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**Developing a complexity leadership competency framework for the
Governance and Administration Cluster of the South African Public
Service**

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DECLARATION

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to the young and elderly from my immediate family (Sedibe, Ndlovu, Mawela, Mashego, Mashile, Mona), my extended family (Khosa, Mahlangu, Moima, Malesa, Mampho, Masete, Sepuru, Shingwenyana) and friends. You have all shaped and blessed my life, and I know that there are more PhDs coming from you. A special dedication to my daughters, Tino and Thabi, may you continue to dream big, work hard, remain humble and truthful, and never settle for less.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

BEI	Behavioural Event Interview
CAS	Complex Adaptive System
CBM	Competency-Based Management
CD	Chief Director
CFO	Chief Financial Officer
CLT	Complexity Leadership Theory
COGTA	Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs
CRC	Collective Requisite Complexity
CRL	Constructionist lens on Relational Leadership
CPM	Collaborative Public Management
DCOG	Department of Cooperative Governance
DHA	Department of Home Affairs
DDG	Deputy Director General
DG	Director General
DPE	Department of Public Enterprises
DPME	Department of Planning Monitoring and Evaluation
DPSA	Department of Public Service and Administration
DTA	Department of Traditional Affairs
ECQs	Executive Core Qualifications
EQ	Emotional Intelligence
ESE&ID	Economic Sectors, Employment and Infrastructure Development
FOSAD	Forum of South African Directors-General
G&A	Governance and Administration
GCIS	Government Communications and Information Services
GSCID	Governance, State Capacity and Institutional Development
HR	Human Resources
HRM	Human Resources Management
ICT	Information Communication and Technology
ICTS	International Cooperation, Trade and Security
IGF	Intergovernmental Forum
IGR	Intergovernmental Relations
IGM	Intergovernmental Management

IQ	Intelligence Quotient (or cognitive intelligence)
IRC	Individual Requisite Complexity
JCPS	Justice, Crime Prevention and Security
KSA	Knowledge, skills and abilities
JUG	Joined-up-government
LAC	Leadership Action Cycle
LMX	Leader-Member-Exchange
MIG	Municipal Infrastructure Grant
MINMEC	Committee of Minister and Members of the Executive Council
MPAT	Management Performance and Assessment Tool
MTSF	Medium Term Strategic Framework
NCOP	National Council of Provinces
NDP	National Development Plan
NPA	New Public Administration
NPC	National Planning Commission
NPM	New Public Management
NPG	New Public Governance
NPS	New Public Service
NSG	National School of Government
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OPM	Office of Personnel Management
OPSC	Office of the Public Service Commission
PCC	President's Coordinating Committee
POA	Programme of Action
POSDCORB	Planning, organising, staffing, directing, coordinating, reporting and budgeting
PSC	Public Service Commission
PRC	Presidential Review Commission
PVM	Public Value Management
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SALGA	South African Local Government Association
SASSA	South African Social Security Agency
SES	Senior Executive Service
SMS	Senior Management Service

SOE	State Owned Entity
SPCHD	Social Protection, Community and Human Development
StatsSA	Statistics South Africa
TCA	Theory of Collaborative Advantage
TPA	Traditional Public Administration
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America
WOG	Whole-of-government

ABSTRACT

Public Administration is influenced by multiple factors, inclusive of complex policy issues, multi-faceted forms of accountability and hybrid governance models. Consequently, public administration organisations must strengthen their adaptive and complexity capacity to deal with environmental complexity through adopting a different leadership model that is characterised by distinct but complementary leadership functions. Complexity leadership theory (CLT) is thus adopted as an appropriate theoretical lens for the study due to its integrative, collective and relational approach to leadership, in spite of its limited application in the public administration context. Against this background, the purpose of the study is to apply CLT as the basis to determine the required leadership competencies that should underpin a complex adaptive system such as the Governance and Administration (G&A) Cluster of the South African government because of concerns regarding the unevenness or lack of appropriate leadership competencies, behaviours and skills to make the government cluster system effective.

To address the purpose of the study and the underlying research problem, a mixed methods research approach was adopted to investigate the leadership competency implications of Public Administration reforms plus their links with intergovernmental relations developments, and the implications of the transition from leader-centric practices to collective and hybrid forms of leadership. An analysis of existing literature in these areas leads to the conclusion that the G&A Cluster, which is an intergovernmental relations structure, is an integral part of hybrid organisational arrangements whose effectiveness requires a different approach to leadership. The literature analysis further identifies a disjuncture between leader-centric practices and conceptions of leadership as a collective, collaborative and hybrid phenomenon. The disjuncture is attributed to the scarcity of leadership and competency-based management (CBM) literature to guide the development of complexity leadership practice, especially in inter-organisational arrangements, and reliance on theoretical analysis as the basis to propose competencies for complexity leadership.

Thus, the study addresses the research question and simultaneously contributes towards knowledge and practice by providing an empirical lens to the dynamics of

collective leadership in a government inter-organisational structure and advancing CBM through articulating seven adaptable principles and six competency clusters that inform the development of a meso level leadership competency framework for inter-organisational arrangements. The study is also contributing to the application of CLT in P(p)ublic A(a)dministration and improved understanding of CLT's leadership functions by clarifying its competency dimensions. The study concludes with an outline of implications and recommendations for inter-organisational leadership competency development and practice as well as recommendations for further research.

Key words: complexity leadership competency framework; inter-organisational competency clusters; collective and complexity leadership competence; hybrid governance and organisational structures; governance and administration cluster.

CHAPTER ONE: ORIENTATION, PROBLEM STATEMENT AND OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Public Administration (Raadschelders 1999:287) as a discipline and practice is complex, especially in the post-New Public Management (NPM) and governance era, due to increased demand for higher levels of responsiveness, complex policy issues and the coexistence of old and new organisational structures (Rhodes and MacKechnie 2003:57; Klijn 2008:307; Christensen and Laegreid 2010a:13). The coexistence of old and new organisational structures creates hybrid organisational models that are characterised by complex cultural challenges, competing principles and goals, plus conflicting ideas and demands (Christensen and Laegreid 2010a:14). Though unavoidable, hybrid organisational models contribute to a cyclical process of reform and compounding complexity as reforms that are expected to address the weaknesses of existing or earlier reforms create new challenges that require new or enhanced solutions (Gruening 2001:21; Stoker 2006:54; Peters 2010:48).

Organisational hybridity and complexity in the governance era requires different ways of working (Stoker 2006:41); hence, “the *Law of Requisite Complexity*” (McKelvey and Boisot 2003, cited in Uhl-Bien *et al.* 2007:301; Boisot and McKelvey 2011:279) requires organisations to strengthen their adaptive and complexity capacity to deal with environmental complexity. So, in addition to enhanced systems and structures, organisational adaptability in a complex environment requires a different “model of leadership” (Uhl-Bien and Arena 2018:101) that is characterised by the “influential increment” (Katz and Kahn 1966, cited in Hazy and Uhl-Bien 2015:80) of distinct but complementary leadership functions whose dynamic interactions result in an evolving organisational and “leadership meta-capability” that transcend individual capabilities (Hazy 2011:186).

Since available literature suggests that leadership for organisational adaptability is an individual, collective and integrative phenomenon (Uhl-Bien and Marion 2009:631; Uhl-Bien and Arena 2018:90), complexity leadership theory (CLT), which is touted as an integrative (Marion and Uhl-Bien 2001; Lichtenstein *et al.* 2006; Van Wart 2015), collective (Crosby and Bryson 2018) and relational (Craps *et al.* 2019) approach to

leadership is adopted as a theoretical lens for the study. In particular, CLT conceptualises leadership as a social process that is shaped by dynamic interactions that transcend individual capabilities, formal authority and hierarchy and involves multiple agents and constituencies (Lichtenstein *et al.* 2006:3; Avolio *et al.* 2009:432; Reiche *et al.* 2017:554; Murphy *et al.* 2017:692; Uhl-Bien and Arena 2018:95).

A review of the available literature has revealed that the application of CLT in P(p)ublic A(a)dmistration is still limited and the implications of CLT on leadership competence and competency frameworks have not been thoroughly investigated and documented (Baltaci and Balci 2018:152; Uhl-Bien and Arena 2018:101). Because of this limitation, there is a need for research on how to develop leadership for organisational adaptability (Uhl-Bien and Arena 2017:14; Uhl-Bien and Arena 2018:100). Therefore, the purpose of the study is to contribute towards an appreciation of organisational hybridity in the South African Public Service and the application of CLT in a government cluster system in order to improve performance as a basis to develop a complexity leadership competency framework for the Governance and Administration (hereafter referred to as G&A) Cluster.

The remaining sections of this chapter provide an overview of the study by elaborating on the theoretical orientation, problem statement, as well as the research question, objectives and methodology. In addition, the chapter outlines the significance of the study, ethical considerations and overview of the chapters. In section 1.2 below, the study's orientation within the leadership field is presented.

1.2 ORIENTATION

CLT is an appropriate theoretical lens of the study because an analysis of existing literature, which is discussed in chapter three, confirms that leadership practice and theory have evolved from the great man theory in the 1800s, to trait theory in the 1930s and 1940s and the behavioural and contingency theories of the 1960s (Bolden 2004:9; Grint 2011:8; Northouse 2016:2-5). In response to the weaknesses of preceding theories in identifying universal characteristics of leaders and failure to articulate the role of followership in leadership effectiveness (Bolden *et al.* 2003:6; Fernandez *et al.* 2010:309; Oc 2018:218), the 1970s and 1980s witnessed the development of numerous transactional and transformational theories (Bolden *et al.* 2003; Van Wart

2003), whose weaknesses in demonstrating effectiveness in different contexts resulted in the development of integrative theories such as Bass's (1985) full range leadership model, shared/distributed/dispersed leadership, charismatic leadership and servant leadership in the 1980s and 1990s (Bolden *et al.* 2003:17; Bolden 2004:11-12; Avolio *et al.* 2009:431; Fernandez *et al.* 2010:310; Van Wart 2011:11-13; Murphy *et al.* 2017:692).

Scholars such as Van Wart (2003:218) and Fernandez *et al.* (2010:308) note that most of the leadership literature is more focussed on private sector organisations, whereas there is limited empirical research on public administrative leadership in scholarly journals. In his review of leadership-related articles, Van Wart (2013) notes that administrative leadership literature is still lagging behind when compared to leadership literature in the private sector, but there is some improvement in terms of the number of publications and the content addressed in the reviewed publications. There is still a need for empirical studies that seek to apply different leadership theories in public administration and to develop appropriate theoretical models for the public sector (Rhodes and MacKechnie 2003:58; Fernandez *et al.* 2010:308; Van Wart 2013:537).

Developments in leadership theories since the 1970s did not necessarily displace earlier theories such as the trait and behavioural theories (Bolden 2004:14; Van Wart 2011:22) and their influence on the structure and content of leadership competency frameworks. But there is acknowledgement by many authors (Uhl-Bien *et al.* 2007; Hanson and Ford 2010; Probst *et al.* 2011; Hazy and Uhl-Bien 2015) that emphasis on leadership as a function of a specific person is inadequate in addressing complex and rapidly changing environments that are characterised by multiple factors such as globalisation, technological developments and organisational turbulence. As such, complex environments require a different leadership model that possesses "complexity equal to that of its environment" (Uhl-Bien *et al.* 2007:301).

While dynamic interactions and "rich interconnectivity" between agents are central to organisational complexity (Uhl-Bien and Arena 2017:9), Lichtenstein and Plowman (2009:626) caution that complexity leadership, of which CLT is one of several related applications of complexity theory in the leadership field (Rosenhead *et al.* 2019:1-2), does not represent a single universal view of leadership, but it provides insights to complex organisational contexts. Marion and Uhl-Bien (2001:390) assert that

“complexity theory encourages us to see organizations as complex adaptive systems composed of a diversity of agents who interact with one another, mutually affect one another, and in so doing generate novel behaviour for the system as a whole”.

