of accuracy, the persons, events or situations. They further argue that descriptive studies would mainly use questionnaire surveys, sampling, interviews, and reanalysis of the secondary data. Lastly, explanatory studies take descriptive research a step further as they seek explanation behind the events through discovery of causal relationships (Saunders & Lewis, 2012).

In this study there are elements of the exploratory design given that, even though a lot of research has been done in this field of leadership, there has been no empirical data criteria for identification of leadership potential (Dries & Pepermans, 2012). Also important to note is that an exploratory study is relevant where the objective is either to explore an area where very little is known or to investigate the possibilities of undertaking a particular research study (Kumar, 2005; Saunders & Lewis, 2012). The main approach to be used will be grounded theory, whose origin is the symbolic interactionism and social sciences (Ryan, Coughlan, & Cronin, 2007). The grounded theory advocates for the generation of theory from the data collected or modification or extension of the existing theory in line with the insights that come from the data (Ryan *et al.*, 2007; Saunders & Lewis, 2012).

This research adopted some elements of descriptive study in the sense that a questionnaire was administered and data analysed. The initial stage involved administering a questionnaire to managers as per the sampling section below to understand their views and perceptions on the aspects of ideal self and leadership potential identification. The second stage involved conducting semi-structured interviews from a sample of managers selected from the list of all managers in levels 11-12 who had filled the questionnaire in the first place, to get an understanding in terms of their

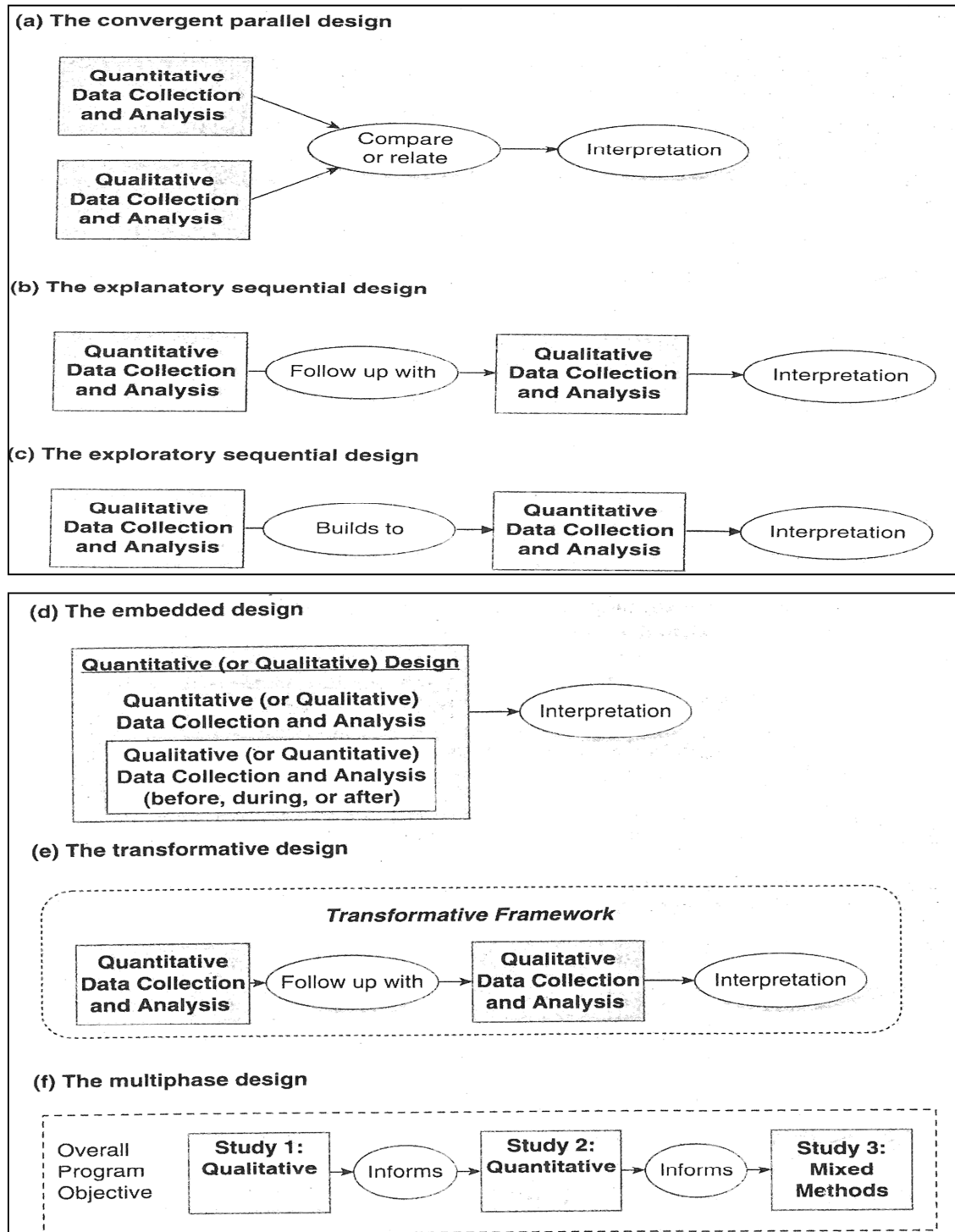
awareness of their ideal self as well as their perceptions of their leadership potential. The interview also sought their advice on how organisations can assist managers and employees in general to become more aware of their ideal self and how this could enhance their leadership potential. The only reason the interviews were conducted after the survey questionnaires had been administered was because the sample for interviews was drawn from the valid submitted questionnaires. Otherwise the interview was not necessarily based on the survey analysis results, but rather the two were analysed separately and the results were later consolidated in the discussion.

In essence this study adopted the mixed methods design, specifically the embedded design. The definition of the mixed method research has evolved over time and Creswell & Plano Clark (2011, p. 5) define this as a research method where the researcher:

- “collects and analyses persuasively and rigorously both qualitative and quantitative data (based on research questions);
- Mixes (or integrates or links) the two forms of data concurrently by combining them (or merging them), sequentially by having one build on the other, or embedding one within the other;
- Gives priority to one or both forms of data (in terms of what the research emphasizes);
- Uses these procedures in a single study or in multiple phases of a program of study;
- Frames these procedures within philosophical worldviews and theoretical lenses; and
- Combines the procedures into specific research designs that direct the plan for conducting the study.”

There are four basic mixed methods designs and those are the convergent parallel design, the explanatory sequential design, exploratory sequential design, and the embedded design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Leedy & Ormrod, 2013). Creswell & Plano Clark (2011) also argue that there are two other designs that bring multiple elements and those are the transformative design and the multiple design. Figure 5 demonstrates the core elements of each of the six major mixed methods designs.

Figure 5. Prototypical Version of the Six Major Mixed Methods Research Designs (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011, pp. 69-70)



As indicated earlier, this study adopted the embedded design, and this is defined by Creswell & Plano Clark (2011, p. 90) as an “approach where the researcher combines the collection and analyses of both quantitative and qualitative data within a traditional quantitative research design or qualitative research design.” This is consistent with the definition by Leedy & Ormrod (2013) who define it as an approach where both quantitative and qualitative data are collected around the same time even though one approach dominates, with the other as a supplementary approach. For instance this approach is used in a situation whereby researchers embed qualitative elements within a quantitative study or vice versa. It is deemed to be very relevant in cases where the researcher has different questions that entail different types of data so as to augment the application of a quantitative or qualitative design to address the purpose of the study. This approach is used to collect data that is somewhat different responding to different research questions (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Leedy & Ormrod, 2013). The use of this approach in this study was appropriate given that there were questions that had to be answered through the quantitative data as well as others that needed to be answered through the qualitative data. Also given the time available for this research it was not possible to use any of the sequential approaches.

## **4.2 Scope**

This study was conducted within the public service, specifically the Department of Environmental Affairs in South Africa. The focus on the public sector was informed by the fact that there does not seem to be any recent research about identification of leadership potential in the South African public sector. The only recent study on identification of leadership potential in the public sector was conducted by Troth & Gyetvey (2014) in Australia. Furthermore, the researcher had access to these managers given that he also worked there. He had also requested and received permission from the department to conduct this study.

### **4.3 Universe/Population**

Saunders & Lewis (2012) define the population as the complete set of the group members to be studied. For this study the population was all the managers who fell between levels 11 – 13 within the public sector. It must be noted that the senior management level in the public sector ranges from level 13 (Director) to 16 (Director-General) and overall the government levels are from level 1 to 16. Therefore the focus of this study is at a fairly senior level even though it is not at an executive or top management level.

This study focused on managers within the public sector who were at the middle management level (level 11-12) and senior management level (level 13) and who had been in their current job levels for the full 2013/14 performance management cycle, that is, those who had been in the department and in the same level for the period 01 April 2013 and 31 March 2014. The determination of the full performance cycle was meant to enable the researcher to get the most recent performance review results for the sampled managers.

### **4.4 Unit of Analysis**

The unit of analysis for this study was the manager. Any conclusions made in this research are about the ideal self as well as leadership potential of the managers in the public sector.

### **4.5 Sampling**

#### **4.5.1 Sampling Technique**

Non-probability sampling methods are used when the researcher does not have a complete list of the population (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). Similarly, for this study the researcher had no access to the complete list of the population hence non-probability purposive sampling method was used.

#### **4.5.2 Sampling Frame**

A list of all the managers between levels 11-13 was sourced from the human resources (HR) section of the Department of Environmental Affairs, South Africa. This sampling frame was mainly based on the access to this information by the researcher as he also worked for the same department and so authority to access this information was granted. According to the information received from the HR section, by the middle of June 2014 there were 139 managers at Director level (i.e. level 13) as well as 303 managers at the level of Deputy Director (i.e. levels 11-12 inclusive of 119 that are part of the Occupation Specific Dispensation). Therefore the sample was drawn from a total of 442 managers from the Department of Environmental Affairs.

#### **4.5.3 Sample Size**

At the time of data collection there was no clarity on the number of managers, out of the 442 mentioned above, who had completed a full performance management and development cycle (PMDs) for 2013/14 financial year. As a result all the managers were included in the sample and as such were eligible to complete questionnaire. However, as it transpired 309 questionnaires were sent out, of which 120 were distributed in meetings and 189 were sent by email to middle managers. Overall 131 questionnaires were returned by participants.

Given the fact that one of the research questions required performance information for 2013/14 financial year, 35 questionnaires were not considered in the final analysis as they did not contain this information. The reasons for not having this information varied from the fact that the individual manager may have been with the department or in the current position for less than a year and therefore would not have finished a full performance management cycle, that is, 01 April 2013 to 31 March 2014. In most cases though it was clear that the main reason was that the managers' positions had been upgraded from level 11 to level 12. Now, in the public sector, if one's job level had been upgraded in the middle of the performance cycle, their performance management cycle is interrupted and therefore do not qualify for a performance review and any associated incentives such as a bonus.

One participant did not indicate his name in the questionnaire and as a result it was not possible to link this questionnaire to the performance data and as such it was excluded in the analysis. Therefore a total of 95 questionnaires were deemed valid and analysed. These are the questionnaires completed by managers who had been with the department in the period from 01 April 2013 to 31 March 2014.

For the second stage of the study, using the purposive sampling technique, the researcher used his judgment to identify 15 managers from level 11-12 ensuring some representation across the functions of the department given his familiarity with the working environment. It must be noted that there was a deliberate decision to only focus on the middle management for the second part of the study. These selected managers were from all the nine branches or function areas of the department except one, that is, Climate Change and Air Quality. This was due to the fact that in the completed questionnaires there was not a single manager at level 11-12 who had completed the questionnaire from this branch. In this regard all attempts were made to ensure that there is fair representation in terms of the race, gender and age even though no complete quota sampling was employed. Due to the unavailability of some managers, in the end 12 managers from seven of the nine branches or functional areas of the department were interviewed.

## **4.6 Measurement Instrument**

### **4.6.1 Questionnaire Design**

A questionnaire, based on the theory of ideal self as well as the model of identification of leadership potential, was developed. The questionnaire was designed in such a way that section A captured the demographic data of the participant; section B recorded the employment information about the participant. Sections C and D were the core elements of the questionnaire, that is, the ideal self as well as the leadership potential respectively. The questions in these two sections were measured on a 5 point Likert scale such that: 1- strongly disagree; 2 - disagree; 3 – neutral; 4 – agree; and 5 – strongly agree. The last section, that is, Section E is where the participant was requested to grant the researcher permission to access his/her performance review scores from the Employee Development

section within the department. A sample of the questionnaire is included in the report as Appendix A.

#### **4.6.1.1 Ideal Self**

The design of section C of the questionnaire was meant to collect the information in relation to the three elements of the ideal-self, that is, image of the desired future, hope and core identity of the manager as per Boyatzis & Akrivou (2006). The image of the desired future component of the questionnaire was based on the questions designed by the researcher as it was difficult to find any questionnaire that measures this construct. As a result this portion of the questionnaire had not been tested for reliability at the time of data collection and such was done during the analysis and the results are presented in Chapter five.

The hope component of the questionnaire was based on the work done by Schrank, Woppmann, Sibitz & Lauber (2011) to measure hope. Important to note is that this new scale of measuring hope was based on a combination of three pre-existing scales, that is, Miller Hope Scale (MHS), Herth Hope Index (HHI) and Snyder Hope Scale (SHS) (Schrank *et al.*, 2011). The new Integrative Hope Scale (IHS) took into consideration all the overlapping elements of the prior scales using “an item reduction procedure based on statistical and theoretical considerations” (Schrank *et al.*, 2011, p. 425). The new scale, with 23 questions, was tested for reliability and Cronbach's alpha was determined for each of its subscales, supporting their high internal consistency. In this regard it has been demonstrated that overall IHS rating is 0.92; for trust and confidence it is 0.85; for lack of perspective it is 0.85; for positive future orientation it is 0.80; and lastly for social relations and personal values it is 0.85 (Schrank *et al.*, 2011). They further argue that correlations for all subscales were more than 0.3 and contributed adequately to their subscales without being redundant.

The concept of *core identity* is related to the concept of identity in general and the identity theory. The core principle of the identity theory is that the identities guide behavior (Adamsons & Pasley, 2013) and in this regard a distinction can be made between social identity and personal identity. Social identity regularly referred to as a collective identity

and mainly suggests that belonging to a group occurs through categorisation and affective components that are associated with group membership (Feitosa, Salas, & Salazar, 2012). Personal identity, on the other hand, is more focused on the individual rather than group identification (Feitosa et al., 2012). This part of the questionnaire therefore was based on the work of Feitosa et al. (2012) which is mainly about social identity. The reason for this consideration was to determine the extent to which the public sector managers identify with the group of other public sector managers. This is important for assessing the extent to which their vision is aligned to their public sector responsibilities.

The operationalisation of the social identity theory is said unclear and in order to integrate the discrepancies emanating from the current measures Feitosa *et al.* (2012) developed measures of social identity. The measures identified three dimensions, that is, categorisation, sense of belonging and positive attitudes and they seem to widely capture the social identity construct. Even though social identity differs from self-identity, it is common to include social membership as a description of part of one's identity (Feitosa *et al.*, 2012), hence the decision to pursue social identity rather than self or personal identity. Even though some questions may have been adapted to fit with the current study the core of the questions had been tested for reliability in other studies but there is no evidence of reliability testing of this new measure. As a result the reliability testing was done as part of this study and the results are presented in Chapter five.

#### **4.6.1.2 Leadership potential**

Section D of the questionnaire deals with the criteria of the leadership potential as per Dries & Pepermans' (2012) framework and all the factors in all four quadrants are reflected. This model contains 77 criteria based on all four quadrants and they measure all the 13 factors across the quadrants. Given the size of this study and the time available to complete it, it was decided that instead of using all the 77 criteria the focus would be on the factors, and the managers rated themselves on each of the factors. Dries & Pepermans (2012) did not comment on the reliability and validity of these measures, however, they determined the effect-size range across studies including each factor as a predictor of leadership effectiveness or a similar outcome. This ranged from .02 – .18 for

the strategic insight to .25 - .60 for stakeholder sensitivity. A reliability test was then done as part of the analysis and it is presented in the next chapter.

#### **4.6.2 Interview Schedule**

The second tool that was used in this study was an interview schedule which was developed based on the theory of Ideal Self as well as the model of leadership potential identification (see Appendix B). In this regard semi-structured interviews were conducted with a sample from the managers in levels 11-12. The qualitative, non-numerical data which takes the form of verbal descriptions was collected through semi-structured interviews (Fitzpatrick, Sanders, & Worthen, 2004; Kumar, 2005; Ryan et al., 2007; Saunders & Lewis, 2012). The semi-structured interview was chosen for this study because the researcher had a predetermined set of questions but also had the flexibility of varying the order of questions depending on the responses received. This approach was preferred because it allowed the researcher an opportunity to engage with the managers in an interview session and gain a deeper insight of their ideal self as well as understanding their views of how to assist managers to develop this construct and link it with their leadership potential.

#### **4.6.3 Pilot Testing of the Questionnaire & Interview Schedule**

Upon completion of the questionnaire and the interview schedule, piloting or pre-testing was done to determine their validity. Pre-testing allows the researcher to make a determination of whether there are any problems in the design (Zikmund, 2003). If, through this process, the researcher identifies any problems such as the misinterpretation of the questions or difficulties in the understanding of the language used, there is an opportunity to correct those before the actual data collection takes place.

In this case the pre-testing was done wherein three managers of whom two were levels 11-12 and one was level 13, randomly selected participated in this process. This pre-testing revealed that there were some difficulties in understanding some questions and in that regard the language used was adjusted accordingly. Overall, the feedback received showed that the questionnaire and the interview schedule are clear and to the point. A

crucial observation made during the pre-testing was the time it took to complete the questionnaire which ranged between 9 minutes 30 seconds and 12 minutes 43 seconds. This made it easy for the researcher during the data collection to indicate that the process of filling the questionnaire would take no more than 15 minutes.

#### **4.6.4 Existing Records**

Existing records, in the form of the performance review scores for 2013/14 financial year of all the participants who had filled the questionnaire and gave consent for their information to be accessed from the Employee Development section of the department for this study, were accessed. All the data sourced was linked to the respective questionnaires so that a clear picture could be determined in the analysis. The data mainly had four fields, firstly there was the individual score, secondly, there was the supervisor score, and thirdly there was an agreed score between the individual manager and their supervisors. The fourth and last was the final score determined by a moderation committee. For the purpose of the analysis, the third score was used because some of the moderation committees had not met and so there was no committee score. Also important to note is that the third score is most probably the most valid because it is a combination of how a manager sees him or herself and how their supervisor or manager sees them. This is a product of a discussion, hence it is called the agreed score.

#### **4.7 Data Collection**

The questionnaire was distributed in meetings wherein the targeted managers were in attendance. Another strategy adopted for this study was to send the questionnaire by email to all the middle managers. In total 120 questionnaires were distributed in meetings and 189 emails were sent to middle managers for them to fill the questionnaire. Overall this process yielded a response of 131 questionnaires of which 95 of them were usable as they had all the required data. The main reason for choosing the technique of administering the questionnaire in the meetings was so that the researcher could be able to explain to the managers the reason for requesting their performance data as it was anticipated that there might be reluctance to participate in the study. It should also be noted that in the actual questionnaire that was distributed for filling by the participants, all

the subheadings had been removed so as not to influence the participants. The only headings retained were the key ones, that is, the ideal self and leadership potential.

In terms of the interviews, the researcher had face-to-face interviews with all the 12 participants and all the interviews were voice-recorded and sent for transcription by professional transcribers.

## **4.8 Data Analysis**

A number of steps were undertaken to analyse the data that were gathered for this study and below is an indication of what the analysis covered.

### **4.8.1 Descriptive statistics**

Descriptive statistics were performed to determine the characteristics of the data collected. The focus of this analysis included the following

- Percentage of males and females that participated in the study
- Percentage of participants according to age groups
- Percentage of participants according to race
- Percentage of participants according to education level
- Percentage of participants according to job level
- The experience of the participants within the department in years
- The experience of the participants in their current job level in years
- Number of interview participants by gender and departmental functional area

### **4.8.2 Data coding**

The data from the questionnaire was captured directly onto IBM SPSS Statistics 21 and coded accordingly by the researcher. Coding of the data was done in line with the requirements of a 5 point Likert scale such that: 1- strongly disagree; 2 disagree; 3 – neutral; 4 – agree; and 5 – strongly agree. There was an instance where some questions were reverse-coded and this applied to those questions phrased negatively and the

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specifics of this are provided in the next chapter. Equally, the analysis to attempt to answer the research questions was performed on the same platform. It is hoped that the results will clearly demonstrate the relationship between the ideal self and performance ratings; the ideal self and the leadership potential; as well as the performance ratings and the leadership potential.

Coding of the data from the interviews was done by the researcher using Microsoft Excel wherein various themes emerged. The main approach to coding was based on the grounded theory as originally introduced by Glaser and Strauss in 1967 as the main approach to the analysis of qualitative data. Coding in grounded theory involves the practices of abstraction and generalisation (Parker, 2011). Parker (2011) further defines abstraction as the practice of dividing a whole into elements that are distinct from one another whereas generalisation is about finding what is common or repeated among these components. The constant comparative analysis as defined by Glaser & Strauss (1967) is an inductive method through which a researcher develops concepts through abstraction from the empirical data and thereby bring out the underlying uniformities and diversities. This method mainly relates to a process whereby the new set of data is being compared to the previous one during the process of data collection.

The most important thing to note about this method is that, much as it has four stages (explicit coding, integrating categories, delimiting theory and writing theory), they are not distinct given that one of the key characteristics of the grounded theory is that collection of data, coding and analysis happens around the same time (Parker, 2011). Explicit coding, one of the stages of comparative analysis, as defined by Parker (2011, p. 61) was used and this is where the researcher reads through the material “coding each incident in his data into as many categories of analysis as possible, as categories emerge or as data emerge that fit into an existing category”.

A related method which was used in the coding and analysis of this qualitative data is content analysis. Kumar (2005, p. 240) defines content analysis as the “means of analyzing contents of the interview in order to identify the main themes from the responses given by your respondents”. This approach involves four steps, that is, identifying the main

themes, assigning codes to the main themes, classify responses under the main themes, and lastly, integrate themes and responses into the text of your report. It is important to note that in this approach people do not necessarily have to use the exact words as the other respondents, what is important is identifying the themes in the meaning of what they are articulating.

#### **4.8.3 Principle Component Analysis (PCA)**

Factor analysis, including both principle component analysis and common factor analysis, is a statistical approach that may be used to analyse interrelationships among a large number of variables to explain these variables in terms of their common underlying dimensions (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010). Similarly, a researcher may use the exploratory factor analysis (EFA) for a variety of purposes including reducing a large number of items from a questionnaire or survey instrument to a smaller number of components, uncovering latent dimensions underlying a data set, or examining which items have the strongest association with a given factor. Once a researcher has used EFA and has identified the number of factors or components underlying a data set, he/she may wish to use the information about the factors in subsequent analyses (DiStefano, Zhu, & Mindrila, 2009).

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) index and the Bartlett's test of sphericity are used to determine the appropriateness of the factor analysis as data reduction tool in a study. KMO indices of more than 0.5 as well as Bartlett's test of sphericity significant at  $p < 0.05$  are suggested for an acceptable factor analysis (Field, 2005).

#### **4.8.4 Cronbach's Apha**

Cronbach's alpha test was conducted to test the reliability and validity of the measurement instrument. This test demonstrates the consistency that the measurement instrument is measuring what it intends to measure. In essence this means a reliable instrument would provide consistent results if used in the same or different person repeatedly. The generally acceptable lower limit for the Cronbach's alpha is 0.70, although it may decrease to 0.60 in

exploratory research (Hair et al., 2010). For the purpose of this study 0.65 was deemed to be the acceptable lower limit.

#### **4.8.5 Pearson's Correlation**

Correlation analysis is used when one wants to determine whether a change in one variable leads to a change in another (Hair et al., 2010). Therefore, it measures a relationship between two variables. For the purpose of this study the Pearson's correlation analysis was used to determine the relationship between the performance scores and the ideal self of managers and leadership potential respectively. It was further used to determine the relationship between the ideal self of managers and their leadership potential. The value of the correlations range from 0 to 1 and it can either be positive or negative and if the value is closer to 1 it indicates a strong relationship and if closer to 0 it indicates a poor relationship (Hair et al., 2010).

#### **4.9 Research Limitations**

The research was based on self-reported data and there was no opportunity to verify data using other methods and there is therefore a risk of the common method bias in the findings.

Secondly, the challenges of using performance review results in identifying leadership potential are well documented, however, in this study the performance review results were used as one of the variables rather than being the only one. But also the fact that the participants were expected to write their names so that a link could be made with their performance information may have deterred some from participating. However, in the case where the researcher had explained the purpose of the study for those questionnaires that were administered during meetings this did not seem to bother the participants and the response rate was high.

Thirdly, In terms of the Intentional change theory, only one discovery, that is, ideal self was used for this study due to time constraints. Therefore the results cannot be generalised for

the entire intentional change theory. Equally, for the leadership potential identification model, only 13 factors were used instead of the 77 criteria as defined in the model. Therefore the results may not be generalised for the entire leadership potential identification model.

Fourthly, the use of one organisation limits the ability to generalise the results of the study in the entire public sector, however, there might be value out of the model for the entire public sector to adopt in enhancing the awareness of the ideal self and possibly enhance leadership potential especially among the managers.

## **5. CHAPTER 5: RESEARCH RESULTS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter highlights the main findings of the data collected using the methods outlined in the preceding chapter. The main objective of the analysis was to explore the research questions as raised in Chapter three. To recap, the main research questions are as follows:

**Research Question 1:** What is the relationship between the managers' ratings of their 'ideal self' and their overall final performance scores?