Complexity leadership scholars concede that CLT borrows from and complements existing theories, especially transformational leadership and other integrative forms of leadership such as game and chaos theories (Marion and Uhl-Bien 2001:409; Obolensky 2009:v; Hazy 2009:66). Therefore, as much as transformational leadership represented an improvement to leadership theory and practice in the 1970s and 1980s, CLT represents a new approach to leadership theory and practice through recognising new modes of operating and behaviour when diverse groups of agents interact in dynamic networks (Marion and Uhl-Bien 2002; Uhl-Bien *et al.* 2007; Uhl-Bien and Marion 2017). This broadened conceptualisation of leadership has contributed to the development of CLT “as a model for leadership in and of complex adaptive systems (CAS)” (Uhl-Bien *et al.* 2007:302). As a unit of analysis in CLT, CAS can operate at the micro, meso or macro levels and they are not constrained by organisational form and structure (Rhodes and MacKechnie 2003:80; Lichtenstein and Plowman 2009:618; Uhl-Bien and Marion 2009:632; Gordon *et al.* 2017:1103; Uhl-Bien and Arena 2018:100).

Dooley (1996:2-3; 1997:90) describes a CAS as a dynamic aggregate of interacting and interdependent agents whose behaviour and evolution is influenced by the following principles: order is not pre-determined, the system’s historic form is not reversible and its future is unpredictable. Within a CAS, agents can be individuals, ideas, groups, networks or organisations (Uhl-Bien *et al.* 2007:304; Lichtenstein and Plowman 2009:618; Baltaci and Balci 2017:53, Uhl-Bien and Arena 2018:99). Complementary to the diversity of agents that comprise them, CAS are dynamic, fluid, temporary, interlinked and adaptable open systems that can be found in hierarchical and network structures of organising human activity (Rhodes and MacKechnie 2003:64; Uhl-Bien *et al.* 2017:11; Uhl-Bien and Arena 2018:100). Therefore, in terms of CLT, leadership is not an act of selected individuals; it is a dynamic social process and “emergence” or non-linear/unexpected outcome (Uhl-Bien *et al.* 2007:302; Lichtenstein and Plowman 2009:621; Uhl-Bien and Arena 2017:10) from a CAS that can be found in formal bureaucratic organisations or informal organisational structures

such as networks or alliances (Uhl-Bien and Marion 2009; Reiche *et al.* 2017; Uhl-Bien and Arena 2017).

Within formal organisational structures, CLT recognises the coexistence of three distinct but complementary leadership functions, namely: administrative, adaptive and enabling leadership (Uhl-Bien *et al.* 2007; Uhl-Bien and Arena 2017). Scholars such as Uhl-Bien *et al.* (2007), Uhl-Bien and Marion (2009) as well as Murphy *et al.* (2017) argue that the key function of complexity leadership in bureaucratic organisations and network structures is to coordinate and manage the entanglement between administrative leadership (i.e. formal operations), adaptive leadership (i.e. entrepreneurial systems) and enabling leadership. In particular, enabling leadership creates, engages and protects adaptive space (Uhl-Bien and Arena 2018:98) that can assume varied forms from physical, virtual, engagements/meetings and “head” (or quite intellectual thought) space (Uhl-Bien and Arena 2018:99). Enabling leadership facilitates change through the creation of an enabling temporary adaptive space and the facilitation of information flow and learnings between administrative and entrepreneurial leadership (Hazy and Uhl-Bien 2015; Uhl-Bien and Arena 2017). Adaptive space is essential because it facilitates the conversion of complex systems into CAS (Uhl-Bien and Arena 2017:19).

According to Uhl-Bien and Arena (2017:14; 2018:90), not all leaders have the ability to master the three leadership functions, however, the most agile and ambidextrous leaders would have proficiency in all three. Similarly, organisations that aspire to be ambidextrous in balancing efficiency and innovation as well as stability and adaptability should develop individual and collective leadership ambidexterity across the organisation’s hierarchy and networks (Probst *et al.* 2011:329; Uhl-Bien and Arena 2018:92). Yet, developing “leadership for adaptability” (Uhl-Bien and Arena 2018:89) is a challenge because, unlike administrative and entrepreneurial leadership functions, enabling leadership is the most intangible since those who practice it are often misunderstood or unrecognised because they cannot explain what they do and how; they simply do so from the top, bottom and/or margins based on tacit knowledge (Uhl-Bien and Arena 2017:17; Uhl-Bien and Arena 2018:101). This is the reason why Uhl-Bien and Arena (2018:101) assert that there is a need for research on how to develop leadership for adaptability at the individual and collective organisational level.

In P(p)ublic A(a)dmistration, the CAS approach can serve as a framework for studying and understanding complex organisations (Hazy and Uhl-Bien 2015:100), post-NPM coordination mechanisms (Rhodes and MacKechnie 2003:58; Christensen and Laegreid 2010a:2) as well as the “wicked problems” (Klijn 2008:314) associated with “complex integrated service delivery”, “governance networks” (Klijn 2008:302) and complex policy processes and outcomes (Klijn 2008:305; Eppel and Rhodes 2018:951). According to Rhodes and MacKechnie (2003:80), as well as Lichtenstein and Plowman (2009:626-627), the CAS approach can also be used for (a) studying the effects of micro and meso level interactions and interdependencies on macro level outcomes, and (b) integrating NPM and post-NPM theories into a coherent model. These assertions demonstrate the relevance of the CAS approach for this study.

The application of the CAS approach and CLT in the public administration context is also essential for the study given the recognition by different authors (Bolden *et al.* 2003:37; Bolden 2004:15; Mau 2017:4) that developments in leadership theory and practice have had an influence on the conceptualisation, development and implementation of leadership competency frameworks. As acknowledged by many scholars and practitioners (Rodriguez *et al.* 2002; Markus *et al.* 2005; Bolden and Gosling 2006; Croft and Seemiller 2017), David McClelland (1973) was instrumental in launching the competency movement. Though the concept is used in all sectors, there are multiple definitions of competence and competency, which have largely been grouped into behavioural traits; skills, knowledge and abilities; and organisational capability (Hood and Lodge 2004; Mau, 2017).

The study demonstrates that the majority of the competency literature is related to the first two groups and is largely concerned with unique, innate and acquired abilities that distinguish exceptional individuals from the rest. Organisational competence, which is different but interlinked with individual skills and other attributes, can be defined as an aggregation of individual competencies, combined with other unique organisational capabilities such as efficient systems and processes that give organisations a competitive advantage (Intagliata *et al.* 2000; Hood and Lodge 2004; Bolden and Gosling 2006). But, leadership development and practice continue to emphasise leader-centric approaches (Pearce and Manz 2005:137-138; Broussine and Callahan 2016:486; Murphy 2019:210). Even emerging literature on global leadership (Tubbs

and Schulz 2006; Jokinen 2015; Reiche *et al.* 2017; Mau 2017) and global public servants remains leader-centric in its exploration of the feasibility of developing a universally-generic or situationally-sensitive global “leadership competency model that could be used to select, develop and reward” practicing and aspiring “global public servants” (Mau 2017:4). Chapter four of the study demonstrates that environmental complexity and the need for organisational adaptability in an evolving public administration context underscore the need for a collective approach to organisational competence (Markus *et al.* 2005:118) and the need for a complexity leadership competency framework. However, competency frameworks are not a panacea for all organisational performance and public service delivery challenges because they have weaknesses (Intagliata *et al.* 2000; Marijani 2017; Mau 2017). Hence, some of their strengths are also regarded as weaknesses and *vice versa*.

Amongst other things, the weaknesses of competency frameworks (Intagliata *et al.* 2000; Marcus *et al.* 2005; Getha-Taylor *et al.* 2013; Mau 2017) include the following: they are designed based on past and current experiences; they are badly implemented for compliance reasons due to lack of understanding and/or ownership by line function managers; and they are often outdated because once developed, many frameworks are not reviewed in response to changing contexts and leadership requirements. The major weaknesses are that they put too much emphasis on individual characteristics and they are mostly generic in describing commonly desired behaviours from many people who often occupy different occupational levels and/or operate in different organisational and social contexts (Hood and Lodge 2004; Bolden and Gosling 2006; Mau 2017). Bolden and Gosling (2006:159) have observed that “competency frameworks tend to reinforce individualistic practices that dissociate leaders from the relational environments in which they operate and could, arguably, inhibit the emergence of more inclusive and collective forms of leadership”. Collective leadership and its implications for leadership competence are central to CLT and the CAS approach and also fundamental to the problem statement and research question for this study.

Cognisant of the preceding observations and discussion, the study demonstrates that the implications of CLT on leadership competency frameworks have not been thoroughly investigated and thus contribute towards research on the application of

CLT in a CAS such as the government cluster system and the implications thereof on the development of a leadership competency framework. To contextualise the study, section 1.3 below provides an overview of the government cluster system.

1.3 CONTEXT AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

The South African government introduced the cluster system in 1999 as one of several mechanisms to improve service delivery through enhanced coordination and integration (DPSA 2003; DPME 2014). This was influenced by the recognition that government is confronted with complex challenges that cannot be adequately addressed by individual departments (DPME 2014) and is in line with the principles of cooperative government and intergovernmental relations (IGR) as outlined in section 41 of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996* (South Africa 1996). The six Cabinet Clusters that were established in 1999 comprised of the Social Sector Cluster; the Governance and Administration Cluster; the Economic Cluster; the International Relations, Peace and Security Cluster; the Investment and Employment Cluster; and the Justice, Crime Prevention and Security Cluster (DPSA 2003; DPME 2014).

The objective of the cluster system is to foster integration, improve coordination and ensure alignment of priorities between departments and the strategic priorities set forth in government's plan of action (DPSA 2003:35; DPME 2014:62). The cluster system also seeks to address the lack of policy coherence across multiple departments as well as the potential for programme duplication and fragmentation due to departments operating in silos (The Presidency 2014:12). In addition to serving as a coordination mechanism between departments, the clusters are expected to coordinate amongst themselves on (cluster) cross-cutting issues (The Presidency 2003:7). Departments within the clusters are also expected to establish "joint interdepartmental project teams" to implement specific priority projects (The Presidency 2008:110).

The cluster system consists of three sub-structures; namely, ministerial clusters and support structures in the form of technical clusters, which are constituted by members of the Forum of South African Directors-General (FOSAD). The technical (or FOSAD) clusters are in turn supported by cluster technical working groups, comprising of officials below the director-general level (DPSA 2003; DPME 2014). In essence,

participation in the cluster sub-structures is, by-and-large, influenced by hierarchy because ministers and deputy ministers participate in ministerial clusters (Levin 2009; DPME 2014), whereas DGs participate in FOSAD clusters or they can be represented by deputy directors-general (DDGs) (DPME 2017). Senior managers below the DG level, namely, DDGs, chief directors (CDs) and directors, attend technical working groups. However, secretariat services in these groups are provided by a combination of senior managers and middle managers, mainly deputy directors. Notwithstanding the existence of the three sub-structures, focus in this study is on the FOSAD technical clusters, the G&A Cluster in particular, because FOSAD clusters play a significant role in facilitating the interface between the political (executive) leadership and departmental operations. The main functions of the G&A Cluster, as outlined by The Presidency (DPME 2014:111) in 2009, are to promote policy coherence and collaboration, to ensure integrated planning, programme alignment as well as service delivery across all the three spheres of government, and to ensure effective decision-making processes.

According to The Presidency (2003; 2008), multiple challenges had an impact on the implementation of the cluster system since its inception in 1999. Amongst other things, many departments were assigned to multiple clusters, planning and budgeting for cross-cutting priorities continued to be executed in silos by departments, and interdepartmental project teams did not operate effectively because there was no clarity on how such teams should be coordinated outside the cluster system. As such, the need to review the cluster system was identified and questions were raised regarding the appropriateness of configuring the clusters around departments or priority projects (The Presidency 2008:110). Further consideration of the project approach to clustering was complicated by the fact that several cross-cutting programmes and projects such as the Accelerated Shared Growth Initiative of South Africa (ASGISA) and the anti-poverty strategy operated outside the cluster system and were coordinated through the Deputy President's Office (The Presidency 2008:110).