**Research Question 2:** What is the relationship between the managers' ratings of their 'ideal self' and their ratings of their leadership potential?

**Research Question 3:** What is the relationship between the managers' overall final performance scores and their leadership potential?

**Research Question 4:** What measures can be put in place to assist managers and employees to develop their 'ideal self' and thereby enhance their leadership potential?

This chapter highlights the results of the data and begins by explaining the sample and its demographics especially as they relate to the job level, years of experience in the department as well as experience in the job level. The chapter also presents the results found as a result of the various tests undertaken as explained in Chapter four. The Principle Component Analysis was performed to determine the appropriateness of using the factor analysis to combine related measures. Furthermore, the Cronbach's Alpha was performed to verify the consistency and reliability of the data. Lastly, Pearson's correlation test between the ideal self-construct (and its components) as well as the leadership potential (and its components) was performed to test the existence of the relationship. The same Pearson's correlation was conducted to test the relationship between the ideal self and performance scores as well as leadership potential and performance scores. The outcome of these tests assisted in understanding whether there are any associations

between these constructs and performance scores, and therefore to answer the research questions.

## 5.2 Response Rate, Job Level and Experience of the Participants

As indicated in Chapter four, the study was conducted in a two-stage process, that is, survey questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. In terms of the survey, questionnaires were administered in meetings and in order to increase the participation, they were further sent by email to middle managers. In total 120 questionnaires were distributed in meetings and the same questionnaire was sent by email to 189 middle managers. Overall 131 questionnaires were returned by participants. Given the fact that one of the research questions required performance information for 2013/14 financial year, 35 questionnaires were not considered in the final analysis as they did not contain this information. One questionnaire did not contain the name of the respondent and was not signed and as a result it was not used in the analysis as it was difficult to link it to the performance information received.

In the end therefore, 95 questionnaires were deemed valid and analysed, and as shown in Table 1 below, 47 (60%) of the participants were middle managers whereas 38 (40%) were senior managers. Within the range of middle managers, 17 (29.8%) of the managers were in job level 11 whereas 40 (70.1%) were in job level 12.

**Table 1. Job level of the respondents**

Job level		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	11	17	17.9	17.9	17.9
	12	40	42.1	42.1	60.0
	13	38	40.0	40.0	100.0
Total		95	100.0	100.0	

**Table 2. No of years of the respondents in the department**

No of years	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 0-3	28	29.5	29.5	29.5
4-6	22	23.2	23.2	52.6
7-9	24	25.3	25.3	77.9
10 & above	21	22.1	22.1	100.0
Total	95	100.0	100.0	

As demonstrated in Table 2 above there was a relatively equal spread of participants in terms of their experience in the department such that 29.5% of participants had been with the department for between zero to three years whereas about 22.1% of them had been with the department for ten years and above. In terms of the number of years in the current job level, the picture was different though because the majority, 76.8%, had been in their current positions for six years or less as shown in table 3 below.

**Table 3. No of years in the current job**

No of years	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 0-3	43	45.3	45.3	45.3
4-6	30	31.6	31.6	76.8
7-9	14	14.7	14.7	91.6
10 & above	8	8.4	8.4	100.0
Total	95	100.0	100.0	

With regard to semi-structured interviews, 12 participants were interviewed face-to-face by the researcher. Appendix C contains a list of the managers who were interviewed for this study. The main consideration in selecting the participants for the interviews was that first and foremost, they had completed the questionnaire. Secondly, in line with the purposive sampling technique chosen, it was decided that in order to get a variety of views from different perspectives the interviewees should be sourced from different branches or

function areas within the department. Out of the nine branches of the department only two were not represented in the interviews as shown in Table 4 below. This was due to unavailability of the selected participants during the period of data collection as well as the fact that there was no manager at this level who completed the survey from one branch (Climate Change and Air Quality). Lastly, there was an attempt to get a fair representation of gender so as not to get a picture skewed towards one gender or the other.

**Table 4. Split of participants by departmental branches and gender**

Name of Branch	Participants by Gender		Number of Participants
	Male	Female	
Biodiversity & Conservation	0	0	0
Chemicals & Waste Management	0	1	1
Chief Financial Officer	1	0	1
Chief Operating Officer	0	3	3
Climate Change & Air Quality	0	0	0
Environmental Programmes	2	1	3
Environmental Advisory Services	1	0	1
Legal, Authorization & Compliance Enforcement	1	0	1
Oceans & Coasts	2	0	2
<b>Total number of participants</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>12</b>

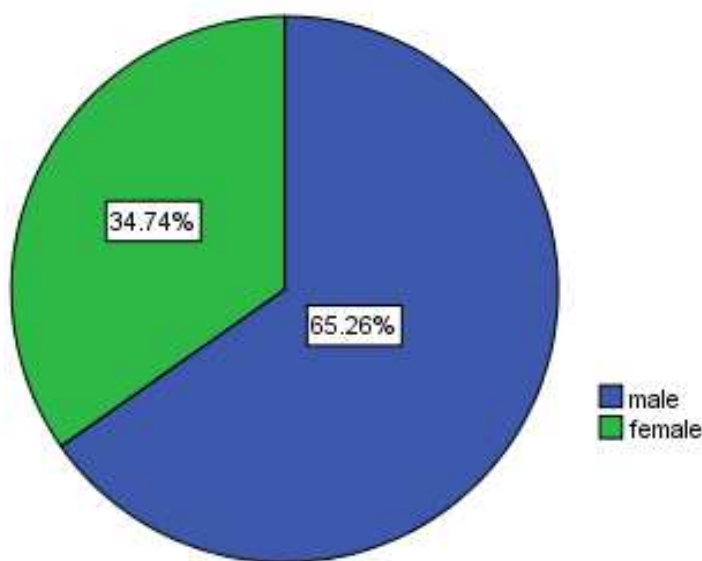
### 5.3 Descriptive Statistics of the Sample Group

The descriptive statistics of the sample indicate that the questionnaire was answered by 95 respondents, 62 of whom were males and 33 females which accounts for 65.2% and 34.7% respectively (see figure 6). In terms of age, the respondents fell in five age groups: less than 24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54 and 55 & above. There was only one (1.1%) respondent in the range of less than 24; 24 (25.3%) in the range 25-34; 56 (58.9%) in the range 35-44; 12 (12.6%) in the range 45-54; and lastly there were two (2.1%) in the range 55 & above (see figure 7).

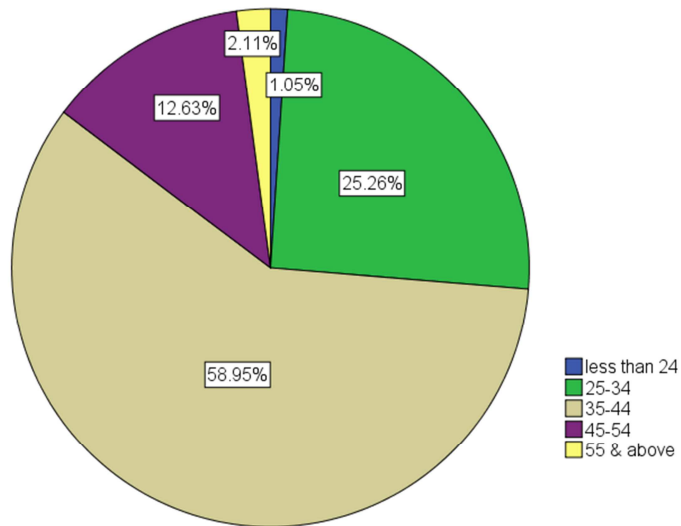
The sample was also representative of the country's demographics in terms of race in that 89 (93%) of the respondents were black with 81 (85.3%) of them being African, 3 (3.2%)

being coloured and 5 (5.3%) being Indian (see figure 8). There were 6 white respondents and this accounted for 6.3% of the respondents. In terms of education 2 (2.1%) respondents had matric, 18 (18.9%) had a diploma, 22 (23.2%) had a bachelor's degree, 26 (27.4%) had an honours' degree, 25 (26.3%) had a master's degree, and finally 2 (2.1%) had a doctoral degree (see figure 9).

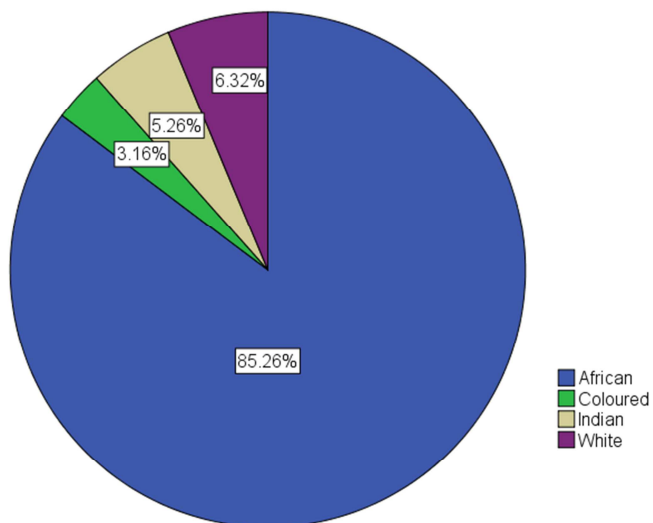
**Figure 6. Percentage of Respondents Based on Gender**



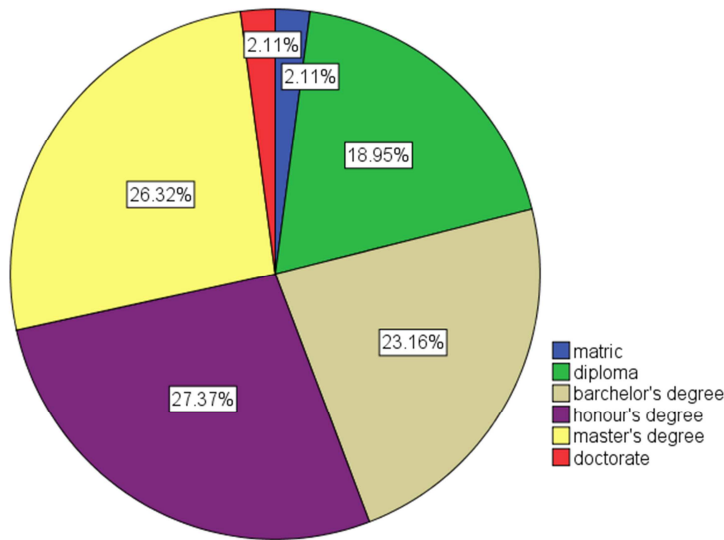
**Figure 7. Percentage of Respondents Based on Age**



**Figure 8. Percentage of Respondents Based on Race**



**Figure 9. Percentage of Respondents Based on Educational Level**



## 5.4 Principle Component Analysis (PCA)

The ideal-self discovery from Richard Boyatzis' theory has three constructs, that is, the image of a desired future, hope as well as core identity. Equally the model of leadership potential identification by Dries & Pepermans (2012) has four dimensions, which are, analytical skills, drive, emergent leadership and learning agility. Therefore, in order to measure each of these constructs or dimensions a number of questions were used. All of these questions were linked to one another and as a result it became necessary to perform the PCA in order to reduce the data so as to build higher level constructs than just the questions. The questions were therefore subjected to PCA to determine if the factor analysis is appropriate.

### 5.4.1 The Ideal Self

#### 5.4.1.1 Image of a Desired Future

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy for the questions relating to the image of a desired future construct (questions 8-12) was found to be .835 which is greater than 0.5 (acceptable limit), and the Bartlett's test of sphericity is statistically significant at  $p > 0.001$  (see table 5). Therefore factor analysis is appropriate.

**Table 5. KMO and Bartlett's test results for the construct of the image of a desired future**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.835
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	214.864
	df	10
	Sig.	.000

#### **5.4.1.2 Hope**

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy for the questions relating to the hope construct (questions 13-35) was found to be .748 which is greater than 0.5 (acceptable limit), and the Bartlett's test of sphericity is statistically significant at  $p > 0.001$  (see table 6). Therefore factor analysis is appropriate.

**Table 6. KMO and Bartlett's test results for the hope construct**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.748
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	534.076
	df	210
	Sig.	.000

#### **5.4.1.3 Core Identity**

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy for the questions relating to the core identity construct (questions 36-46) was found to be .698 which is greater than 0.5 (acceptable limit), and the Bartlett's test of sphericity is statistically significant at  $p > 0.001$ . Therefore factor analysis is appropriate.

**Table 7. KMO and Bartlett's test results for the core identity construct**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.698
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	184.987
	df	45
	Sig.	.000

### 5.4.2 Leadership Potential

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy for the questions relating to the leadership potential construct (questions 48-60) was found to be .771 which is greater than 0.5 (acceptable limit), and the Bartlett's test of sphericity is statistically significant at  $p > 0.001$ . Therefore factor analysis is appropriate.

**Table 8. KMO and Bartlett's test results for the leadership potential construct**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.771
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	382.332
	df	78
	Sig.	.000

### 5.5 Cronbach's Alpha for Internal Consistency and Reliability

In total the survey questionnaire consisted of 52 five-point Likert scale questions wherein 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree and 5 = strongly agree. Out of 52 questions, 39 were measuring the construct of the ideal self (five for image of a desired future, 23 for hope, and 11 for core identity) and 13 were measuring the construct of the leadership potential (four for analytical skills, three for learning agility, three for drive, and three for emergent leadership). In order to determine the reliability of the questions in measuring the intended construct, the Cronbach's Alpha was performed (see table 9) and .65 was considered to be acceptable as indicated in Chapter four.

For the Ideal self-construct, the five items of the image of a desired future had a score of .867, whereas hope registered a score of .684 after two questions (question 25 & 27) had been deleted in order to improve the score from .638. There was an opportunity to increase this score to .998 by deleting another question, however, it was decided that no further questions should be deleted given that the minimum acceptable score of .65 had

been achieved. For the core identity the score was .654 after one question (question 44) had been removed in order to increase the score from .548. Again there was an opportunity to increase this score to .931 by deleting another question however, given that the minimum acceptable score had been achieved, it was decided not to delete the question.

In terms of the leadership potential a score of .828 was obtained, demonstrating that the data was reliable to measure this construct. Under leadership potential there was also a possibility of increasing the score of the Cronbach's Alpha to .838 by deleting one question but it was also decided to keep all the questions given that the minimum score of .65 had been achieved.

**Table 9. Cronbach Alpha scores fo the ideal self and leadership potential**

		Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
<b>Ideal self</b>	Image of a desired future	.867	5
	Hope	.684	21
	Core identity	.654	10
<b>Leadership Potential</b>	Leadership Potential	.828	13

## 5.6 Research Question 1

What is the relationship between the managers' ratings of their 'ideal self' and their overall final performance scores?

### 5.6.1 Quantitative Results

The performance scores as agreed between the managers and their supervisors for the 2011/12 financial year were used in the analysis. In this regard a correlation analysis was performed and the results showed that there is no statistically significant relationship between the performance scores and the ideal self (see table 10).

**Table 10. Pearson's correlation between the ideal self and the performance score - no significant relationships**

Ideal Self		Performance Score
Image of a desired future	Image of a desired future	$r = -0.029$ ; $P > 0.05$
Hope	Future plans	$r = 0.032$ ; $P > 0.05$
	Social relations	$r = -0.195$ ; $P > 0.05$
	Positive historical perspective	$r = 0.041$ ; $P > 0.05$
	Personal value	$r = 0.047$ ; $P > 0.05$
	Lack of perspective	$r = 0.021$ ; $P > 0.05$
	Positive future orientation	$r = -0.032$ ; $P > 0.05$
	Trust and confidence	$r = -0.100$ ; $P > 0.05$
Core identity	Categorisation	$r = 0.116$ ; $P > 0.05$
	Sense of ownership	$r = 0.142$ ; $P > 0.05$
	Positive attitudes	$r = 0.003$ ; $P > 0.05$
	Sense of belonging	$r = -0.040$ ; $P > 0.05$

### 5.6.2 Qualitative Results

Even though the quantitative analysis above demonstrated that there is no significant relationship between the ideal self and performance scores, this issue was further explored in the semi-structured interviews. The idea was to get a sense from the middle managers about those aspects of their vision that impact on their performance. The questions continued on the theme of the entire research and they sought to explore further the issue of a vision for each manager as well as the effects of such a vision on the performance of the manager. In the analysis various themes emerged and the frequency of those is reflected in figure 10 below.

**Figure 10. Factors of Ideal Self/Personal Vision that Affect Performance of Managers**

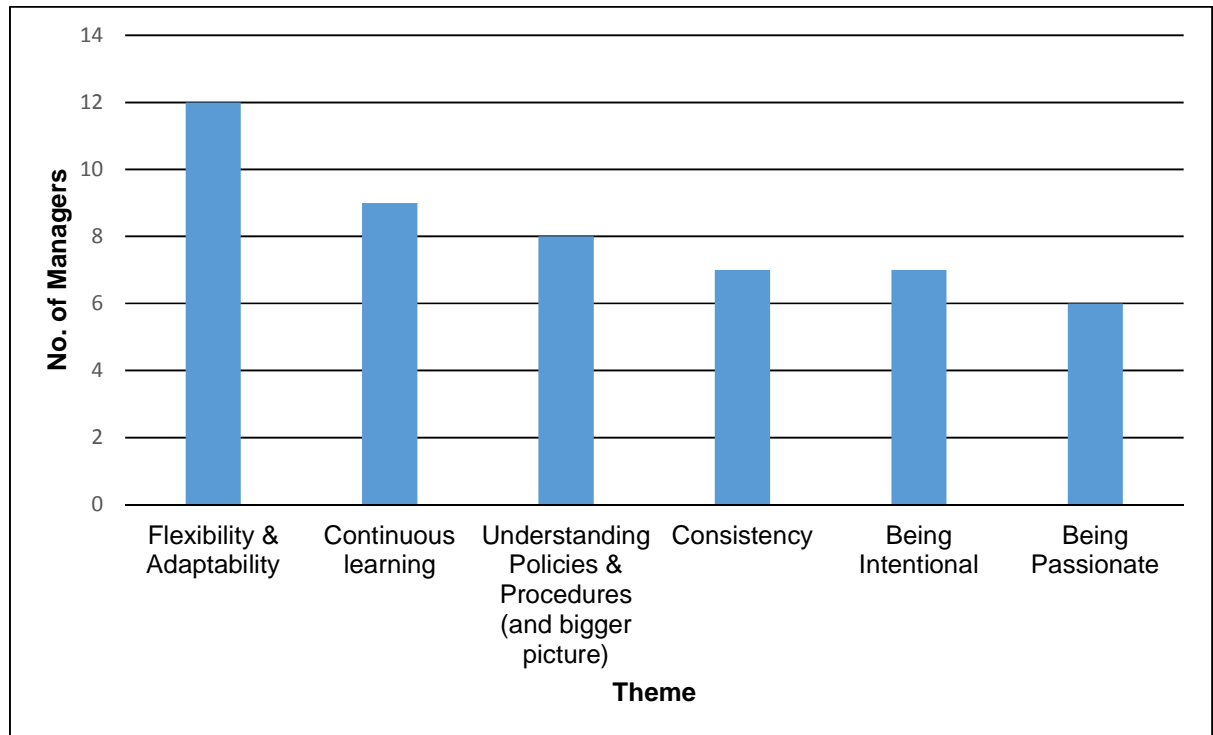


Figure 10 shows that all twelve interviewed managers concurred that flexibility and adaptability are very important if one has to perform at a higher level. The second most important factor based on the frequency is continuous learning. There is a view from the managers that unless you keep up with the developments in your field and broadly, you may not perform at your optimum level. The third most important factor was the understanding of the policies and procedures that guide your work, but also understand the bigger picture. Being intentional, consistency and being passionate are the three other factors that came up in the analysis as being important if one has to perform at a higher level. A snapshot of some of the comments from the managers about the three most important factors that link personal vision or ideal self with the performance will be given below.

In respect to flexibility and adaptability, one manager said:

“I trained as a marine biologist beneficiaries risk resource manager and I would say my pre-disposition was science as well, but with time when I was

doing my masters I realized that actually as much as I love the sciences but I love working with people more, I then started re-crafting my positioning from being a scientist to working more with people..”

Another manager said:

“I hope to not just end up being a specialist in one field, because that is what I am currently doing, which is recruitment and service benefits, so I want to branch out in other fields within HR.”

This theme was echoed by all the managers and one of the longest serving managers in government, out of all the interviewed managers had this to say:

“My advantage was that I worked in different sections of government, mainly starting off from finance, supply chain, and now in contract operations, contract management, and budgets.”

Another manager indicated that:

“I used to be a journalist. I was a journalist for thirty years before I joined the department.”

Another factor that came up during the interview is about continuous learning and in this regard, the interviewed managers expressed that:

“...there are certain types of training that I like to do but I know that they will never pay for me at work so what I then do I will rather pay for myself to go and do it because it's things that I know they will help me to become even more intentional about my greater vision.”

One manager commented as follows:

“I would say, one of the most important factors would maybe be that affinity for learning, having that affinity for learning. I would not say aptitude for learning, but rather affinity, to just constantly making sure that I am up to date with the research, even if it is reading an article in my coffee break, or searching on line, or just reading the latest research...”

To amplify the point, one manager who aspires to be a Chief Financial Officer one day remarked that:

“...and the willingness to learn as an individual, I go outside my boundaries to learn, not only learn what I am doing here, but I am also learning what other sections are doing, just like the budget, because if you want to become a CFO you must really know finance as a whole, that’s what basically I am doing here, willing to learn.”

To further demonstrate the importance of learning if one has to understand their ideal self and perform at a higher level, one manager had this to say:

I’m a lifelong learner...ever since I completed my master’s in 2000 or so at the University of Western Cape...I’ve never gone a year without studying although I’m not yet a doctor...So I’ve been studying a lot of other things in different areas, not just the environment, not just the issues of finances or leadership or management. Different areas. And the more you do that the more you realise that there’s still a lot that you still don’t know or that you don’t understand. Cause you realise that you can get an A in environmental management but there’s psychology, there’s sociology, there’s ...”

When it comes to understanding policies and procedures guiding the work you do as a manager, eight managers viewed this as important. The main issue here is that, much as it is important to understand the policies and procedures, one has to understand the bigger picture. How does the work that you do contribute to the bigger picture? One manager commented as follows:

“Now, for me it is critical, contract, as we know that, government, in any organisation, private or government, there is procedures and policies....” If we do not have our contracts ready in time then the whole objective of this job creation, poverty alleviation, expanded public works and all the deliverables that we have to meet, will not be met.”

A manager who also works in the job creation space within the department had this to say:

“I guess one of the things that we are doing as a program in particular, we are actually trying to improve people’s lives, and in terms of training and that on its own, it does assist me in terms of saying I could add more value...”

Another manager whose job focusses on integrated coastal management services sees it as going beyond that where he says:

“...even though I am more or less in this specialized coastal management field as well, I feel that Integrated Coastal Management by its very nature, requires you to be exposed and to be knowledgeable on a number of various aspects, to bring together, to achieve a goal as coastal management, so coast is not really the coast, which is the fun part of it.”

## **5.7 Research Question 2**

What is the relationship between the managers’ ratings of their ‘ideal self’ and their ratings of their leadership potential?

### **5.7.1 Quantitative Results**

Overall there is a significant relationship between the ideal self and the leadership potential of the managers surveyed, even though there are some cases where the relationship is not significant in other components.

#### **5.7.1.1 Image of a Desired Future**

Table 11, for instance, demonstrates that the construct of the image of a desired future is significantly correlated to the analytical skills, drive as well as the learning agility components of the leadership potential. The only component that has no significant relationship with the image of desired future is the emergent leadership.

**Table 11. Pearson correlation between the image of a desired future and the components of the leadership potential**

Image of a desired future		Leadership Potential			
		Analytical Skills	Drive	Emergent Leadership	Learning Agility
Image of a Desired Future	Pearson Correlation	.293**	.342**	.180	.364**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	.001	.080	.000
	N	95	95	95	95
	Mean	4.0456	4.1579	4.2105	4.2561
	Std Deviation	.52953	.54706	.52828	.52017

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

### 5.7.1.2 Hope

As indicated earlier, the hope construct of the ideal-self had 21 questions (after two had been deleted to improve the Cronbach's Alpha score) which were reduced, using factor analysis, to seven components (see table 12). Four of these components, that is, trust and confidence, positive future orientation, personal value as well as positive historical perspective showed positive significant relationship with most of the components of the leadership potential which are analytical skills, drive, emergent leadership and learning agility. However, two components of hope which are social relations and future plans showed no significant relationship with any of the components of the leadership potential. On the other hand, the lack of perspective component of hope showed negative significant relationship with the drive component of leadership potential and showed no significant relationship with the other components.

**Table 12. Pearson correlation between the components of hope and the components of leadership potential**

		Leadership Potential			
		Analytical Skills	Drive	Emergent Leadership	Learning Agility
Trust and Confidence	Pearson Correlation	.317**	.341**	.279**	.415**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.001	.006	.000
	N	95	95	95	95
Positive Future Orientation	Pearson Correlation	.278**	.494**	.307**	.466**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.006	.000	.003	.000
	N	95	95	95	95
Lack of Perspective	Pearson Correlation	.031	-.230*	-.023	-.037
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.769	.025	.825	.725
	N	95	95	95	95
Personal Value	Pearson Correlation	.173	.170	.309**	.348**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.093	.100	.002	.001
	N	95	95	95	95
Positive Historical Perspective	Pearson Correlation	.264**	.273**	.246*	.262*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.010	.007	.016	.010
	N	95	95	95	95
Social Relations	Pearson Correlation	.067	.089	.141	.178
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.520	.390	.172	.084
	N	95	95	95	95
Future Plans	Pearson Correlation	-.063	-.010	.134	-.024
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.546	.922	.194	.814
	N	95	95	95	95

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 13 below demonstrates seven components of the hope construct as well as the associated mean and standard deviation. It is worth noting that the positive future orientation component had the highest mean at 4.3895 whereas the lack of perspective component had the lowest mean at 2.3298. It should also be noted that the questions relating to the lack of perspective were reverse-coded such that 1 was strongly agree and 5 was strongly disagree. This might explain the low mean for this component.