Some of the 2008 review recommendations were implemented in the sense that in 2009 broad terms of reference were developed for the six clusters (DPME 2014:111). The clusters were also reconfigured into five clusters in 2014 (SANews 2014), namely: the Social Protection, Community and Human Development (SPCHD) Cluster; the

Economic Sectors, Employment and Infrastructure Development (ESE&ID) Cluster; the Governance and Administration (G&A) Cluster; the Justice, Crime Prevention, Peace and Security (JCPS) Cluster; and the International Cooperation, Trade and Security (ICTS) Cluster. The focus of this study is on the G&A Cluster's operations since its inception in 1999 until 2019 because the G&A is the only Cluster whose core membership included representatives from the nine provincial administrations. This is in spite of the fact that the mandates and composition of the five clusters were reviewed again after the May 2019 elections, thus resulting in the renaming of the G&A Cluster to the Governance, State Capacity and Institutional Development (GSCID) Cluster and renaming of the ESE&ID Cluster to the Economic Sectors, Investment, Employment and Infrastructure Development (ESIE&ID) Cluster (Government of South Africa 2021). The study argues that adaptation to enhance relevance and responsiveness to the changing environment after the 2014 reconfiguration and 2019 review processes demonstrate that the clusters are dynamic, interlinked and adaptable, and operate in a manner that is consistent with the characteristics of a CAS (Rhodes and MacKechnie 2003, Uhl-Bien *et al.* 2007).

At the operational level, each cluster comprises core and non-core departments (DPME 2017). As has been the case since their inception in 1999, each cluster has two coordinating departments and the ministers and DGs of those departments serve as chairpersons of the ministerial and FOSAD clusters (Levin 2009; DPME 2014; DPME 2017; Government of South Africa 2021). According to the DPME (2017), it is mandatory for DGs to attend cluster meetings where their departments are part of the core, but they may be represented by DDGs in clusters where their departments are not part of the core. As such, care was also taken in line with the recommendations of the 2014 review report (DPME 2014), to minimise the participation of departments in multiple clusters. Still, departments such as Home Affairs (G&A and JCPS), Labour (SPCHD and ESE&ID), National Treasury (ESE&ID and G&A), Telecommunications and Postal Services (ESE&ID and ICTS), as well as Tourism, and Trade and Industry (ESE&ID and ICTS) continued to participate as core members in two clusters (DPME 2017).

Though recognised as a legitimate mechanism through which government implements policies and programmes, the cluster system does not have a statutory mandate

(DPME 2014:6) and there is no support or plan to formalise the system through legislation and regulations (DPME 2014:49). Therefore, the system continues to derive its mandate and relevance from executive decisions (DPME 2014:7). This allows the cluster system to operate as an executive, mandatory and formal or semi-formal coordination structure within and alongside the public service bureaucracy, just like a CAS (Christensen and Laegreid 2010a:3; Hanson and Ford 2010:6588).

According to Christensen and Laegreid (2010a:13), coordination and integration mechanisms, such as the government cluster system, can be regarded as post-NPM initiatives whose purpose is to complement or supplement old and existing new structures. The coexistence of old and new structures creates hybrid public organisations that are characterised by potential structural and cultural tensions as well as partial inconsistencies that produce difficult and unstable trade-offs and long term tensions. From a CAS and CLT perspective, the study argues that this can weaken the influence of public service organisations if not properly channelled through adaptive and enabling leadership that has potential to generate “the right degree of tension and loosened control to drive collaboration, problem solving, or foster a climate that reinforces self-organization to create adaptive outcomes” (Hanson and Ford 2010:6588).

In particular, the 2014 cluster system review report (DPME 2014:61) highlighted concerns regarding the unevenness or absence of appropriate leadership competencies, behaviours and skills to make the cluster system effective. The required skills that were found to be lacking across the clusters included negotiation skills at the cluster level, coordinated and collaborative problem solving skills, high level analytical skills, and the ability to integrate large volumes of data in order to make sound decisions. Investigating solutions to these challenges is integrally linked with the research question for this study because, amongst other things, collaborative leadership competence is central to the effectiveness of a CAS, or in this case, a cluster system.

The study argues that, while the South African government, like many countries around the world, has embraced the use of a public sector leadership competency model, the existing generic competency framework for senior managers in the South African Public Service is inadequate because it places emphasis on individual generic

competencies (DPSA 2014; PSC 2016). The analysis in chapters four and five discusses the underlying causes for this weakness and also shows that the competency framework is more focussed on the intra-organisational context, instead of a broader perspective that conceptualises organisational and collective competence as an emergent capability or meta capability from dynamic and complex interactions between leaders (as individual agents), departments (as organisational agents and intra-organisational CAS) and other coordinating (CAS) structures (Lichtenstein and Plowman 2009; Obolensky 2009; Hazy 2011; Uhl-Bien and Arena 2017). Therefore, the overarching problem statement for this study is that the competencies identified in the Senior Management Service (SMS) Competency Framework do not adequately prepare public servants to perform their duties effectively in the networked governance context. The identified problem partly explains why, since its introduction, implementation of the cluster system has been characterised by isolated instances of success while its effectiveness is undermined by numerous challenges (Levin 2009; DPME 2014).

In response to the problem statement, the study proposes the development and implementation of a meso organisational and collective leadership (Lichtenstein and Plowman 2009; Uhl-Bien and Marion 2009) competency framework, which is informed by the richness of complexity theory and CLT (Lichtenstein and Plowman 2009; Uhl-Bien and Marion 2009). To minimise challenges associated with the ineffectiveness of generic competency frameworks, the study focusses on the G&A Cluster as a CAS that is characterised by a dynamic interaction of administrative leaders who are required to provide collective solutions to complex challenges through semi-structured cooperation and collaboration.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION AND OBJECTIVES

Research questions are central to research and they emerge from a dynamic, iterative and reflective process after reviewing available literature about the selected topic (Agee 2009, Edmondson and MacManus 2007). As informed by the literature analysis presented in the orientation section above and justification of the identified problem statement, the overall research question for the study is: what leadership competencies should underpin a CAS such as the G&A Cluster in the South Africa

Public Service? Cognisant of the problem statement and research question, the objectives of the study are:

- (a) to describe the legislative and policy framework that underpins the South African government's coordination mechanisms, inclusive of the cluster system;
- (b) to examine leadership theory and practice within the context of Public Administration as a discipline and practice;
- (c) to discuss the role of leadership competency frameworks in an evolving public administration context;
- (d) to analyse the leadership challenges and critical success factors that influence the effectiveness of the G&A Cluster and the role of complexity leadership in enhancing its effectiveness; and
- (e) to propose the development of a complexity leadership competency framework for the G&A Cluster.

The research objectives are integrally linked with the problem statement and overarching research question. As the study progressed, the overarching research question and research objectives served as a basis for developing and refining specific questions that were used during the data collection process (Agee 2009). The methodology followed in conducting the study is discussed in section 1.6, and the foundational theoretical statements for the study are presented in section 1.5 below.

1.5 CENTRAL THEORETICAL STATEMENTS

Informed by the literature analysis, problem statement as well as the research question and objectives, the following theoretical statements underpin the study:

- (a) In public administration, CLT is important in understanding and operationalising post-NPM coordination and integration mechanisms (Hazy and Uhl-Bien 2015; Rhodes and MacKechnie 2003; Christensen and Laegreid 2010b) such as the G&A Cluster because the co-existence of formal and informal coordination mechanisms is necessary to enhance the adaptive capacity of organisations such as the Public Service in complex environments (Uhl-Bien *et al.* 2007; Hansen and Ford 2010; Uhl-Bien and Arena 2017) and to minimise fragmentation, duplication and non-responsiveness (Keast and Brown 2002; Christensen and Laegreid 2010b; Clarke and Campbell 2018). This means that the South African

government cluster system is an important coordination mechanism that has the potential to enhance the adaptive capacity of the Public Service. (This is elaborated further in chapters two and three as well as sections 4.4 and 4.6 of chapter four.)

- (b) Problems encountered with the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the government cluster system in South Africa are not attributable to the extent of formalisation of the system, but can be attributed to the inability of Public Service leaders to operationalise the system in the complex environment (Uhl-Bien and Arena 2018) for which it was designed, due to reliance on traditional leadership theoretical frameworks and their associated competency frameworks (Bolden *et al.* 2003; Van Wart 2003, Fernandez *et al.* 2010). This justifies the need for a complexity leadership competency framework to support the G&A Cluster (Murphy *et al.* 2017; Uhl-Bien and Arena 2017; Uhl-Bien and Arena 2018). (This is elaborated further in chapters three and four as well as section 5.3.8 of chapter five.)

The research design and the methodology adopted to operationalise the research objectives are presented in section 1.6 below.

1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research is a systematic process of investigating and obtaining knowledge about phenomena while research methodology is concerned with the methods (i.e. techniques and procedures for sampling and data collection) used and rationale, assumptions, limitations and ethical considerations associated with methods (Cohen and Manion 1980:26; Maxwell 2008:216). Research methodology is therefore informed by specific ontological (i.e. philosophical assumptions about the essence and nature of a phenomenon or reality) and epistemological (i.e. philosophical assumptions about how knowledge concerning a phenomenon or reality is obtained) perspectives (Guba and Lincoln 1994; Gray 2014), as outlined below.

1.6.1 Approach and design

Historically, research was categorised into qualitative or quantitative approaches, with the latter being supported by an objectivist ontology and positivist epistemology and the former supported by a subjectivist/relativist ontology and constructivist epistemology (Guba and Lincoln 1994; Gerphart 2004). In qualitative research, the

underlying research approach is inductive and interpretive, whereas quantitative research follows a deductive approach (Gerphart 2004; Gray 2014). Qualitative research requires reflexivity and transparency about the researcher's biases, subjective values, assumptions, method selection and challenges (Gabriel 2015; Tracy 2010). As such reflexivity should be incorporated into the research design and interactions with research 'subjects' or participants, and should further be documented in the report (Gabriel 2015).

Paradigms such as post-positivism and critical theory have reconciled some of the differences between the two approaches and their overarching paradigms; hence, the emergence of mixed methods research (Creswell 2009; Bryman 2016). Mixed methods research has the potential to combine the strengths and minimise the weaknesses of qualitative and quantitative approaches (Creswell 2009:104; Tariq and Woodman 2013:7). This shift is supported by Reichertz's (2014:123) assertion that induction and deduction are intellectual tools for generating and connecting research ideas, therefore, "they are method neutral" and can be used jointly in an iterative manner. According to Bryman (2016:111), there are varied reasons for and ways of integrating qualitative and quantitative research approaches; hence, researchers must be explicit about their integration strategies and reasons thereof. Bryman (2016:632) further argues that qualitative and quantitative research approaches can be integrated in an equal or unequal manner, depending on the priority method(s) in relation to the focus of the study and the concurrent or sequenced application of selected methods. Thus, the study adopted a mixed methods approach, with a prominent qualitative research approach.

Cognisant of the various integration strategies, the reasons and justification for integrating qualitative and quantitative research approaches, as explained by Bryman (2016:633-634), include data corroboration using different methods, elaboration and enhancement of results from one method with results from another method, as well as development and expansion of theoretical perspectives and frameworks. In particular, the mixed methods research is considered suitable for this study because it enables data triangulation through collecting primary data at "different times" and/or "from different sources" (Easterby-Smith *et al.* 2002, cited in Gray 2014:37). In addition, the mixed methods research enables methodological triangulation through the

combination of different design methods such as case studies, interviews and surveys (Gable 1994:112; Gray 2014:39; Bryman 2016:649).

According to Edmondson and MacManus (2007), the key to good research is ensuring methodological fit through choosing the most appropriate methodology after asking the right question. Methodological fit refers to “internal consistency” between and amongst the research question, extant literature, research design as well as theoretical and practical implications (Edmondson and MacManus 2007:1155). In terms of the “contingency framework” for “methodological fit” in the field of management research (Edmondson and MacManus 2007:1168), this study is located in the intermediate theory phase. The intermediate phase, which is positioned between the nascent and mature theory phases, provides for the explanation of phenomena as well as the introduction of new constructs and their relationships with established constructs (Edmondson and MacManus 2007:1158). The intermediate phase is more suited to this study because, as alluded to in the theory orientation in section 1.2 above and is expanded further in chapter three, CLT and its underpinning theoretical constructs of CAS and emergent capability has progressed from the nascent phase, but has not reached theoretical maturity.