**Table 13. Mean and standard deviation for the components of hope**

		Hope						
		Trust and Confidence	Positive Future Orientation	Lack of Perspective	Personal Value	Positive Historical Perspective	Social Relations	Future Plans
N	Valid	95	95	95	95	95	95	95
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Mean	4.3368	4.3895	2.3298	4.1368	4.1895	4.2000	3.7053
	Std. Deviation	.55543	.35535	.81286	.58849	.44470	.64164	.65839

### 5.7.1.3 Core identity

The core identity construct of the ideal self was reduced from ten questions (after one question was deleted to improve the Cronbach's Alpha score) into four components using the factor analysis as indicated earlier on, and for some components such as the sense of belonging there is a statistically significant relationship with the drive and learning agility components of the leadership potential (see table 14). Also, there is a significant relationship with the positive attitudes component of the core identity together with the learning agility. However, for all other components of core identity such as categorisation and sense of ownership there is no significant relationship with any of the leadership potential components. Table 15 on the other hand demonstrates the mean and standard deviation of the components of the core identity, with positive attitude having the highest mean whilst the categorisation component has the lowest mean.

**Table 14. Pearson correlation between the components of core identity and components of leadership potential**

Core identity		Leadership Potential			
		Analytical Skills	Drive	Emergent Leadership	Learning Agility
Sense of Belonging	Pearson Correlation	.198	.353**	.174	.262*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.055	.000	.092	.010
	N	95	95	95	95
Categorization	Pearson Correlation	-.091	-.004	.170	-.088
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.378	.969	.100	.397
	N	95	95	95	95
Positive Attitudes	Pearson Correlation	.126	.164	.114	.350**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.224	.112	.269	.001
	N	95	95	95	95
Sense of Ownership	Pearson Correlation	.075	.110	.013	-.009
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.470	.290	.904	.929
	N	95	95	95	95

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

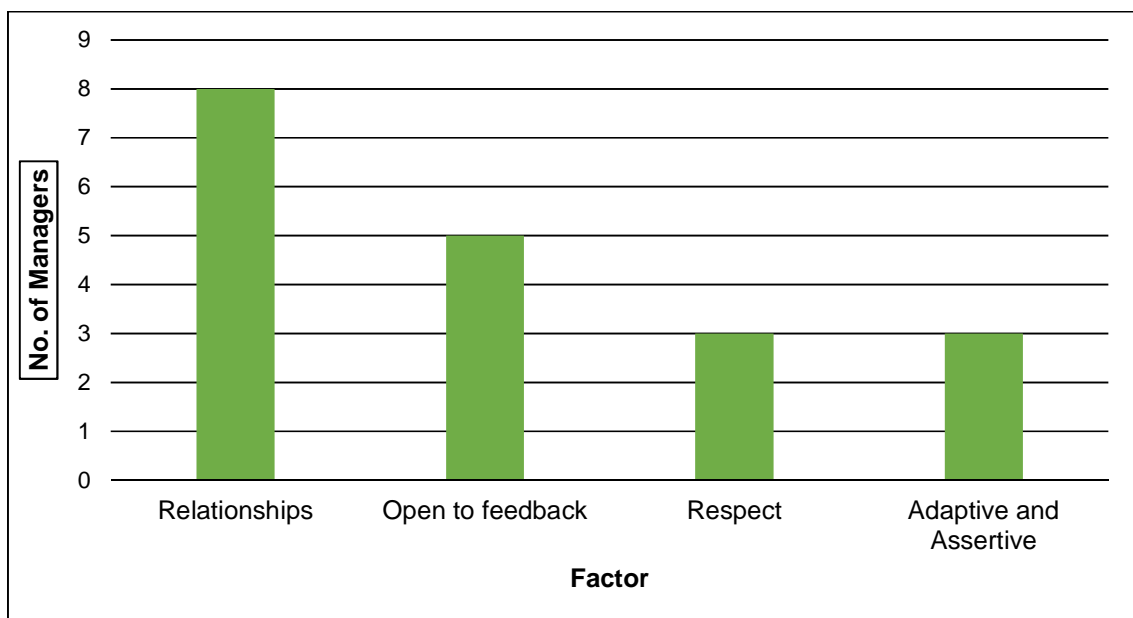
**Table 15. Mean and standard deviation of the components of core identity**

		Core identity			
		Sense of Belonging	Positive Attitudes	Sense of Ownership	Categorization
N	Valid	95	95	95	95
	Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean		3.8544	3.8579	3.2421	3.0211
Std. Deviation		.55557	.76375	1.32662	.89892

### 5.7.2 Qualitative Results

The key focus here was to determine the factors of the ideal self that influence the leadership potential. It must also be stated that the quantitative data demonstrated that overall there is a statistically significant relationship between the components of the ideal self and those of the leadership potential. This section is meant to illustrate the factors that influence this as seen by the managers themselves (see figure 11 below).

**Figure 11. Factors of Ideal Self that Influence Leadership Potential**



About eight managers felt that relationships play a big role in ensuring that one's leadership potential is enhanced. The second most important factor was seen as being open to feed back. Two other factors that came up out of the interviews and analysis are respect as well as being adaptive and assertive at the same time.

In terms of the relationships one manager commented as follows:

“I think I am a person who is very relationship-based, so for me it is through connecting my relationship space and being able to utilize that part of the relationship to be able to facilitate that part of myself.”

To demonstrate the importance of this relationship one manager strongly feels that you need to connect with the people you manage where she says:

“I often feel that there is a space to lead by heart, but it does not work when you have to work with other people and it creates a situation where you want, I am usually a person that wants everybody to be happy, but I have realized that you cannot make everyone happy...”

One manager was straight forward on the issue when she argued that:

“Just be honest and treat people the way you want to be treated.”

Given that all this is about leadership, one manager took it back emphasizing the point about leading by example so that others could follow:

“So to be a leader you lead by example. What I do is important for the people that report to me to see. So, number one, I can't be someone else and portray a different leadership.... so if I as a leader want to become a leader and tell you, you need to do the following, I must be able to have done that so that I can assist you in terms of how to become a better leader...”

In terms of being open to feedback, some managers have emphasized the importance of this issue such that one even said:

“I think I honestly try by all means at times to obtain feedback, whether from clients or from subordinates in whatever that I do, and whether we are negative or positive, so that I can get to know myself better and try to work on my weaknesses, and that will assist me to be a better leader in the future.”

To emphasize the value of being open to feedback one manager incorporated the idea of learning and commented that:

“...leadership is about learning, teaching, talking, understanding, getting ideas. And that is how you become a better leader. So to become a leader...you'd have to be a good listener. You have to be a person that understands and also get ideas. If people have good ideas, take those ideas into you.”

Commenting on the same issue of being open to feedback one manager said:

“I will have to rely on feedback that I have received in terms of ... what I call my leadership style. I think that what I've said I am a heart leader. My supervisor always comes to me and say, you are going to have to change, you cannot lead this way. You cannot lead by heart.”

The other factor that was observed as being important in the relationship between the ideal self and the leadership potential is respect. In this aspect one manager believes that:

“And the important thing is that, respect in terms of leadership. You respect people, not for the levels or who they are. Mutual respect when you talk to anyone. I talk to people, I mean, we got the people that do our cleaning and whatever, and you go to them. They're my friends, they come and sit here. And at the same time I can speak to the Director-General and I treat everyone with the same respect.”

Complementing the above view one manager commented as follows:

“Just be honest and treat people the way you want to be treated. I have found that if you treat someone with the same level of respect and same kindness, and just honesty and gentleness that you want to be treated with, you get so much more out of people.”

On the issue of being adaptive and assertive one manager commented that:

“I think I am an assertive person and that helps me a lot. You know and I am a person that adapts very easily and very quickly. Very fast person. I can learn things quickly, so that helps me a lot because as a leader you want to be forward thinking.”

### 5.8 Research Question 3

What is the relationship between the managers' overall final performance scores and their leadership potential?

The performance scores as agreed between the managers and their supervisors for the 2013/14 financial were used in the analysis. The 13 factors of leadership potential were reduced into four components as indicated earlier on, that is, analytical skills, drive, emergent leadership and learning agility. A correlation analysis was performed between all these components of and the performance scores and the results demonstrated that there does not appear to be any significant relationship between the performance scores and the ideal self (see table 16).

**Table 16. Pearson's correlation between leadership potential and performance scores – no significant relationship**

Leadership Potential		Performance Score
Leadership potential	Analytical skills	$r = 0.013$ ; $P > 0.05$
	Drive	$r = -0.085$ ; $P > 0.05$
	Emergent leadership	$r = 0.034$ ; $P > 0.05$
	Learning agility	$r = 0.019$ ; $P > 0.05$

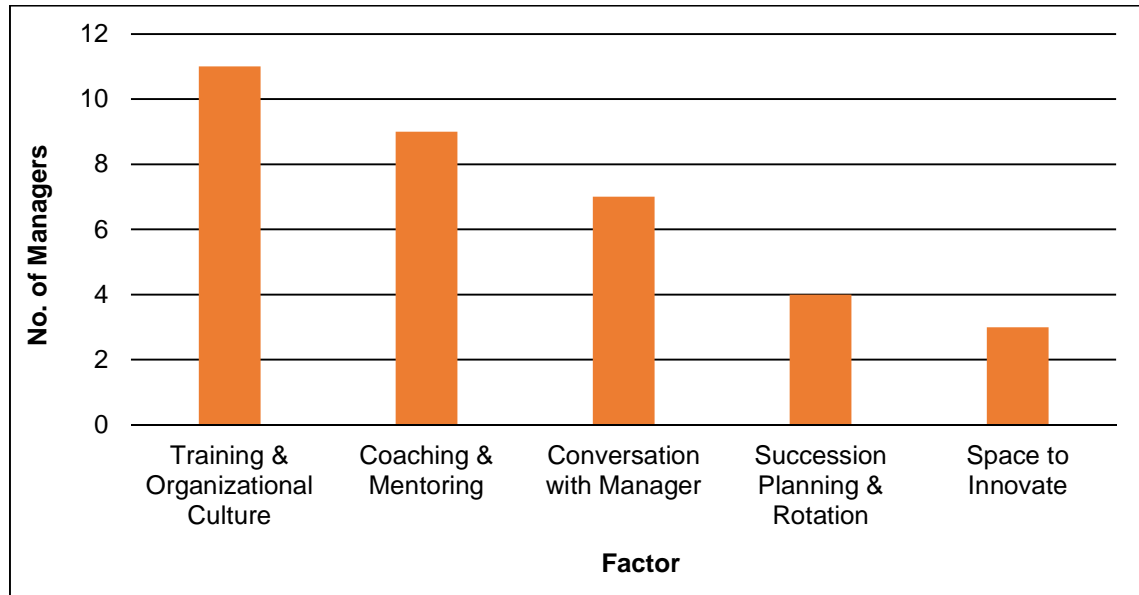
### 5.9 Research Question 4

What measures can be put in place to assist managers and employees to develop their ideal self and thereby enhance their leadership potential?

In order to answer this question, semi-structured interviews were conducted and they explored further the constructs of ideal self and leadership potential in relation to what the organization can do to improve the awareness of the ideal self/vision. The analysis of the interviews demonstrated that a variety of things would need to take place for employees to become aware of their vision and thereby enhance their leadership potential. The factors that emerged from the interviews are training and organisational culture, coaching and

mentoring, conversation with the manager, succession planning and rotation, as well as a space or opportunity to innovate (see figure 12).

**Figure 12. Ways through Which an Organization can assist Employees to develop their Ideal Self/Personal Vision**



Training emerged as the most important factor to assist employees to develop their vision or ideal self. This training relates both to the training of the individual employees on various skills as well as the training of their managers in a variety of skills including talent identification. The second most important factor that emerged in the analysis is coaching and mentoring, followed by conversation with the manager. Succession planning and rotation also emerged as an important factor and lastly, there was also an appreciation of the need for space or opportunity to innovate. An illustration of what some managers had to say about some of the factors identified will be given below.

In respect to training and organizational culture one manager commented as follows:

“As I said I’ll go back to the Personnel Development Plan (PDP) to be saying possibly that will also link with your PDP. You say I thought I lacked a skill in communication. I actually lack a presentation skill...I don’t necessarily need a skill in Environmental Management but I actually lack a

skill in Leadership. I might be a Manager but don't know how to lead people and I need to identify it is a gap and it must be filled and how do I fill it. So if I learn from other people whom I think are good leaders within the organization and outside the organization then they will help close that gap for me."

Another manager concurs with this and below is what he had to say:

"...they can take you for the courses, there are courses that they offer, but not just courses that you attend and get a certificate of attendance, but courses that you can build on, there's a competency test and in that way you can really measure yourself in terms of that one..."

In respect of the organizational culture element as well as the training of the managers, this is what some managers had to say.

"I think more importantly if a culture could be changed it may not be that you train me to be as good as you without the threat that I might take your position, it's not about that, but it is about that I would have enough skill..."

The other manager commented that:

"I think maybe as well that should be done for every employee, but I think Managers as well should have that, I don't know if I should call it intuition or what, or maybe they should also be given a course and a program on how to also identify talents in their own people which they are leading."

In relation to coaching and mentoring one manager believes that:

"...have mentors, or coaches, they look up to somebody else, and that's what they call job shadowing whereby you learn how your manager executes certain task or roles, you learn that, I think that's the best way one can identify those kinds of things..."

One manager believes that some of the current programmes could be cascaded down to the level of junior officials and this is what she had to say:

“I think the Department can have a focussed program that assists employees. For Senior Management there is this mentorship program and I usually feel that would be beneficial for more junior management and even junior staff.”

In terms of the conversation with the managers, the results indicate that there is a need for such conversations between the managers and the subordinates. One manager commented as follows:

“If a manager takes the time to sit down with individual staff members and speak to them and say to them, look, this is your present position. Where do you want to go to, how do you want to develop?...I think it needs to be a situation where a manager actually sits down with a staff member and gets to know who’s working for them and what they want to do with their lives. Because some personal assistants (PAs) don’t want to be a PA for the rest of their lives. Some of them want to be managers. Some of them want to be out in the field and be inspectors. An environmental management inspector might actually want to be a baker or a chef or something. I’d say most people aren’t in the jobs that they really want to do, and it’s up to management to find out and then help them to get to that. Encourage them to study in that direction.”

There is a view that managers don’t know what their subordinates really want as this manager puts it:

“...conversations need to be held where I don’t think even our managers, they understand my passion for instance.”

One manager even suggested time frames for these conversations:

“Maybe after a year, you are in your position. Maybe then we should be having these interviews, either with your manager or people from Human Resources. Just to identify where people want to go, because when you come into this place, they sometimes say I applied for this job because I want the money. I want the position.”

In terms of succession planning one manager commented that:

“I have reached a ceiling so there is no sense that right now I am being groomed to become the next director, the next other person that I am working with is being groomed to be one as well, so there isn't that also that bigger vision around that growth and development...”

On the issue of being given space to innovate one manager indicated that:

“I just attended a conference which was around innovation and I think we lack that in the department, we don't let people be, we don't give people the space to fail, try something new, and fail, there is more of compliance and control more than anything else. So if people can be given a room or space, to do something different, I think that would work.”

## **5.10 Conclusion**

In conclusion, the results demonstrate that in terms of the first research question wherein the idea was to determine the relationship between the ideal self and the performance scores of the managers, it was found that no statistically significant relationship exists between the variables. However, it must also be noted that the interviews have demonstrated some factors linked to ideal self that could play a role in influencing the performance of the managers. In respect to the second question, which relates to the relationship between the ideal self and leadership potential it has been found that there is a statistically significant relationship. The interviews also demonstrated that relationships, respect, being open to feed back as well as being adaptive and assertive are some of the ideal-self factors that could influence the leadership potential of a person.

On the third question, the results demonstrated that there is no statistically significant relationship between the performance scores of managers and their leadership potential. Lastly, the results of the fourth question demonstrate that there are specific actions that could be taken by the organizations to assist their employees to develop their ideal selves thereby increasing their leadership potential. These include training and organizational culture; coaching and mentoring; conversation with the manager; succession planning and rotation; as well as a space or opportunity to innovate.

## **6. CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH RESULTS**

### **6.1 Introduction**

The identification of the potential that already exists in the organization as well as employees who have a potential of becoming effective in future roles is very crucial and Dries & Peperman's (2012) two-dimensional model is the most useful framework to use in considering the leadership potential construct (Troth & Gyetvey, 2014). In some recent literature review on public administrative leadership, Van Wart (2013) notes that the various public sector industries, jurisdictions and levels of administration would welcome well-designed studies on leadership in public administration. The main purpose of this study was to understand how organisations could assist managers and employees in their understanding and/or development of their ideal selves and thereby enhance their leadership potential. The results of this study would greatly assist the attempts of the public sector organisations in assisting their employees to develop or become aware of their ideal selves and enhance their leadership potential.

Data from 95 respondents and 12 interviews was analysed quantitatively and qualitatively respectively, and the results have been presented in the previous chapter. This chapter discusses the findings in the context of the theoretical literature reviewed in Chapter two as well as the research questions indicated in Chapter three. In the main, the findings support the findings of previous studies based on the existing literature in respect of performance and leadership potential as well as performance and ideal self. The results also shed some light on the relationship between the ideal self and the leadership potential and all this will be discussed in detail in this chapter. The discussion of the results in this chapter is structured in such a way that it follows the structure of the research questions.

### **6.2 Performance Scores and Ideal Self**

***Research Question 1: What is the relationship between the managers' ratings of their 'ideal self' and their overall final performance scores?***

Using Pearson's correlation, the results in Table 10 indicate that there is no significant relationship between the ideal self and the performance scores of the participants. It must

be noted that the performance scores used in this regard were the agreed annual scores between the managers and their supervisors in terms of their performance for the 2013/14 financial year. However, as reflected in figure 9, in terms of the interviews conducted with 12 managers who were asked about the aspects of their vision or ideal self that influence their performance, there was some consensus on the factors that might play a role. For instance, flexibility and adaptability, understanding of the policies and procedures (and the bigger picture), continuous learning, being intentional, consistency, as well as being passionate are the factors that affect the performance of a manager.

Defining the ICT, Boyatzis (2006) stresses that the intentional change process must begin with a person wanting to change and adding that this desire may not even be in their consciousness or even in their scope of self-awareness. Boyatzis and Akrivou (2006) posit that if the ideal self (the first discovery of the ICT) is activated, it plays an executive and motivational function within the self. They argue that it takes responsibility for the overall monitoring and guidance of all actions and decisions in a manner that leads to satisfaction of the person. It is therefore assumed that this includes any decisions and actions by a person in relation to the performance of their duties at work. Given the impact it has on the behavior, feelings and perceptions of a person, the articulation of the ideal self can be a very strong personal vision as it invokes an intentional change (Boyatzis & Akrivou, 2006). In essence, the argument is about the fact that a person's awareness of their desires has a huge impact on their perceptions and choices.

In a study about star performers Bish and Kabanoff (2014, p. 112) hold that these individuals "have superior knowledge, especially in relation to procedural knowledge, show more focus on goal-setting and on long-range goals, seek more feedback, and show higher social skills and greater involvement in team-oriented behaviors". This conclusion demonstrates that even though the statistical results are emphatic on the non-existence of a significant relationship between one's ideal self and their performance scores, there are ways through which ones' ideal self can influence their performance. For instance their understanding of the policies and procedures (and the bigger picture) was identified as a contributing factor.

Buse (2009) in her analysis of the ideal selves of the women engineers found that those who stayed in the profession against all odds demonstrated some persistence and passion. She specifically argues that persistent engineers saw an unrelenting opportunity in their professional futures and that despite decades in the field, they believed that they will find novelty in the work they do. This is in line with the findings of this study in that consistency and being passionate are some of the factors that were identified as very important in influencing the performance of the managers in the public sector. As Boyatzis and Akrivou (2006) put it, the ideal-self engages in behavior consistent with ones desired end state and in this regard sacrifices are sometimes made in the short term to accomplish the more important long term goals. This also talks to the issue of being flexible and adaptable as found in this study given that one might have to change the route but focus on the desired state as imagined.

One of the factors that came out of the analysis of the interviews is that one needs to be intentional about whatever they are pursuing for them to perform at a higher level. This is therefore consistent with the whole notion of the ICT as defined by Boyatzis (2006), specifically the fact that one needs to be intentional in order to change towards a desired direction.

In light of the findings, as well as the literature review undertaken, it can be concluded that indeed there appears to be no statistically significant relationship between the managers' ideal-selves as well as their performance scores. Being clear about your ideal-self or personal vision is therefore not a good predictor that one would improve their performance. There is no indication that a person who has a clear vision of where they want to be in the future will perform better than those without it. However, in order for one to enhance their performance it is clear that they need to know what is happening in their environment. This can be done through investment of time in the understanding of the policies and procedures guiding the work that one does. Equally important to know, beyond just the granular detail of how to perform the task, is how such tasks contribute to the achievement of the organizations' high level objectives.

It is equally important to note that in order to enhance one's performance in their job, they need to be adaptable and flexible; adopt an attitude of continuous learning; be intentional

about the outcome. Also relevant is the whole notion of being consistent and demonstrate the highest levels of passion.

### **6.3 Ideal Self and Leadership Potential**

**Research Question 2:** *What is the relationship between the managers' ratings of their 'ideal self' and their ratings of their leadership potential?*

Overall there is a statistically significant relationship between the ideal self and leadership potential constructs. Table 11 specifically shows that firstly, the image of a desired future (a component of the ideal self) has a statistically significant relationship with all but one of the components of the leadership potential. This is consistent with the thinking by Boyatzis (2006) where he concludes that there would never be any emergence of a desired and sustainable change without leadership. It can therefore be concluded that a person who has clarity on how they would want their life to unfold are likely to demonstrate high levels of leadership potential.

Secondly, the results in Table 12 indicate that there is a statistically significant relationship between some components of hope, that is, trust and confidence, positive future orientation and positive historical perspective and all the components of the leadership potential. On the other hand, the personal value component of hope only has a statistically significant relationship with only two components of leadership potential, meaning, emergent leadership and learning agility. Two of the hope components, that is, social relations and future plans have no statistically significant relationship with any of the components of the leadership potential. It is worth noting that the lack of perspective component of hope demonstrates no significant relationship with all but one component of leadership potential. Even the observed statistically significant relationship with the drive component of leadership potential is a negative relationship.

These results are generally in line with the literature on many components for instance the significant correlation between trust and confidence, positive future orientation and positive historical perspective with all the leadership potential components is in line with Dries & Peperman's (2012) multi-dimensional conceptualization of leadership potential. This

clearly demonstrates that for a person to be considered as having leadership potential they must demonstrate analytical skills, drive, emergent leadership and learning agility. In support of this, it has also been demonstrated that motivation to lead, which encompasses the components of the leadership potential framework by Dries & Peperman's (2012) is a key quality related to leadership potential (Waldman, Galvin, & Walumbwa, 2013).

Similarly, in line with Boyatzis and Akrivou's (2006) assertion that optimism and efficacy are the key determinants of hope and therefore key determinants of the ideal self, positive future orientation is a function of hope. The finding on these ideal-self components is also consistent with findings by Bandura (1986, 1982, 1977, cited in Boyatzis & Akrivou, 2006) that a person's perception of their ability also determines the type of goals they chose as well as the effort they put in achieving them. They further conclude that hope drives energy through positive emotions and therefore a person with a relatively low level of self-efficacy and optimism will experience less hope.

Equally, the results on the lack of perspective demonstrate that without a clear sense of purpose, it is unlikely that one can demonstrate any leadership potential traits. This result was unsurprising, though as studies have shown that, for one to exhibit any leadership potential, they need to be clear in their minds in terms of their purpose in life and be motivated (Waldman *et al.*, 2013). The results on the social relations and future plans components were quite interesting though as they did not seem to agree with the current literature which broadly concludes that those components should contribute to one's leadership potential. One explanation that could be given is that the instrument used to measure these may have been seen by the participants to be too personal and emotional and even possibly superficial, looking at the specific questions.

The research results, on the other hand have demonstrated that relationships, respect, being open to feedback as well as being adaptive and assertive are some of the key traits that one needs to possess as part of the leadership potential construct. These results are in line with the findings by DeRue, Nahrgang, Wellman, & Humphrey (2011) who argue that leadership effectiveness has some crucial intrapersonal factors at play in particular as it relates to future leadership effectiveness, which in this case is leadership potential.

Thirdly, in terms of the core identity the results shown in Table 14 demonstrate that there is a statistically significant relationship between some components of this construct with the leadership potential. For instance, the sense of belonging component is statistically significantly correlated with drive and learning agility, whereas positive attitude is only significantly correlated with the learning agility. On the other hand, the categorisation and sense of ownership components did not demonstrate any statistically significant relationship with any of the leadership potential components.

These results are important because they validate the work of Adamsons and Pasleys (2013) on the identity theory where they posit that the key principle of this theory is that identities guide behavior. In essence, the literature holds that people have multiple statuses in the society and therefore have various identities which they appeal to in the process of performing the relevant functions. If therefore people feel a sense of belonging they are likely to possess drive and curiosity to learn new things. On the other hand, contrary to the measurement scale developed by Feitosa *et al.* (2012) to measure social identity, the results demonstrate that there is no significant relationship between the categorisation and leadership potential. This is probably one of those cases where the participants viewed this set of questions as being exclusionist instead of being inclusive.