According to Edmondson and MacManus’s (2007) contingency framework, the intermediate theory phase is more suitable for hybrid methods of data collection; hence, a mixed methods research with embedded case study (Yin 1994:39) as a design choice was adopted. This study is therefore located between two historically divergent research paradigms that are now viewed as complementary when studying particular phenomena such as complexity leadership, namely, a predominantly relativist ontology and constructivist epistemology combined with an objectivist ontology and post-positivist epistemology (Guba and Lincoln 1994; Edmondson and MacManus 2007; Creswell 2009).

The embedded case study design (Yin 1994), which is implied in the research topic, is also considered relevant because it has the capacity to enhance triangulation through the collection and analysis of data from multiple units or agents. According to Eisenhardt (1989) and Yin (1994), case studies combine multiple data collection methods such as the review of archives, interviews, observations and questionnaires. In addition, primary data from case studies, depending on the data collection methods

used, can be analysed qualitatively or quantitatively. The versatility of case study design is demonstrated by its use to describe phenomena, test or develop theory (Eisenhardt 1989:535). The benefits of using the mixed method research and embedded case study design in this study are that the G&A Cluster is treated as a single case with multiple units of analysis that can be selected through sampling techniques (Yin 1994:39-42). As a CAS, the G&A Cluster is constituted by diverse agents who interact (a) with other agents at the aggregate G&A Cluster level and (b) at the sub-unit level through various sub-structures such as the G&A Cluster technical working group and inter-departmental project teams that are established within the cluster to deal with integrated programmes and projects.

1.6.2 Population and sampling

The target population for the study is the FOSAD/technical G&A Cluster, whose core membership prior to the 2019 review and reconfiguration of national departments comprised of directors-general (DGs) of ten national departments and nine Office of the Premier departments, plus the senior leadership of the South African Local Government Association (SALGA) (DPME 2017). Its non-core members included DGs and deputy directors-general (DDGs) of the remaining 44 national departments (DPME 2017), which were also reduced to 41 following the reconfiguration of national departments in June 2019 (DPSA 2019a). Therefore, as of January 2019, the technical G&A Cluster consisted of 64 member institutions that were divided into two groups, that is, 20 core and 44 non-core members (DME 2017). As explained in the following sections, non-probability sampling was used for the selection of interviewees from the core departments and probability sampling was used to target participants for survey purposes from the core and non-core members.

The ten core national departments in January 2019 included: Cooperative Governance (DCoG); the Government Communications and Information Services (GCIS); Home Affairs (DHA); the National School of Government (NSG); National Treasury; the Office of the Public Service Commission (OPSC); Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (DPME); Public Service and Administration (DPSA); Statistics South Africa (StatsSA); and Traditional Affairs (DTA). As demonstrated in the contextualisation of the study in section 1.3 above and elaborated upon in chapter two, the membership of the G&A Cluster has evolved over the years, partly due to the cluster reconfiguration processes

and an increase in the number of national departments following the establishment of new departments in 2014 and subsequent decrease following the reconfiguration of some departments in 2019. These changes did not have a direct impact on the target population and it is anticipated that the cluster system will continue to evolve in response to lessons from experience, new challenges and priorities.

At the institutional level, the population for the study comprised 64 institutions as at January 2019 and 61 institutions as at June 2019, inclusive of SALGA. In theory, at the official or sub-unit level, each institution would be represented by a DG and chief executive officer (CEO) in respect of SALGA, or an assigned DDG or SALGA senior executive. Therefore, if each institution was represented by one person consistently, then the target population at the sub-unit level would be 64/61 senior managers. Consistent representation by two or more senior managers would increase the sub-unit population to 128/122 and above. Conversely, inconsistent representation by different people would reduce the population size due to failure to meet the selection criteria that is outlined below. However, due to institutional restructuring processes, vacancy and turnover rates at the DG level (PSC 2010; Institute of Race Relations 2017; DPSA 2017) as well as other senior management levels (PSC 2007), inconsistent representation practices were anticipated.

Furthermore, an investigation on the study's population also revealed that, contrary to prescription on who should participate in FOSAD Clusters (DPME 2017), some departments are permanently represented by CDs in the G&A Cluster. These developments necessitated a slight deviation from the original plan, thus resulting in the inclusion of CDs in the survey. Consequently, it was estimated that at the sub-unit level, the target population for the study, excluding SALGA, would range from 126 (63x 2) to 252 (63x 4) G&A Cluster members/participants, inclusive of DGs, DDGs and CDs. Cognisant of the population size at the institutional and sub-unit levels and the identified challenges, both probability and non-probability sampling techniques were used to identify two participant groups.

Non-probability sampling techniques, namely, purposive and convenience sampling, were used to enable the selection of the first research sample based on the researcher's judgement. Purposive sampling is a deliberate technique for targeting specific groups of people based on a specific selection criteria or profile, especially

when the research population is very small to permit for probability and random sampling (Etikan *et al.* 2016). In addition, non-probability sampling is more relevant when it is not feasible or necessary to target all members of the research population, but it is necessary to achieve data and analytical saturation (Braun and Clarke 2009). Saturation is achieved when the depth of data collected through structured or semi-structured interviews will not allow for the creation of new themes and codes (Fusch and Ness 2015:1409). Since the study adopted a mixed methods approach, saturation was achieved through methodological triangulation (Fusch and Ness 2015:1412) using an incremental and iterative process throughout “the data collection and analysis” stages (Saunders *et al.* 2017:1903).

The non-probability sampling techniques are therefore relevant for the study because it was not feasible to interview DGs from all G&A Cluster core departments due to several reasons. Amongst others, the population size is negatively impacted by the high turnover rate of DGs in the Public Service and, for the period covered in the study, some departments operated under the leadership of DDGs who were appointed as acting-DGs for short periods of time on a rotational basis (PSC 2008; PSC 2010; Institute of Race Relations 2017; DPSA 2017). This reduced the number of DGs who could be interviewed from core departments. In addition, it was not feasible to target many DGs from provinces because some Office of the Premier departments have also been operating without substantively appointed DGs for a considerable period of time. Therefore, the convenience sampling technique was also used to identify and approach potential research participants effortlessly (Etikan *et al.* 2016). While the G&A Cluster is the only cluster whose core membership included provincial DGs and SALGA, the latter was not included in the sample because the study focusses on the Public Service and SALGA represents local government institutions that operate under different public administration prescripts and diverse institutional policies and practices.

Purposive and convenience sampling were used to target the first group of participants, that is, 10-12 DGs who are and/or were core members of the technical G&A Cluster for interview purposes. The criteria for identifying the DGs comprised a combination of the following: they must be or should have been substantively/legally appointed in departments that fall under the G&A Cluster through Cabinet, and they

should have served in the G&A Cluster for a minimum of three years between 2015 and 2019. The criteria meant that former DGs of departments that fall within the core G&A Cluster would also be included, provided they met the criteria and had the necessary institutional memory regarding the operations of the G&A Cluster. In total, 11 DGs who met the criteria were identified, but only nine were successfully interviewed without compromising the quality of the study because quality data was collected (Braun and Clarke 2019:2) and it was further supplemented with survey data.

For the second group of participants, probability sampling was used to achieve a target response rate of 40 DGs, DDGs and CDs from both core and non-core departments for the survey, due to the assumed availability of a fairly large number of DDGs and CDs. The criteria used to identify the survey participants was similar to the one used for identifying interviewees; however, priority was given to senior managers who are still working for core or non-core cluster departments. While 43 completed surveys were received, two were excluded and 41 were included in the analysis. Implementation of the probability and non-probability sampling techniques resulted in 50 senior managers participating in the study through interviews and surveys.

1.6.3 Data collection instruments and methods

As explained in section 1.6.1 above, the location of the study in the intermediate theory phase of the contingency framework for “methodological fit in management field research” (Edmondson and MacManus 2007:1155) coupled with the adoption of the mixed methods research and embedded case study design makes triangulation an integral part of the research methodology (Eisenhardt 1989; Yin 1994). To ensure triangulation, data was collected using a literature review, a semi-structured interview schedule and a survey questionnaire (Gable 1994; Gray 2014, Bryman 2016).

In the Public Administration field, a literature review is essential because it enables the identification of “knowledge gaps” and helps the researcher to justify the research question (Hutchinson 1993, cited in Tummers and Karstens 2012:73). In addition, a literature review strengthens the “theory building capacity” of various research approaches (Tummers and Karstens 2012:81) and contributes towards methodological fit (Edmondson and MacManus 2007). Some of the criticisms or pitfalls of the literature review are that it might inhibit the development of new insights or can

be used selectively by the researcher to support specific views whilst suppressing contrary viewpoints.

Mindful of various uses and criticisms, the literature review drew on, *inter alia*, administrative leadership (Van Wart 2003; 't Hart and Uhr 2008; Rhodes 2014) and public sector reform (Osborne 1993; Christensen and Laegreid 1999; Cameron 2009; Denhardt and Denhardt 2015); debates and developments in leadership theory and practice (Rost 1991; Bass and Bass 2008; Van Wart 2013; Ospina 2016; Uhl-Bien and Arena 2018); the evolution of competency frameworks and their adoption in public administration (Bolden, *et al.* 2003; Bolden and Gosling 2006; Getha-Taylor *et al.* 2013); and the rationale for and relevance of complexity leadership competence in continuously changing public administration environments. The literature surveyed included published articles, books and reports, conference papers, publicly available documents such as the South African Public Service legislation and frameworks, review reports and policy pronouncements. The literature review, which is discussed in detail in chapters two to four of the thesis, guided the development of primary data collection instruments; namely, the interview schedule and survey questionnaire.

The interview method is one of the prevalent strategies for qualitative data collection because it is regarded “as a superior technique for tapping subjects on the knowledge about their experiences and/or social practices” (Alvesson 2003:14). The interview method was thus considered suitable for the study because it enabled the researcher to probe issues identified through the literature review from key members of the target population. Although there are numerous approaches of collecting data through interviews, such as telephonic, online and video-conference interviews (Gable 1994:114; Bryman 2016:666), the researcher planned to interview (Appendix A) the identified DGs using face-to-face interviews (Bryman 2016:672) due to the geographic proximity of most of the targeted sample members. The face-to-face interviews would enable the researcher, subject to the consent of the participants, to record the interviews and ensure that the recordings were audible. Needless to say, most interviews were conducted and recorded using electronic platforms such as *Microsoft Teams*, *Zoom* and *Otter.ai* due to the COVID-19 national state of disaster (Government Gazette No. 43096, 15 March 2020).

The study acknowledges that interviewing is more than having a conversation with someone; it is a “socially and linguistically complex” process whose effectiveness is dependent on the researcher’s prior knowledge of the subject matter as well as listening and synthesising skills (Alvesson 2003:14). According to Maxwell (2008:236), interview questions should enable the researcher to address the research questions, but research questions are not directly translatable into interview questions. Interviewing requires the researcher to be consciously reflexive during the interview and during data coding and analysis, instead of pretending to be value neutral and assuming that the interview context is also neutral (Alvesson 2003:30; Gabriel 2015:334). This requires the researcher to be thoroughly prepared and equally reflexive about the possible influence of one’s prior perceptions and assumptions.

The second set of primary data was collected using a survey (Appendix B). According to Gable (1994:113), “the survey approach refers to a group of methods which emphasise quantitative analysis for large” quantities of data that “are collected through” questionnaires, telephone interviews or published statistics. Like all research methods, surveys have strengths and limitations. One of the strengths is that surveys enable the establishment of trends; however, the key weakness is that surveys cannot explain the underlying causes or account for contextual variables (Gable 1994:113). As such, the researcher planned to use critical issues emanating from the literature review and interviews to inform the development of a self-administered survey, which comprises a combination of closed questions, open-ended questions and statements. But, as is explained in section 5.2 of chapter five, the interview and survey instruments were developed and administered simultaneously and care was taken to ensure that this deviation does not compromise the quality of the data collected.

Given the likelihood of non-responsiveness by participants in surveys (Bryman 2012:199), the researcher planned to distribute the questionnaire to approximately 120 DGs and DDGs in order to achieve a target response rate of 40 participants from core and non-core G&A Cluster departments. Ultimately, the questionnaire was distributed to 73 DGs and DDGs as well as 56 CDs. As explained in detail in chapter five, in the end, 43 responses were received from DGs, DDGs and chief directors (CDs), but two were disqualified, thus resulting in data from 41 surveys being included in the study.