Given the results and the literature on this issue, one can conclude that it is important for one to assume a particular individual identity as well as a social identity to be able to demonstrate some level of leadership potential. This is mainly because the sense of belonging provides some security that one is not alone in whatever activities they are performing and so the ability to be creative and learn new things in the process is enhanced.

Overall, the results from the interview as shown in figure 10 have clearly demonstrated that relationships, respect, being open feedback as well as being adaptive and assertive are the main factors that influence ones leadership potential. This is in line with the recent research on identity theory that has focused more on the importance of the characterisation of the individual as one of the ways of understanding their behavior (Adamsons & Pasley, 2013). In essence a person who is clear about their ideal self is

likely to be motivated and find it easy to assume the various identities and thereby enhance their leadership potential.

#### **6.4 Performance Scores and Leadership Potential**

**Research Question 3:** *What is the relationship between the managers' overall final performance scores and their leadership potential?*

When a correlation analysis was performed in order to answer this question, it was found that there is no statistically significant relationship between the performance scores and the leadership potential of the participants (see table 16). In fact the relationship between the performance scores and one of the components of the leadership potential, that is, drive was even negative.

This was however an interesting finding because the literature is also not conclusive on this relationship. For instance, Dries and Pepermans (2008) in a study conducted on the real high potentials found that the number one criterion that is used as an input in the identification of high potential is the current performance. They further found that the high potentials believe that they are innately more talented than other employees both in terms of leadership and interpersonal skills. However, Dries and Pepermans (2008) are not arguing that there is a relationship between the two. To further amplify the point about performance, Ready *et al.* (2010) argue that high potentials consistently and significantly outperform their peers in a variety of settings and circumstances. They further argue that organisations mainly consider employees as high potentials if they meet three baseline activities, that is, deliver strong results, credibly and not at other's expense; master expertise beyond technical; and behave in ways consistent with the organizations' values. What this emphasises though is the role played by the current performance in the identification as a high potential.

Similarly Troth and Gyetvey (2014), even though they acknowledge that performance ratings and leadership development are vulnerable to halo effect, contend that there is value in using this information. They further add that such information shall come from both the manager and their supervisor. Furthermore, Troth and Gyetvey (2014) agree that

there are conceptual differences between performance and leadership potential but also recognize the role of the job performance in determining the initial consideration for future leadership role within an organisation.

On the other hand, other scholars (Miller & Desmarais, 2007) criticise the over-reliance on the performance information as the single determinant of the leadership potential as they believe that leadership potential is more than just the current and previous job performance. This is supported by Greer and Virick (2008) who equally believe that performance is not a good predictor of leadership potential given that for one to be able to perform in a future leadership role they need a different set of skills. They argue that one's technical knowledge in a particular field becomes less important in a leadership role with broader responsibilities that require greater strategic and people management skills. In further support of this view, Dries and Pepermans (2012) argue that the use of past performance to indicate leadership potential has the risk of halo effect coming into play in that high performance scores might be generalized to other characteristics such as leadership potential.

From the results as well as the literature, it can be concluded that there does not appear to be any relationship between the performance rating and leadership potential. This is also because there is no single performance management system that is not subjective. So even though some might argue that instead of self-reported scores, once you bring in the supervisor's scores they neutralise the over confidence bias of the individual, the reality is that the supervisors bring in their own biases into the equation. In fact Dries and Pepermans (2012) believe that line managers, at times, are reluctant to identify their best people as high potentials for fear of losing them to other units within the organization. Therefore, it is important to note that, as Bish and Kabanoff (2014) conclude, performance is more task and context specific. This is in line with the view by Groysberg *et al.* (2008) who submits that, the performance of an individual is not owned by that person alone, it is due to a combination of the individuals' efforts, the capabilities of the organisation as well as the relationships with colleagues. They also conclude that star performers who change employers tend to do less compared to those who stay with the same employer. Performance information therefore may not be used to predict someone's leadership potential.

## 6.5 Development of Ideal Self and Influence on Leadership Potential

*Research Question 4: What measures can be put in place to assist managers and employees to develop their 'ideal self' and thereby enhance their leadership potential?*

The results in Figure 11 indicate the factors or practical measures that could be put in place by the organisation to support the employees and managers to become aware of their ideal selves and therefore enhance their leadership potential. In their order of importance, these are training and organisational culture; mentoring and coaching; conversation with manager; succession planning; as well as space or opportunities to innovate.

The importance of training in enhancing leadership potential has been demonstrated by various studies (Boyatzis et al., 2006; Boyatzis, 2006, 2008; Greer & Virick, 2008), however Boyatzis (2006) warns against what he calls honeymoon effect. He defines this as the tendency for training programs to start showing positive improvements immediately after the training, but within months decline starts setting in again. This is why in this study the issue of organisational culture is seen as equally important and linked to the training aspect. Organisational culture is so important so as to leverage what Boyatzis (2006, p. 611) calls the "sleeper effect", which he defines as the phenomenon that explains "that a sustainable change in a person's behavior, thought patterns or emotional reactions to events does not appear until after six to 12 months following the change effort", which could be training in this case.

The importance of mentoring and coaching in the development or helping people to become aware of their ideal self is consistent with the literature (Boyatzis et al., 2006; Boyatzis, 2006, 2008; Greer & Virick, 2008). Boyatzis (2008) stresses that given the awareness of the ICT, the coach or trainer should always make it a point that the prospective leaders have well-articulated ideal-self or personal vision. In this process he also warns that the trainers or coaches should be careful not to encourage what he calls the "ought self". This, he defines as the person that a trainer or coach might want the

employee to become rather than the person the employee want to be. Mentoring is indeed regarded as one of the less costly ways of promoting talent development and entrenching organisational culture (Balakrishnan & Prathiba, 2011). To further emphasize the importance of mentorship in helping one develop or become aware of their ideal self, Greer and Virick (2008) note that such mentors should have a diversity of skills and maintain a positive relationship with the mentee. A mentor and a mentee should have a caring relationship that maintains appropriate levels of admiration, but also be able to engage informally maintaining respect and trust (Boyatzis *et al.*, 2006; Greer & Virick, 2008).

Continuous conversations between the manager and the employee is one way of demonstrating one of the most important traits of leadership, empathy (Boyatzis, 2011). According to Boyatzis (2011), this is where a person asks questions and listens to the other person because he or she is interested in understanding the other person, his or her priorities or thoughts in a situation. The importance of these conversations as highlighted in the findings of this study are therefore consistent with the conclusions by Boyatzis (2011). It is through such conversations that managers will get to understand the ideal self of their employee and that process would also help the employee to crystalize their ideas about their personal vision and become clearer. A study by Troth & Gyetvey (2014) in the Australian public sector also confirms that career aspirations, among others, is an important consideration in making judgments about leadership potential.

In a study on succession planning by Collins and Porras (1994, cited in Greer & Virick, 2008) they found that only 11.1 % of the visionary companies employed their Chief Executive Officers directly from outside. Even more, they found that out of 113 Chief Executive Officers for whom they had data, only 3.5 % came directly from outside the company. Given the importance of succession planning for the success of organisations, Greer and Virick (2008) conclude that the future of many organisations will depend on their mastery of the process of succession planning especially given the diversity in terms of gender and race in many organisations. This is therefore a confirmation that the finding of succession planning and rotation is consistent with the literature and it can therefore be concluded that this plays a crucial role in enhancing one's leadership potential.

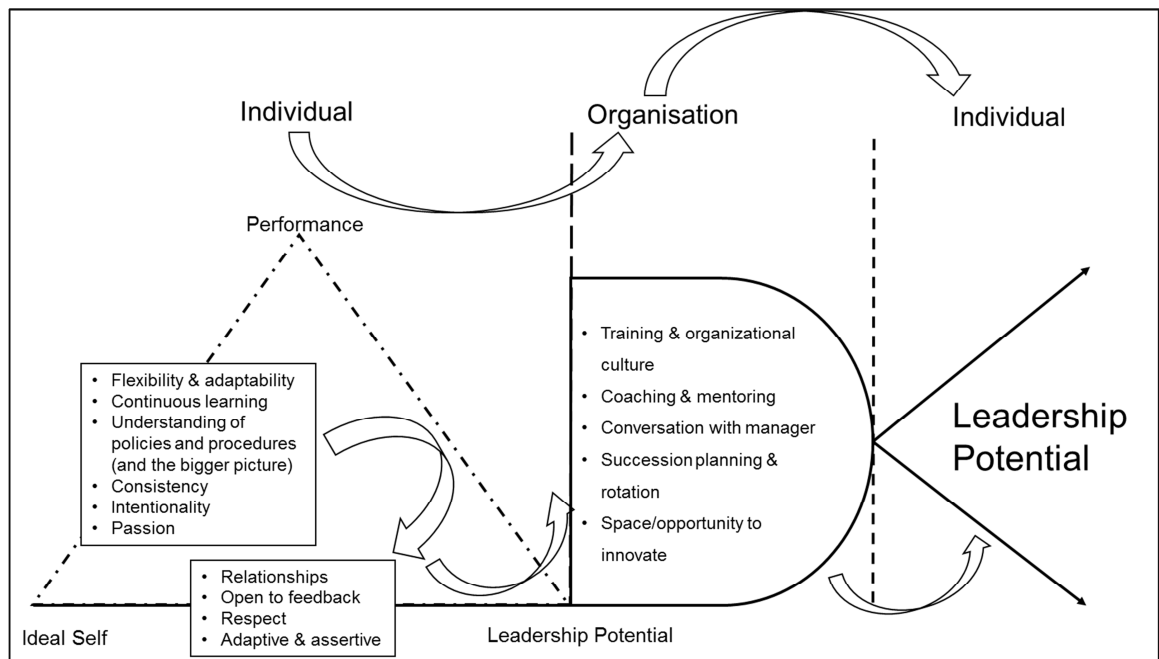
In terms of the opportunity to innovate, Boyatzis *et al.* (2006) hold the view that in order for one to exercise leadership they need not hold a powerful position, because they can show leadership by declaring an innovation in their own area of work. What therefore becomes important is whether the employer presents such opportunities to the employees instead of only focusing on compliance to set rules and regulations.

Given these results and the confirmation by the literature, one can conclude that in order for the organization to enhance the leadership potential of its employees, assisting them to become aware of their ideal self or personal vision would be a good starting point.

## **6.6 Model to Enhance Awareness of Ideal Self and Improve Leadership Potential**

Figure 13 below shows a model that can be used by the Department of Environmental Affairs or the public sector in general to enhance the Ideal Self of its managers and thereby improve their leadership potential.

**Figure 13. Model to enhance Awareness of Ideal Self and Improve Leadership Potential**



The model demonstrates an interplay between the individual and organizational levels. In the first instance the model is depicted through a triangle which represents the relationship or lack thereof between the performance, ideal-self as well as the leadership potential constructs as per the aim of this study. The dotted lines of the triangle between performance and ideal self and leadership potential respectively demonstrate that there is no statistically significant relationship between these constructs and performance reviews. The solid line between the ideal self and the leadership potential demonstrate the statistically significant relationship between these constructs.

The bubble of information between the ideal self and the performance indicates the ideal-self factors that could influence the performance of a manager. It is therefore worth noting that these are some of the factors that the organisation may consider in recruiting an individual into a particular function. The second bubble of information between the ideal self and leadership potential demonstrates the individual traits that should be considered and possibly enhanced by the organisation if they want to enhance the understanding of the ideal-self of its their managers. At organisational level, the bubble of information represents the specific interventions that the organisation can or should undertake in order

to enhance the awareness of ideal self by the managers and employees with a view to improve their leadership potential. This is also in line with the assertion by Van Wart (2013) that a huge portion of the leadership is learned and therefore considerably enhanced through developmental experiences, education, mentoring and training. Lastly, once all of these things have been done, it is expected that the leadership potential of an individual manager or employee will significantly improve.

## **6.7 Conclusion**

The results obtained in this study have clearly demonstrated that becoming aware of your vision i.e. ideal self plays a significant role in your development towards your chosen path, in this case, leadership potential. This is consistent with the intentional change theory as developed by Boyatzis as well as the leadership potential identification framework developed by Dries & Pepermans (2012). Even though there is no statistically significant relationship between the ideal self and the performance information, which is consistent with the literature, it has been demonstrated that there are factors of ideal self that might play a role in improving the performance. Furthermore, it has also been demonstrated that there is no statistically significant relationship between the performance information and the leadership potential.

Given that there has been very little done in the public administration in terms of leadership potential research, the results of this study will add great value to this scarce body of knowledge. The study has demonstrated that there are ways through which public organisations can assist in the awareness of the ideal self by their employees and managers, and this would greatly enhance the leadership potential of such managers and employees.

## **7. CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION**

### **7.1 Introduction**

The main aim of this study was to assess the leadership potential of the managers in the public sector and develop a model that could be used to assist managers and employees become aware of their ideal selves and thereby enhance their leadership potential. The key focus was on the administrative leadership of the public sector and this was influenced by the realization that research had shown that there is a loss of confidence in the public administration and governments had lost all sense of contribution (Van Wart, 2013). Furthermore, the public sector has been criticized for being less efficient and in many instance the leadership is viewed as not being creative, talented or autonomous (Chen & Bozeman, 2014).