1.6.4 Data analysis

Thematic analysis is a flexible and frequently used method in the social sciences and other fields such as medicine to identify, analyse and report on data patterns and meanings, but, it is rarely acknowledged and poorly demarcated (Braun and Clarke 2006:77-79; Longhofer *et al.* 2010). The approach accommodates the identification of themes from theory and the generation of new themes from primary data (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane 2006:83; Braun and Clarke 2016:298; Miles and Huberman 1994, cited in Costa *et al.* 2016) using the key thematic analysis phases. The six phases of thematic analysis, as explained by Braun and Clarke (2006:87) as well as Nowell *et al.* (2017:4), include: a thorough re-reading of primary data; manual coding and then coding through *Atlas.ti* following a review of codes; generating themes on the basis of codes, research questions and theoretical framework; reviewing themes; defining and labelling codes; and then writing up the results.

Thematic analysis highlights descriptive patterns of “substantive significance”, but not statistical tests of significance (Patton 2002, cited in Longhofer *et al.* 2010:408). The basis for substantive significance is that themes should be consistent “within and across the study participants” and should “deepen understanding of extant knowledge about the object of inquiry” (Patton 2002, cited in Longhofer *et al.* 2010:408). According to Braun and Clarke (2006:80), thematic analysis “should be seen as a foundational method for qualitative analysis” and should be the primary method learnt by researchers because it “provides core skills that will be useful for other forms of qualitative analysis”.

Thematic analysis differs from grounded theory analysis because the latter uses incident by incident coding of text, thus allowing the linking of all incidents and text to specific codes, which is not the case with thematic analysis. Thematic analysis provides for the identification of semantic codes, which are informed by the explicit meaning derived from the data, and latent codes based on the implicit or underlying meaning of the data (Braun and Clarke 2006:8). Nonetheless, thematic patterns can be supplemented with descriptive statistical data (Costa *et al.* 2016), thus supporting the mixing of inductive and qualitative as well as the deductive and quantitative data analysis approaches for the study (Edmondson and MacManus 2007).

For the purpose of this study, *Atlas.ti*, which is a “computer assisted qualitative data analysis software” (Archer *et al.* 2017), was used for the analysis of primary data obtained through interviews and data obtained from open-ended survey questions, whereas Excel was used to analyse quantifiable survey data such as frequency responses to closed questions as well as the participants’ biographical data - such as the length of service at the specific occupational level.

1.6.5 Limitations and delimitations

Outlining the limitations and delimitations of the study forms an integral part of transparency and reflexivity (Gabriel 2015:334; Tracy 2010:842). Consequently, the following are the limitations of the study.

The analysis in chapter four highlights the importance of process and further demonstrates the labour intensiveness as well as context and content sensitivity of competency frameworks. Therefore, the focus of this study is deliberately limited to inter-organisational leadership perspectives and practice, based on the experience of senior managers who participated adequately in G&A Cluster processes over an extended period. Therefore, the study does not seek to replace the existing Public Service SMS Competency Framework nor to regurgitate its documented limitations, in terms of content depth and intra-organisational (i.e. departmental) focus, and recommendations (De Wet 2010; DPSA 2014; PSC 2016). Conscious of the research design, and from a CLT and CAS perspective, minor adjustments to the existing framework without addressing its theoretical underpinnings and associated or supporting mechanisms such as regulatory and accountability mechanisms will not fundamentally improve its effectiveness at the intra- and inter-organisational levels.

The turnover rate of the target population, especially at the DG level, is very high (PSC 2008; PSC 2010, DPSA 2017). According to the DPSA (2017), between 2004 and 2014, the average period of service for a DG in the Public Service was 2,4 years, of which 3,8 years was the average for national DGs whereas provincial DGs served an average period of 2,3 years. This reduced the size of the target population and sample. Nonetheless, the study acknowledges that there are few DGs whose service period within the Public Service extends beyond 10 years and some of them are part of the core members of the G&A Cluster. This observation and the results presented in

chapter five demonstrate that in spite of the high turnover rate across the Public Service, primary interview data for the study comprises a combination of experiences and lessons from long term (i.e. 10 years and above), medium term (six to ten years) and short term (three to five years) serving DGs within the G&A Cluster.

To minimise the potential risk of excessive sample reduction, the criteria outlined in section 1.6.2 above was implemented. In particular, DGs who are and were core members of the G&A Cluster for at least three years between 2015 and 2019 were identified and encouraged to participate in the study. This minimised the loss of institutional memory and data unreliability that would have resulted from the exclusion of DGs who were redeployed to other portfolios, or had left the Public Service due to the expiration of employment contracts or premature termination prior to data collection. The period covered in the selection of participants puts emphasis on the G&A Cluster's historic operations prior to the reconfiguration of all clusters in June 2019 (Government of South Africa 2021), but the study submits that the 2019 reconfiguration process might have influenced the participants' views of the G&A Cluster's contributions, challenges and successes, given that interviews and surveys were conducted in 2020.

Furthermore, the study acknowledges that by focusing on the application of CLT in the G&A Cluster as a CAS in South Africa, the findings will not be applicable to all government clusters and CAS in other contexts. But the study may derive lessons that could be applied to other clusters, whilst taking cognisance of their unique mandates and various stakeholder groups who are directly and indirectly affected by the actions or non-actions of each cluster.

1.6.6 Ethical implications

The study was conducted in line with the University of Pretoria's Policy and Procedures for Responsible Research (2007) and the Code of Ethics for Research (n.d.). To ensure compliance with the Policy and the Code, fieldwork for the study was conducted after permission was granted. In addition, the University of Pretoria's Faculty of Economic and Management Science's Ethics Committee approved the research instruments and related protocols (Appendix D), and access to the G&A Cluster target population was approved by the DG in The Presidency (Appendix C).

As part of the data collection process, the objectives of the study were explained to the selected participants and their written and/or verbal consent to participate in the study was secured. Participants were also assured that the data would be properly secured, designators would be used for data capturing and analysis, and the reporting on the results would be done in an aggregated manner in order to protect their identities.

1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

CLT is fairly new (Avolio *et al.* 2009) and its application in the Public Administration field is only beginning to gain momentum (Hanson and Ford 2010; Uhl-Bien and Arena 2017). Although CLT does not have answers for all leadership, competency and public administration challenges, the theory provides valuable theoretical and practical insights into some of the taken for granted phenomena such as (a) the impact of the rapidly changing environment on existing public administration systems; (b) the lack of coherent systems to ensure the effective deployment of formal, informal or semi-formal coordination and integration mechanisms such as the cluster system in bureaucratic organisations; and (c) the lack of an integrated framework to investigate the effects of micro and meso level interdependencies on macro level organisational interdependencies and dynamics for public service organisations.

The study therefore contributes towards (a) a conceptual understanding of the cluster system as a CAS within and alongside the Public Service bureaucracy and (b) the effectiveness of the cluster system through proposing the development of a complexity leadership competency framework for the G&A Cluster in the South African Public Service. Hopefully, the study will also contribute towards the performance of the GSCID Cluster because the recommendations made by participants in chapter five seek to address the G&A Cluster's historic challenges and the lessons from the study plus the proposed framework in chapter six have the potential to benefit other clusters. Below is an overall outline of the thesis.

1.8 OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

The thesis consists of seven chapters, including the introductory and concluding chapters. As illustrated in Figure 1.1 below, chapter one introduces the study through providing an overview of the factors that influence the complexity of public

administration in the governance era and the connections between new reforms and the CAS approach. The evolving nature of the South African Public Service cluster system, in terms of composition, objectives and operations, is provided to contextualise the problem statement, plus the research question and objectives. The chapter highlights the implications of public sector forms and IGR developments on leadership theory and competency-based practices to illustrate the relevance of CLT and the CAS approach in relation to the G&A Cluster. In addition to an outline of the methodology followed to address the research question and objectives, chapter one presents the theoretical and practical significance, ethical considerations and limitations of the study. The objectives of the study are addressed in chapters two to six, as illustrated in Figure 1.1 below.

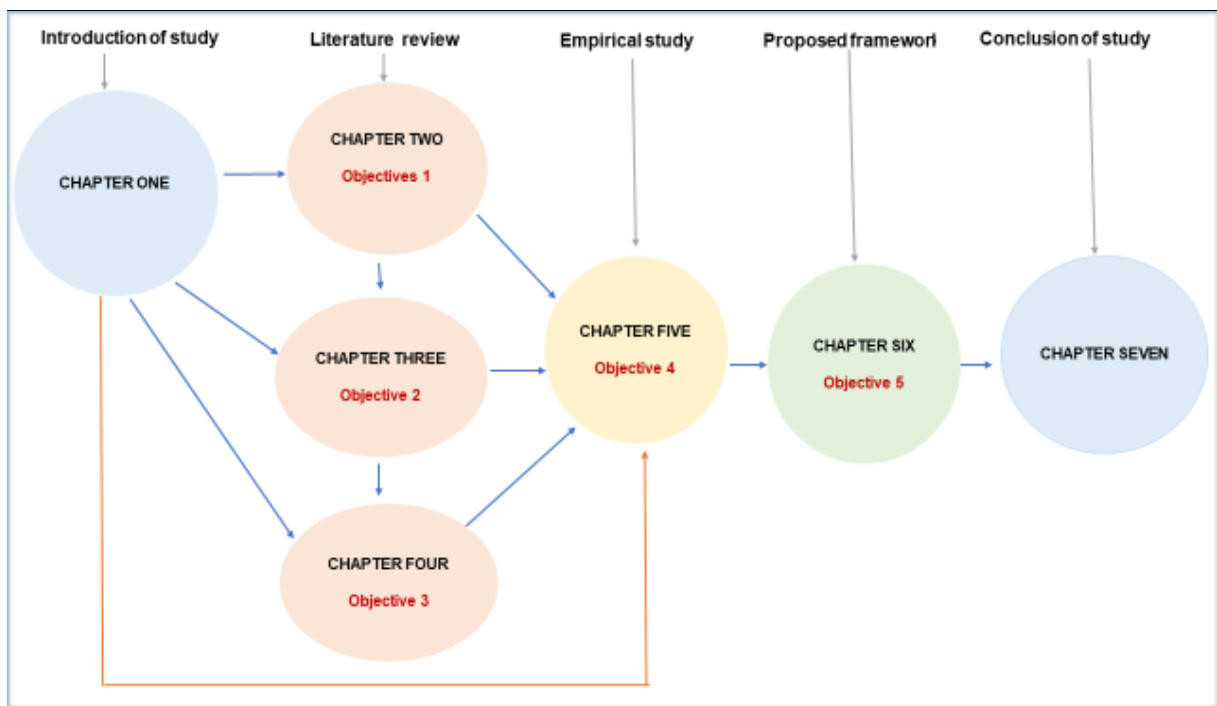


Figure 1.1: Overall structure of the thesis

Source: Author’s own illustration.

Chapter two conceptualises the study within Public Administration and the broader framework for IGR and cooperative government. The chapter expands on the constitutional, legislative, regulatory and policy frameworks that underpin the South African government’s coordination mechanisms, inclusive of the cluster system, whilst taking into consideration international literature on the purpose and role of coordination and integration mechanisms in public administration. The limitations and pre-requisites for IGR are discussed as well as the implications of public sector reforms and IGR on

intergovernmental management (IGM) and leadership theory and practice in the governance era.

Chapter three provides a detailed analysis of the evolution and cumulative effect of leadership theories, models and approaches on the state of the field in general, and within the context of P(p)ublic A(a)dministration. The analysis highlights the proliferation and fragmented nature of constructs to signal the shift from leader-centric perspectives and practices to relational, collective and plural forms of leadership as well as areas of convergence and divergence between theory development and practice. Furthermore, the discussion explores and highlights the implications of the shift from leader-centric to collective and hybrid approaches on leadership development and leadership competency frameworks.

Chapter four examines the evolution of competence and the competency movement, clarifies the difference and relationship between competence and competency and discusses the strengths and weaknesses of CBM. A brief analysis of selected leadership competency frameworks that are relevant for the public administration environment is conducted as the basis to identify strengths and gaps. To assess convergence and divergence from emerging competencies for inter-organisational leadership in the governance context, an overview of leadership competencies proposed by different authors for complexity and public administration leadership in the 21st century and network governance era is provided.

Chapter five presents and discusses the empirical results of the study in relation to the findings made in chapters two to four. A detailed description of the data collection and analysis processes as well as and the challenges encountered during data collection is presented. An overview of the participants' profiles is provided and the results and discussion are presented according to identified themes and sub-themes. To enhance understanding on the dynamics of inter-organisational leadership, the critical success factors and challenges that impacted on the effectiveness of the G&A Cluster as well as the perceived multi-level contribution of the G&A Cluster towards individual, departmental and Public Service wide performance are discussed. To enrich the analysis and discussion, examples of the G&A Cluster's areas of effective and poor performance are also highlighted in order to reflect on the manifestation of collective leadership in the G&A Cluster. Furthermore, the required competencies for inter-

organisational leadership are identified and their relationship with intra-organisational competencies is explored.

Chapter six uses CLT and the CAS approach to critique the results from chapter five and further proposes the development of a complexity leadership competency framework for the G&A Cluster. The purpose of the proposed framework and a set of principles to operationalise the framework are presented. This is followed by an interdependency analysis of the competencies identified in chapter five on the basis of the theoretical framework that is elaborated upon in chapters two to four, thus resulting in the formulation of six inter-organisational leadership competency clusters. The implications of the proposed framework for inter-organisational leadership competency development are briefly discussed.

Chapter seven concludes the study with a summary of and reflections on the findings, presentation of the contribution of the study, an outline of recommendations for practice and suggestions for future research.

1.9 CONCLUSION

In chapter one, the research question and objectives are introduced through a broad overview of the context that underpins the problem statement. In addition a synopsis of the theoretical orientation as well as the central theoretical statements is provided whilst key theories, concepts and issues that are central to the study are also highlighted. The research approach and design adopted to address the research question and objectives and the overall structure of the thesis, which is guided by the research objectives, is also outlined. Chapter two conceptualises and contextualises the study within P(p)ublic A(a)dmistration and the broader IGR and cooperative government field.

CHAPTER TWO: THE FOUNDATIONS OF COOPERATIVE GOVERNANCE AND COORDINATION IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter one, the lack of a complexity leadership competency framework to support a CAS such as the G&A Cluster was presented as a basis to investigate the leadership competencies that should underpin a CAS. To enhance an understanding of the South African government's cluster system as a CAS within and alongside the Public Service and public administration bureaucracy, this chapter conceptualises and contextualises the study within P(p)ublic A(a)dmistration. The conceptual framework commences with a broad analysis of the ontology and epistemology of P(p)ublic A(a)dmistration, whilst taking into consideration different reforms and emerging frameworks that have contributed to the complexity of P(p)ublic A(a)dmistration in the 21st century (Rhodes and MacKechnie 2003:57-58; Christensen and Laegreid 2010a:13).

Since the South African government's cluster system forms an integral part of the broader framework for IGR and cooperative government, the analysis also elaborates upon the evolution of IGR and its connection with P(p)ublic A(a)dmistration reform over the years, particularly in the governance era (Agranoff 2017; Rhodes 1996). In particular, the implications of IGR developments on the practice of intergovernmental management (IGM) in public administration are discussed (Perry 1989; Wright and Krane 1998; Radin 2007). The analysis of IGR and IGM serves as a basis to deliberate on the evolving nature of South Africa's IGR system in terms of its constitutional and legislative foundations (Tapscott 2000; Watts 2006; Thornhill 2012; Newbold 2014), as well as the supporting IGR structures, inclusive of the cluster system (Reddy 2001; Malan 2012). A brief overview of the limitations and pre-requisites for effective IGR and IGM will conclude the analysis and simultaneously create the link between this chapter and the need for a complexity leadership competency framework to support the G&A Cluster as outlined in section 1.3 of chapter one.

2.2 THE NATURE AND SCOPE OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

This section discusses the origins and identity as well as the influence of traditional public administration (TPA), NPM and post-NPM on the nature and scope of P(p)ublic A(a)dmistration. The discussion serves as a basis for highlighting the key concepts

of coordination, integration and networks that constitute the building blocks for the thesis as well as the principles and frameworks that underpin the development of New Public Governance (NPG).

2.2.1 The origins and identity of P(p)ublic A(a)dministration

There is no definitive starting period for P(p)ublic A(a)dministration (Hughes 1998:23; Basheka 2012:26; Tshiyoyo 2018:81), but the origins of Public Administration as a discipline, though debatable, are said to be just over 100 years old (De Wet 2014:28). Basheka (2012:28) and Thornhill (2014:6) trace the origins of Public Administration to Lorenz von Stein's (1815-1890) assertion that Administrative Law is too narrow to describe the integration of several disciplines (such as Political Science, Sociology, Public Finance and Administrative Law) that comprise Public Administration. However, Woodrow Wilson (1887) is often credited as the founder of the discipline as a result of his publication on "The Study of Administration", which advanced the argument to, amongst others, separate administration from politics and enhance the effectiveness of administration through training public servants (Thornhill and Van Dijk 2010:99). Wilson's article contributed to the establishment of Public Administration as a unique discipline (Cook 1995:15; Dobuzinskis 1997:300; Hughes 1998:22).

Luther Gulick and Lyndall Urwick (Al-Habil 2010:97; Basheka 2012:42; Thornhill 2014:7) contributed to the demarcation of the discipline in 1937 by integrating earlier ideas from theorists such as Frederick Taylor's (1911) universal principles of scientific management and Henry Fayol's (1865-1915) 14 principles of organising through the introduction of POSDCORB (that is, planning, organising, staffing, directing, coordinating, reporting and budgeting). Fayol's 14 principles - which include, amongst others, the division of work, unity of command and direction, centralisation of power, initiative and *esprit de corps* (spirit of cooperation) - were influential in the development of the classical approach to Public Administration (Thornhill and Van Dijk 2010:102). Scholars such as Fitzgerald (1990, cited in Cameron 2008:46) and Clapper (2005:183) believe that POSDCORB had a major influence on the administrative processes and six generic functions of administration introduced by JJN Cloete in South Africa in the 1960s and 1980s. As such, Gulick and Urwick's POSDCORB is particularly relevant for this thesis due to its continued relevance to various functions of public administration. In particular, the significance of coordination as a function, principle

and process in the context of this thesis is elaborated upon in sections 2.2.4 and 2.3 of this chapter, whereas its implications for leadership theory and practice as well as leadership competencies are addressed in chapters three to five of this thesis.

The identity of P(p)ublic A(a)dministration as a discipline was challenged between 1938 and 1947 through attempts to submerge it as a foundational course for political studies, but it was regained when public service curricula and training were initiated independent of political studies and scholars started publishing through public administration dedicated journals. Different forms of identity crises have continued over the years due to questions regarding the coherence and independence of P(p)ublic A(a)dministration from other fields of study, scope and methodological orientation, as well as whether it is an art or a science, academic field of study or applied social science. While Raadschelders (1999) describes the identity crisis as an academic and existential one, Denhardt (2008:149) describes it as a crisis of legitimacy because there is implicit agreement about the direction of Public Administration amongst different theorists flowing “directly from the Weberian intellectual heritage, with its emphasis on rational bureaucracy, and the Wilsonian political heritage, with its emphasis on politics-administration. The result is an attempt to construct a rational theory of administration based on a positivist understanding of human behaviour set within a framework of democratic accountability”.

Raadschelders (1999:281-290) questions the preoccupation with the identity debate instead of simply accepting that Public Administration is a multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary field that is concerned with the governance of society because its body of knowledge is shaped by varied responses to questions relating to what are public decisions, who makes them, why they are made and how they are implemented. This makes Public Administration a product of many influences and its content in any given time is thus a reflection of its history and as the role of the state evolves, its ability to adapt to various contextual factors determines its legitimacy (Moynihan 2014:56, 61). Cognisant of its sensitivity to context and the need for varied conceptual frameworks (Newbold 2014:21), Raadschelders (1999:299-300) contends that there is no need for a unified paradigm or theory for Public Administration because the field is multi and interdisciplinary and the practice takes place in a continuously changing context.

Expanding on Raadschelders' (1999) position, Rutgers (2010:25) asserts that the ontology of Public Administration arises from "the practical necessity to cope with social problems which require many different sources' or disciplines' input". In an attempt to put closure to the identity crisis debate, Zalmanovitch (2014:1) asserts that the association of public administration with politics or law should not be viewed as a weakness or attack because there is a trilateral relationship between the political, legal and managerial pillars of public administration and each will be prominent at a particular period. Consequently, as an applied or social science of results, Public Administration must respond to the political, economic, historical and other contextual factors (Thornhill and Van Dijk 2010:97; Zalmanovitch 2014:1). This view, as illustrated in sections 2.2.3 and 2.2.4 below, is shared by many P(p)ublic A(a)dmistration scholars and practitioners (Osborne and Gaebler 1992; O'Flynn 2007; Peters and Pierre 2007; Osborne, 2010; Denhardt and Denhardt 2011) whose voices are prominent in the NPM and post-NPM contexts. The view also gives credence to Farazmand's (2012:487) proposition that instead of a typical discipline, Public Administration must position itself as a "self-conscious enterprise" with theories as well as an interdisciplinary field of study and practice with a code of practice or conduct for its members. Zalmanovitch's (2014) and Farazmand's (2012) assertions are important in relation to the public administration paradigms, movements and reforms discussed in sections 2.2.2 to 2.2.4 below.

2.2.2 Traditional P(p)ublic A(a)dmistration and its enduring features

Although Wilson's (1887) political-administration theory, Fayol's principles and Gulick and Urwick's POSDCORB form an essential part of TPA, the enduring feature of TPA in government is predominantly associated with Max Weber's articulation of bureaucracy (Pfiffner 2004:443). Weber's bureaucratic model, which is one of the classical organisational theories developed in the late 1800s, puts emphasis on structuring organisations according to hierarchy as well as the establishment of rules/procedures and the organisation of labour by specialisation (Stoker 2006:45). One of the major strengths of Weber's model for, which there is still no viable alternative, is the ability to organise and coordinate a large scale of activities into coherent and manageable functions (Pfiffner 2004:444; Stoker 2006:45). Hence, the model is useful when the role of government expands (Basheka 2012:39; Thornhill 2014:9).

However, some of the criticisms of TPA relate to Taylor's one best way of administering that underpins POSDCORB and the rigidity of Weber's bureaucratic model due to its emphasis on top-down management, compliance with rules and regulations as well as inefficiencies emanating from the organisation of responsibilities and tasks into functional silos (Hughes 1998:23; Pfiffner 2004:446, Al-Habil 2010:99). The positivist and rational approach that underpins the development of many classical theories is also criticised by scholars such as Robert Dahl (1947) and Paul Appleby (1945) for its lack of sensitivity to the socio-political context of public administration and emphasis on efficiency whilst excluding other moral and democratic values (Denhardt 2008:72; Al-Habil 2010:99-100).

Diverse proposals to move away from TPA emerged from the Minnowbrook Conference in 1968 (Denhardt 2008; Cameron and Milne, 2009), under the umbrella name of New Public Administration (NPA) to illustrate the shift from TPA. The NPA, which is regarded as a "fictional' movement" by Denhardt (2008:102), puts emphasis on the need for P(p)ublic A(a)dmistration to address issues of relevance, equity and participation. Supporters of the NPA argued that public administrators do not just make policy through their daily decisions on policy implementation and advisory role to the executive; they should make policy because of the failure of legislatures and political executives to address issues of poverty, racism, war and other challenges (Denhardt 2008:102; Cameron and Milne 2009:381). The NPA debate emphasises the need to refocus leadership from hierarchy to shared power (Denhardt 2008:109). Though NPA ideas attracted academic attention, in practice the movement did not have an impact in the 1970s and 1980s as compared to NPM (Cameron 2008:51; Cameron and Milne 2009:390). However, the NPA issues have resurfaced as part of the public value and governance debate, as elaborated upon in section 2.2.4 below.