Until Dries & Perpermans' (2012) two dimensional framework, there had been no universally acceptable criteria for assessing leadership potential. This model was designed in such a way that it steers clear of factors that measure mature leadership as well as performance reviews and it became the basis for assessing leadership potential at all levels. One of the validations of this model was through a study conducted in the Australian public service by Troth & Gyetvey (2014) where they focussed on general mental ability, problem-solving, emotional intelligence, employee engagement and career aspirations of the potential managers. A case has been made, though, for a research design that would incorporate objective measures such as performance review results (Bish & Kabanoff, 2014).

Furthermore, Boyatzis & Akrivou (2006) had argued that any sustainable leadership change occurs as a results of intentional efforts. It was their argument that a process of leadership change occurs through various discoveries, the first of which is the ideal self. Therefore, given that this study was about leadership potential the incorporation of this discovery proved to be valuable. The role played by performance review information in the identification of leadership potential has been a subject of a debate with strong views either for or against. Those against it believe that the current performance is irrelevant when one is considered for a higher position in an organization given that the new position requires a new set of skills rather than the task orientation at lower levels and that it is susceptible to halo bias (Greer & Virick, 2008; Miller & Desmarais, 2007). Those in support

agree that there is a fundamental difference between performance and leadership potential but argue that performance does play a role in the initial consideration of a person for the leadership position in an organisation (Troth & Gyetvey, 2014).

## **7.2 Implications of this Research**

This research has clearly demonstrated in practical terms how an organisation can assist employees and managers become aware of their ideal selves and thereby enhance their leadership potential. It is also worth noting that the research has provided some theoretical context in the identification of leadership potential and as such there is a lot of value that has come from it for both organisations and academia to consider.

### **7.2.1 Organizations**

If organisations in general and public sector organisations in particular, are to improve their leadership effectiveness, adopting measures of identifying leadership potential becomes an integral part of their strategy. This study has demonstrated that a statistically significant relationship exist between the ideal self and the leadership potential. The findings of this study and the model in particular can be used for such an exercise as it has provided the factors that should be in place for someone to demonstrate leadership potential. Furthermore, this model has established the specific actions that public sector organisations can embark on in order to assist their employees and managers to develop or become aware of their ideal selves and enhance their leadership potential.

Performance management remains an important pillar of management in organisations, however, the study has demonstrated that there is no significant relationship between performance review scores and the ideal self as well as leadership potential respectively. It is therefore imperative that as organisations conduct performance review sessions, they are aware that such information should not be used to determine the leadership potential of a person. In fact this is what happens in most cases and the Peter Principle is often the result, that is, promotion of people to their level of incapacity. Objective measures of identifying leadership potential should therefore be adopted.

### **7.2.2 Academic Institutions**

The finding of no statistically significant relationship between performance review scores and the ideal self and leadership potential, respectively was probably the most unexpected. This is despite the fact that literature has been divided on the importance or role played by the performance review information. Also the model that demonstrates the interplay between performance scores, ideal self, and leadership potential provides fertile ground for further research. Such studies could be undertaken with a focus on the individual managers or have a far wider reach at organisational level.

### **7.3 Recommendations for Future Research**

Given that most research on leadership in general and leadership potential in particular, has focussed in the private sector, the findings of this study provide further opportunities for studies to be conducted in the public sector.

No evidence exist that a study that incorporates performance information, ideal self and leadership potential has ever been done, especially in the public sector. It would therefore enhance the understanding of the relationship between these constructs if such a study could be repeated in a different context. This could be either a different organisation or a number of organisations in the public sector or explore the private sector environment. Also given that this study only focussed on one discovery of the ICT, which is the ideal self, a study that incorporates all the five discoveries of the ICT would provide more value in the understanding of this interplay. Equally, the use of only the 13 factors for the leadership potential instead of the 77 criteria for this construct was identified as a limitation. A study, in the public sector, that takes into consideration all the 77 criteria would be welcome.

One of the limitations of this study is that it was based on self-reported data and there was no opportunity to get the views of the supervisors or managers of the participants especially on the issues of ideal self and leadership potential. A study that incorporates such views would greatly enhance the understanding of

leadership potential. It would also be important though to understand the biases that the managers of the participants bring into the picture.

A need to incorporate objective measures such as performance data in the leadership studies was identified in the literature (Troth & Gyetvey, 2014). This also because it is generally expected that a high performer would necessarily demonstrate high leadership potential. However a lot of studies (Greer & Virick, 2008), including this one, have demonstrated that performance review information is not a good predictor of one's leadership potential. This is an area that still requires further investigation. A longitudinal study that validates the model that has been developed from the findings of this study would be welcome. Such a study could focus on whether an organisation that institutionalises the expected organisational responsibilities as per the model would enhance the leadership potential of their employees and managers.

## 8. CONSISTENCY MATRIX

Research Questions	Literature Review	Data Collection Tool	Analysis
<b>Research Question 1:</b> What is the relationship between the managers' ratings of their 'ideal self' and their overall final performance scores?	Boyatzis & Akrivou, 2006;  Church & Rotolo, 2013;  Dries & Pepermans, 2012	Questionnaire – Section C & E  Interview guide – Questions 2 & 5	Descriptive Statistics & Correlation Analysis  Content analysis – identify themes that emerge from responses  Constant Comparative analysis, compare findings of each interview with results of previous one
<b>Research Question 2:</b> What is the relationship between the managers' ratings of their 'ideal self' and their ratings of their leadership potential?	Boyatzis & Akrivou, 2006;  Dries & Pepermans, 2012;  Troth & Gyetvey (2014)	Questionnaire – Section C & D  Interview guide – Question 6	Descriptive Statistics & Correlation Analysis  Content analysis – identify themes that emerge from responses  Constant Comparative analysis, compare findings of each interview with results of previous one
<b>Research Question 3:</b> What is the relationship between the managers' overall final performance scores and their leadership potential?	Boyatzis & Akrivou, 2006;  Dries & Pepermans, 2012;  Troth & Gyetvey (2014)	Questionnaire – Section D & E	Descriptive Statistics & Correlation Analysis
<b>Research Question 4:</b> What measures can be put in place to assist managers and employees to develop their 'ideal self' and thereby enhance their leadership potential?	Boyatzis & Akrivou, 2006;  Dries & Pepermans, 2012;  Troth & Gyetvey (2014)	Interview guide – Questions 3 & 6	Content analysis – identify themes that emerge from responses  Constant Comparative analysis, compare findings of each interview with results of previous one

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## Appendix A: Ideal Self and Leadership Potential Survey Questionnaire

### Ideal Self and Leadership Potential Survey Questionnaire

Dear Colleague

As part of the requirements for my studies at the Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS), University of Pretoria, where I am currently pursuing my second and final year of the Master of Business Administration (MBA), I am expected to conduct a research on a topic of my choice. I have therefore elected to research on the field of leadership and management. My suggested topic is "Identifying Leadership Potential in the Public Sector from an Intentional Change Perspective."

You are therefore requested to fill this questionnaire as truthfully as possible. Please note that your participation in this study is purely voluntary and you can withdraw at anytime without any consequences to you. Also note that all information collected through this study will only be used for academic purposes and will have no implication in your conditions of employment whatsoever.

#### A. Demographic Information

1. Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐
2. Age in Years: Less than 24 ☐ 25-34 ☐ 35 – 44 ☐ 45 – 54 ☐ 55& Above ☐
3. Race: African ☐ Coloured ☐ Indian ☐ White ☐
4. Level of Education (highest qualification): Lower than Matric ☐ Matric ☐ Diploma ☐  
Bachelor's Degree ☐ Honours Degree ☐ Master's Degree ☐ Doctorate ☐

#### B. Employment Information

5. Job level (if on OSD choose the most appropriate) : Level 11 ☐ Level 12 ☐ Level 13 ☐
6. No of years with the department: 0-3 ☐ 4-6 ☐ 7-9 ☐ 10 & Above ☐
7. No of Years in the current job level: 0-3 ☐ 4-6 ☐ 7-9 ☐ 10 & Above ☐

### C. Ideal Self

Please mark with an X next to each factor of leadership potential as it applies to you.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
<b>Image of a desired future</b>					
8. I have core values in life and I live by them					
9. I am very clear of what I am passionate about in life					
10. I have a clear sense of the kind of a person I really want to be					
11. I have clear objectives of the life I want to lead					
12. There is congruence between my core values and the kind of a person I want to be?					
<b>Hope</b>					
Trust and Confidence					
13. I have deep inner strength					
14. I believe that each day has a potential					
15. I have a sense of direction					
16. Even when others get discouraged, I know I can find a way to solve the problem					
17. I feel my life has value and worth					
18. I can see possibilities in the midst of difficulties					
19. My past experiences have prepared me very well for my future					
20. I have been pretty successful in life					
21. I have faith that gives me comfort					
Lack of Perspective					
22. It is hard for me to keep my interest in activities I used to enjoy					

23. It seems as if all my support has been withdrawn					
24. I am bothered by the troubles that prevent my planning for the future					
25. I am hopeless about some parts of my life					
26. I feel trapped, pinned down					
27. I find myself becoming uninvolved with most things in life					
Positive future orientation					
28. There are things I want to do in life					
29. I look forward to doing things I enjoy					
30. I make plans for my own future					
31. I intend to make the most of life					
Social relations and personal value					
32. I feel loved					
33. I have someone who shares my concerns					
34. I am needed by others					
35. I am valued for what I am					
<b>Core Identity</b>					
Categorization					
36. I see myself as a member of this group					
37. My group is a good reflection of who I am					
38. I prefer to see people from other <i>outgroups</i> as being different from <i>ingroup</i>					
39. The group success is my success					
Sense of belonging					
40. I feel involved in what is happening in my group					
41. When someone criticizes this group, it feels like a personal insult					

to me					
42. There is a good relationship within my group as a whole.					
Positive attitudes					
43. I am happy I am an <i>ingroup</i> member					
44. I think my group has little to be proud of.					
45. There are many people in this group that I like as individuals					
46. Generally, I feel good when I think about myself as a(n) <i>ingroup</i> member					
<b>Personal Vision</b>					
47. Please write down your personal vision in life:					
.....					
.....					
.....					
.....					
.					

**D. Factors for Identifying Leadership Potential (Items adapted from Dries & Peppermans, 2012)**

Please mark with an X next to each factor of leadership potential as it applies to you.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
<b>Analytical Skills</b>					
48. I am open to feedback and new impulses					
49. I have a broad insight in the business and the organisation					
50. I am decisive and assertive					
51. I am able to solve problems well and quickly					

<b>Learning agility</b>					
52. I am actively looking for novel experiences that enhance learning					
53. I maintain a stable self-concept even in stressful or novel situations					
54. I am open to change when novel circumstances require it					
<b>Drive</b>					
55. I am motivated to consistently deliver high-quality results					
56. I <i>always maintain</i> high energy levels even in difficult circumstances					
57. I always display a deep and intrinsic commitment to relevant goals					
<b>Emergent Leadership</b>					
58. I naturally assume leadership responsibilities					
59. I know how to create personal visibility and credibility					
60. I am able to identify relevant stakeholders and optimize interactions with them					

E. I (Name & Surname) .....hereby give consent to the Employee Development Directorate of the Department of Environmental Affairs to share my 2013/14 Performance Management and Development System scores with Gcinumzi Qotywa for this study only.

.....

Signature

Date:

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## Appendix B: Qualitative Interview Schedule

Dear Colleague

As part of the requirements for my studies at the Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS), University of Pretoria, where I am currently pursuing my second and final year of the Master of Business Administration (MBA), I am expected to conduct a research on a topic of my choice. I have therefore elected to research on the field of leadership and management. My suggested topic is ***“Identifying Leadership Potential in the Public Sector from an Intentional Change Perspective.”***

You are therefore requested to answer a few questions as truthfully as possible. Please note that your participation in this study is purely voluntary and you can withdraw at anytime without any consequences to you. Also note that all information collected through this study will only be used for academic purposes and will have no implication in your conditions of employment whatsoever.

1. What is your personal vision for the future
2. How is your work related or linked to your vision? What aspects of your overall vision do you think drive your performance?
3. What do you think can be done in the organisation to assist employees to become aware of their vision as individuals?
4. Given the constructs of the ideal-self i.e. the image of the desired future, hope and core identity, what do you think the organisation can do to help the employees develop or understand these about themselves?
5. What are the factors, related to your ideal self that influence your performance level?
6. What do you think are the core factors of your ideal self that influence or impact your leadership potential?

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## **Appendix C: List of Managers Interviewed**

1. Ashok Maharaj
2. Eleanor Momberg
3. Gilbert Mosupye
4. Jimmy Khanyile
5. Neo Leshabane
6. Nkosinathi Nomoyi
7. Nomfundiso Mtalana
8. Patience Diphaha
9. Ryan John Peter
10. Sabona Kgasi
11. Sipokazi Dumalisile
12. Wiseman Rikhotso