In spite of criticisms, TPA has not been dismissed entirely (Osborne 2010:8) and Weber's bureaucratic model has remained enduring in the P(p)ublic A(a)dmistration environment due to the size of the administrative component of government. Weber's continued influence is illustrated by the (un)intentional "pejorative" (Peters and Pierre 2007:2) references to public officials and public administration institutions as bureaucrats and bureaucracies by practitioners, academics and other stakeholders (Dobuzinskis 1997:301; Wright 1998:427; Uveges and Keller 1998:27; Pfiffner

2004:445; Bovaird and Loffler 2009a:6; McNabb 2009:5). Rhodes (1996:665) concedes that bureaucracy continues to be an essential mechanism for organising public administrations around the world, but, just like market solutions, it is not suitable for most policy areas in many situations.

According to McNabb (2009:6), one of the accepted principles of building a bridge between TPA and new reforms is that bureaucratic structure and hierarchy cannot be wholly substituted, but it must be reorganised in response to the requirements of the governance model. The paradox of reform from TPA to other reforms is that hierarchy is essential for the implementation of laws in which uniformity, predictability and accountability are essential and bureaucracy is embedded in democratic principles (Agranoff 2017:3,221). The challenge for the architects of government is to create organisational structures that combine the uniformity of hierarchical institutions and the efficiency and effectiveness of decentralised institutions (Peters and Pierre 2008:6), as explored in section 2.2.3 below.

2.2.3 The transition to and continued influence of New Public Management

Growing concerns by the public, academics and politicians regarding the size, ineffectiveness and inefficiency of bureaucracy in the 1960s to 1970s resulted in the exploration and gradual adoption of business management techniques and economic principles in the public administration domain (Hood 1991:3; Denhardt 2008:137; Basheka 2012:53-54; Kraak 2011:346). As early as 1971, Vincent Ostrom explored the use of public choice theories due to P(p)ublic A(a)dmistration's inability to deal with increasingly difficult problems in the USA (Denhardt 2008:134; Osborne 2010:13).

The pragmatic and incremental developments (Denhardt 2008:137) marked the development of a movement and model of public sector management that was variously labelled by different authors as "managerialism", "market-based public administration", "entrepreneurial government", "a post-bureaucratic paradigm of public management" and NPM (Hughes 2003:4; O'Flynn 2007:354). As noted by Hughes (2003:4) and Cameron (2008:50), despite the use of different names and debates about theoretical differences, the movement is predominantly referred to as NPM by Hood (1991) and other scholars. This explains why "Reinventing Government" by David Osborne and Ted Gaebler in 1992 and the ten principles that should be applied

by public administration entrepreneurs, were published after several years of widespread adoption of NPM techniques in developed countries such as the UK, New Zealand, the USA and Australia, while selective adoption in developing countries like South Africa only started in the 1990s (Gruening 2001:2-3; Cameron 2009:915; Robinson 2015:8). According to Denhardt (2008:42) and Al-Habil (2010:100), the call to adopt private sector models in government operations to improve efficiency is not entirely new because Woodrow Wilson (1887:209) suggested the adoption of business principles to guide public agencies' operations since "the field of administration is a field of business".

Although there is no uniform definition, Hood (1991:3-4) regards NPM as a loose and convenient term for describing comparable administrative reform doctrines that were dominant in many OECD countries since the 1970s. NPM promoted the adoption of business management tools and market-oriented approaches through the introduction of various measures. The measures include, amongst others, privatisation, outsourcing, contracting, competition, performance management, organisation of government into smaller and more focused units of delivery, the separation of politics from administration as well as the general down-sizing of government administrations (Hood 1991:12; Stoker 2006:45; O'Flynn 2007:361; Cameron 2009:913; Christensen and Laegreid 2010b:256). Cameron and Milne (2009:383-384) attribute the non-alignment between the application of business techniques and the designation of those practices as NPM and entrepreneurial government to the fact that "neither of these movements had yet crystallised themselves into any coherent framework" prior to the late 1980s and early 1990s. Due to lack of system-wide evaluations at the sectoral, multi-national organisations and international comparative studies, Pollitt (1995:150) remarks that support for the NPM was "based more on faith and doctrine than on demonstrable track record". Likewise, Des Gasper (cited in Bhatta 2006:viii-ix) argues that language, concepts and metaphors were used to "sell" NPM to authorities, including academics and practitioners, and it was "bought" as if it was a consistent system with proven empirical evidence of effectiveness and efficiency, "even though it was a patchwork of different elements and tendencies, some market-based and some hierarchy-based"

In a cross-sectional analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of NPM, Oehler-Sincai (2008:35) concludes that the key features of NPM in different countries differ according to context, selected tools as well as the people involved in its implementation. Furthermore, Christensen and Laegreid's (1999:188) study on resistance and reception of NPM reforms in Norway arrives at the conclusion that NPM principles are transformed in response to the contextual realities of administrative policies and culture in different contexts, and this explains differences between organisations and countries.

In South Africa, selected aspects of NPM were adopted due to contextual factors that needed to be considered in the transformation of public administration. These include the appointment of highly qualified managers alongside experienced Weberian bureaucrats; the introduction of contract appointments for senior managers; limited levels of delegation; and corporatisation/agencification of selected state assets (Cameron 2009:936; Muthien 2014:129; Naidoo 2015:29-31). Muthien (2014:129) and Naidoo (2015:23) note that the new managerialism was not fully embraced across the South African public administration due to the scale and urgency of the reform process, thus resulting in confusing, contradictory and incoherent practices across departments and the three spheres of government. The variations noted by Oehler-Sincai (2008) and in South Africa support Christensen and Laegreid's (1999:169-170) assertion that NPM can be viewed as an incoherent reform wave that consists of a combination of contradictory and inconsistent theoretical frameworks and instruments.

Although NPM is different from TPA, specialisation is one of the similarities between the two because Weber's bureaucratic model advocates for the grouping of work according to related functions, thus creating functional silos (Oarkerseon 1989:115). The major difference between TPA and NPM is that specialisation under NPM increased the level of fragmentation without providing any systems to ensure adequate vertical coordination and effective horizontal integration and coordination (Peters 2010:42). NPM is further criticised for placing emphasis on efficiency and effectiveness, whilst neglecting public administration's role in the promotion and protection of public governance values (O'Flynn 2007:357-358). There is also no evidence that NPM has increased the overall efficiency of public administration, even though there are isolated instances of efficiency and effectiveness (Peters and Pierre

2007:4; Christensen and Laegreid 2008:99). In spite of the criticisms, there is a view by several authors (Thornhill and Van Dijk 2010:104; Moynihan 2014:62; Agranoff 2017:158) that NPM has contributed to service efficiencies by emphasising the importance of responsiveness to customers through using effective management systems, tools and techniques.

There is no agreement on whether NPM is a post-bureaucratic paradigm as alluded to by authors such as Stoker (2006:20) and O'Flynn (2007:354), a movement as noted by Cameron and Milne (2009:383-384), an administrative doctrine (Hood 1991:3-4), or an incoherent reform wave (Christensen and Laegreid's 1999:169-170). Rutgers (2010:26) maintains that central to Kuhn's theory is that paradigms are not established overnight but exist for a reasonable period before they can be recognised as such. Using Kuhn's theory, it is logical why Osborne (2010:1-2) regards NPM as a transitory stage to NPG but not a paradigm, because it existed for a brief period before the emergence of the new governance approach. As such, Osborne (2010) expects the key elements of NPM to co-exist or overlap with the elements of NPG and other reforms, and this is evident in the analysis in section 2.2.4 below.

2.2.4 Post-New Public Management and the pursuit for public value and new public governance

According to Stoker (2006:22-23), the transition from one reform to another is often driven by incoherent reform initiatives that incorporate new ways of working alongside features of old or existing ways. This partly explains the lack of agreement on when the debate, and implementation of post-NPM initiatives, started. Peters and Pierre (1998:227) assert that the governance debate occurred nearly at the same time as the adoption of NPM in western countries – which is the 1970s according to authors such as Denhardt (2008) and Osborne (2010), as indicated in section 2.2.3 above, whereas Rhodes (1996:653-655, 667) argues that the governance debate was only partly initiated by NPM. Nonetheless, there is consensus amongst scholars (Christensen and Laegreid 2008:98; Bryson *et al.* 2014:446) that the fragmentation created by NPM and the influence of “wicked problems” as well as other factors external to public administration, such as globalisation, contributed to the emergence of numerous models of public sector reform and post-NPM programmes that put emphasis on horizontal and vertical coordination. Since social problems are wicked because they

cannot be described definitively and do not have definitive solutions (Rittel and Webber 1973:155), in a global context wicked problems transcend organisational, policy, jurisdictional and sectoral boundaries (Robinson 2015:12).

In his analysis of the different uses of governance, Rhodes (1996:655) argues that it is appropriate to discuss NPM in the context of governance because it advocated for government to assume a steering role, of which steering is central to governance. While Rhodes (1996) is criticised by Hughes (2010:91) for misinterpreting Osborne and Gaebler (1992), Peters (2010:39) is of the view that apart from being a management approach, NPM is also a general theory of governance due to its emphasis on redirecting administration activities from politicians to appointed administrators and other external parties. Peters' (2010) view can be supported by Hughes' (2010:102) persistence that governance is about running public and private organisations as well as solving societal problems through different approaches, but this does not mean that NPM and governance as theoretical constructs in the context of P(p)ublic A(a)dmistration and public governance are similar. The two constructs have fundamental differences (Peters and Pierre 1998:231), as explained in sections 2.2.4.1 to 2.2.4.3 below.

According to Christensen and Laegreid (2008:99; 2010b:256), post-NPM started in the late 1980s and beginning of the 1990s for countries that were the early adopters of NPM. Consequently, most of the post-NPM initiatives were implemented in the UK, the USA, New Zealand, Australia and other developed countries under the umbrella slogans or movements of "joined-up-government" (JUG) and "whole-of-government" (WOG) in the 1980s and 1990s. The adoption of post-NPM programmes in developing countries was observed later in the 1990s and early 2000s (Kraak 2011:345; Sokhela 2014:106). According to Hood (2004, cited in Christensen and Laegreid 2008:199), JUG and WOG served as the new labels for the familiar concept and practice of coordination because they were primarily concerned with horizontal and vertical coordination. Some of the JUG and WOG initiatives were effective in dealing with fragmentation challenges. Yet, Christensen and Laegreid (2007:1062) note that programmes that sought to replace NPM's decentralised and specialised structures through the creation of multi-purpose or integrated institutions were not as effective because of failure to address the underlying organisational culture issues such as

values in many of the newly integrated institutions. Unforeseen risks, ambitious agendas and unclear accountability lines constrained the effectiveness of some of the JUG and WOG initiatives across institutions and spheres of government (Christensen and Laegreid 2007:1063). Several scholars (Verhoest *et al.* 2007:11; Christensen and Laegreid 2008:113) note that the mixed effectiveness results demonstrate that the JUG and WOG initiatives cannot completely solve the challenges created by NPM and other reforms, but if used selectively and appropriately and the underlying structural, systems, process and cultural issues are addressed, they can enhance the effectiveness of public administration.

In an article aptly entitled, “Public Value Governance: Moving beyond Traditional Public Administration and the New Public Management”, Bryson *et al.* (2014:446) attest that there is no coherent framework or commonly agreed approach to conceptualise the post-NPM incremental changes. Many authors point to its emerging features in theory and practice. The pursuit of public value through inclusive participation and dialogue, as illustrated by the emergence of complementary frameworks discussed below, is central to this new approach. According to Bryson *et al.* (2014:446:452), the new public service (NPS) by Denhardt and Denhardt (2000; 2011) is the most cited amongst several emerging public value approaches, whereas other contending approaches include Stoker’s (2006) public value management (PVM) and Osborne’s (2010) NPG, which are discussed in sections 2.2.4.1 to 2.2.4.3. Other public value approaches noted by Bryson *et al.* (2014:446:452), which are not discussed in this study, include Bozemans’ (2007) publicness and Boyte’s (2011) new civic politics.

The public value approach is informed by Moore’s (1994; 1995) publications on public value creation in response to the poor translation of corporate strategy in the public sector (Strathoff 2016:18) as well as subsequent publications by other scholars, as highlighted in Williams and Shearer’s (2011:2-3) analysis. The approach also forms part of the post-NPM responses to the limitations of NPM (Morgan and Shinn 2014:5; Mintrom and Luetjens 2015:4). Contrary to the monetary wealth creation of managers in the private sector, Moore (1994:296) asserts that the role of public administrators and public institutions is to create public value. Public value, notes Moore (1995:71), is integrally linked with public interest and public benefit and can only be realised if

public institutions pursue a strategy that (a) is informed by the public's conceptions of public value, (b) has the legitimate support of the public and (c) is supported by the organisation's operational capabilities.

In spite of the different theoretical classifications, there is consensus amongst different authors (Rhodes 1997:658; Peters and Pierre 1998:226; O'Flynn 2007:358; Löffler 2009:220; Bryson *et al.* 2014:445; Robinson 2015:9; Amsler 2016:701) that the central concern for the emerging approach is how to govern in a networked environment in order to create public value with citizens and other stakeholders. The similarities and differences between NPS, PVM and NPG as well as their differences from TPA and NPM are discussed in sections 2.2.4.1 to 2.2.4.3 below.

2.2.4.1 The new public service and normative principles

The NPS is "a movement" that consists of diverse ideas proposed by different scholars and practitioners and draws from democratic political theory, which emphasises the connection between citizens and government, organisational humanism and discourse theory, as well as approaches to management that differ from TPA and NPM approaches (Denhardt and Denhardt 2000:549; Denhardt 2008:174; Denhardt and Denhardt 2011:26, 43). Accordingly, it builds on less prominent arguments made by classical scholars such as Dwight Waldo (1952) and David Levitan (1943) who proposed democratic administration as an alternative to top-down bureaucratic administration as a basis for allowing everyone to participate in administration as "leaders and followers" (Denhardt 2008:63-65).

Denhardt and Denhardt (2000:553) concede that the ideas gleaned from the diverse views of scholars and practitioners emphasise the importance of open and sincere discourse amongst public administrators and citizens in the post-NPM governance environment. The NPS recognises that being a public administrator is demanding and challenging; hence, the NPS is not just a call for public administrators to change how they perceive and engage with the citizens they serve, it is also a call to change how public administrators perceive themselves and their responsibilities (Denhardt and Denhardt 2011:183). In addition, it is a call for public administrators to reflect on how they treat each other, make decisions, evaluate their successes and failures as well as how to evaluate the legitimacy of their actions (Denhardt and Denhardt (2011:205).

Denhardt and Denhardt (2011:43-44) have thus organised the diverse ideas that constitute the NPS into seven themes or normative principles that place emphasis on service to citizens, citizens' engagement, collaborative efforts for shared and collective public interest as well as responsiveness and accountability in line with constitutional imperatives, legal prescripts, community values and professional standards. The essence of the normative principles and the ideas and practices underpinning them make the NPS different from (old administration or) TPA and NPM, as presented in Table 2.1 below. In spite of the differences, Denhardt and Denhardt (2011:207-208) assert that in the NPS context, the best elements of TPA and NPM can be retained within a fully integrated public values and interest discourse.

Table 2.1: Comparing Perspectives: TPA, NPM and NPS

	Old Public Administration	New Public Management	New Public Service
Primary theoretical and epistemological foundations	Political theory, social and political commentary augmented by naïve social science	Economic theory, more sophisticated dialogue based on positive social science	Democratic theory, varied approach to knowledge including positive, interpretive and critical
Prevailing rationality and associated models of human behaviour	Synoptic rationality, 'administrative man'	Technical and economic rationality, 'economic man', or the self-interested decision maker	Strategic or formal rationality, multiple tests of rationality (political, economic and organisation)
Conception of the public interest	Public interest is politically defined and expressed in law	Public interest represents the aggregation of individual interests	Public interest in the result of dialogue about shared values
To whom are public servants responsive	Clients and constituents	Customers	Citizens
Role of government	Rowing	Steering	Serving
Mechanisms for achieving policy objectives	Administering programs through existing government agencies	Creating mechanisms and incentive structures to achieve policy objectives through private and non-profit agencies	Building coalitions of public, non-profit and private agencies to meet mutually agreed upon needs
Approach to accountability	Hierarchical Administrators are responsible to democratically elected leaders	Market driven the accumulation of self-interests will result in outcomes desired by broad groups of citizens	Multifaceted public servants must attend to law, community values, political norms, professional standards and citizens interests
Administrative discretion	Limited discretion allowed administrative officials	Wide latitude to meet entrepreneurial goals	Discretion needed but constrained and accountable
Assumed organizational structure	Bureaucratic organizations marked by top-down authority within agencies and control or regulation of clients	Decentralized public organizations with primary control remaining within the agency	Collaborative structures with leadership shared externally and internally
Assumed motivational basis of public servants and administrators	Pay and benefits, civil service protection	Entrepreneurial spirit, ideological desire to reduce size of government	Public service, desire to contribute to society

Source: Adapted from Denhardt and Denhardt (2011:28-29).

Although Denhardt and Denhardt (2000, 2011) present the NPS as a set of ideas and normative principles but not a coherent theoretical framework, Xu *et al.* (2015:12-13) refer to it as a theory. Consequently, Xu *et al.* (2015:12-13) argue that the reason why the NPS did not gain momentum as a theoretical framework, especially in China, is because it is theoretically thin and lacks originality, when compared to the NPG, which is discussed in section 2.2.4.3 below. As noted by Bryson *et al.* (2014:451-452), public value approaches such as NPS, PVM and NPG have been criticised for being rhetorical and empirically lacking by scholars such as Alasdair Roberts (1995), Janine O'Flynn (2007) and Laurence Jacobs (2014). Equally, Bryson *et al.* (2014:451-452) remark that there is also a belief by scholars such as Robert Smith (2004), Thomas Fisher (2014) and Timo Meynhardt (2014) that the public value approach enables the integration of debates and assessments about people, values, processes, systems and institutions, plus the blending of economics, public policy, management and political science analytical perspectives. The latter perspective is consistent with assertions made in section 2.2.1 above that P(p)ublic A(a)dministration is a multi and interdisciplinary applied science that should be responsive to multiple contextual factors (Raadschelders 1999; Thornhill and Van Dijk 2010; Zalmanovitch 2014).

The growing emphasis on public values alongside other values by scholars and practitioners supports Denhardt and Denhardt's (2015:667-669) observation that the adoption of, amongst others, open government partnerships, public participation mechanisms by countries such as Brazil, South Africa, the UK and USA, plus an increase in networks and collaborative public management (CPM) practices, demonstrates increasing interest and focus on the NPS normative principles. Nonetheless, Denhardt and Denhardt (2015:670) concede that neither the NPS nor NPM principles have become dominant in the 21st century, as illustrated by their blending in the governance context.

2.2.4.2 Public value and collaborative management

Discussions and debates about public value can be traced back to the 1990s, though Stoker (2006) is credited for developing the PVM model as an overarching management framework for networked forms of governance (O'Flynn 2007:358; Bryson *et al.* 2014:446). The PVM framework recognises the importance of balancing technical and political consideration while creating public value within the networked

governance environment wherein elected and appointed officials as well as citizens are allowed to participate to ensure legitimacy, trust and confidence in government (Stoker 2006:41). In the PVM framework, politics, which is regarded as a social process of coordination, influence and partnership, is central to public management (Stoker 2006:46-47). Since politics require an understanding of the broader context and a shift in administration processes and decisions (Agranoff 2017:229), scholars and practitioners must acknowledge and embrace the political character of governance as well as the contradictions and conflicts that characterise the political system within which public administration operates (Spicer 2014:76).

As a multi-dimensional construct, public value is concerned with collective processes of engagement and mediation of preferences that result in collective outcomes and collective conceptions of public value (Stoker 2006:42; O'Flynn 2007:358). To this end, Bryson *et al.* (2014:446) state that government cannot create public value for citizens; public value emerges from participatory and inclusive deliberations. But Bryson *et al.* (2014:447) argue that government has to fulfil its role as a convenor, catalyst, collaborator and sometimes it must steer, row, partner or step aside. Although the NPS is critical of public administrators assuming the role of rowing and steering, the analysis illustrates the complementary nature of the NPS, PVM and NPG, as discussed in section 2.2.4.3 below, as public value and governance constructs. The analysis further confirms Bryson *et al.*'s (2014:451) observation that the key features of the public value literature and frameworks can be interlinked.

The importance of interconnections and interdependence within and between government and other stakeholders requires government to adopt collaborative management techniques (Stoker 2006:54). Collaborative management fits well within the broader (collaborative) governance framework, which is discussed in section 2.2.4.3 below, because it is concerned with both vertical and horizontal IGM mechanisms and the involvement of non-governmental stakeholders (Agranoff and McGuire 2003:11, 21). Collaborative management as an element of collaborative governance is concerned with the creation of opportunities to participate in policy development, collective problem solving and public value creation through inclusive networks and other IGR/IGM structures and processes (Morse 2012:160). Instead of addressing challenges through the creation of central coordination agencies and

integrated institutions, the central focus of collaborative management is on the design and implementation of cross-sector collaborations and the management of networks and organisational boundaries on a formal/mandatory or informal/voluntary basis towards the achievement of collective outcomes (Agranoff and McGuire 2003:4; McGuire 2006:3; Naff 2012:127).

There is a view that collaborative management can be effective in turbulent times when government does not have all the answers and when there is a need to avoid the doctrine of bureaucracy versus market interventions (O'Flynn 2009:113). Similar to participation, collaboration is an extrinsic and intrinsic value because it is a process and an instrumental means to an end, but it is also an end in itself (Amsler 2016:702-704). This partly explains why collaborative management is sometimes viewed as a descriptive concept but not a theoretical construct. As a theoretical construct, collaborative management embraces public and stakeholder participation to influence policy across the design and implementation process (Amsler 2016:704).

According to Agranoff and McGuire (2003:23), though not theoretically grounded as an emerging paradigm of management, collaborative management borrows from various theoretical frameworks and disciplines such as sociology (inter-organisational relations), politics and public administration (federalism and IGR/IGM) and business management (strategic alliances). As a policy instrument for dealing with complex issues, collaborative management takes many forms such as investment incentives, tax exemptions, enforcement of standards and subsidy arrangements (Agranoff and McGuire 2003:132). But collaborative management is not a solution for all organisational challenges because many organisational issues should still be addressed by individual public sector institutions (O'Flynn 2009:113).

As part of collaborative management, public value creation in a networked environment requires managers to have different public service ethos and boundary spanning skills (Williams 2002:109; Morse 2012:160), diplomatic competencies (Rhodes 1996:663) and multifaceted forms of accountability and value-based leadership (Stoker 2006:52; Getha-Taylor 2012:117). Amongst others, the new ethos includes strong public accountability as opposed to accountability to executive authorities, capacity and commitment to serve, contribution to community well-being through active participation and commitment to ethical values (Aldridge and Stoker,

cited in Stoker 2006:48-49). These features expand on Moore’s (1995) public value framework, and further differentiate NPV from NPM and TPA. Stoker (2006:41) argues that the PVM framework is more suitable for the networked governance environment because its success rests on the practice of and motivation from dialogue and exchange. To test whether PVM can be classified as a paradigm, Stoker (2006:50) tests how TPA, NPM and PVM would respond to questions of efficiency, accountability and equity, because he considers these three criteria the ultimate test for a public management paradigm. Based on the test analysis presented in Table 2.2 below, Stoker (2006:56) asserts that PVM provides for a new way of thinking about public management reform rather than TPA and NPM, and proposes a new paradigm based on its approach to issues of equity, accountability and efficiency.

Table 2.2: Management paradigms and the challenges of efficiency, accountability and equity

Responses to Core Challenges	Efficiency	Accountability	Equity
Traditional public administration	Break down complex tasks and get staff to follow procedures.	Competitive elections provide leaders who can steer and exercise oversight.	By treating all similar cases the same
New public management	Set tough performance tasks that the organization is encouraged to achieve.	Politicians set public goals and set targets and then hold managers to account for their delivery.	Offering a framework of responsiveness to users and setting targets to achieve fair access to services.
Public value management	Check on a continuous basis that activity fits purpose.	By negotiated goal setting and oversight.	By developing individual capacity so that rights and responsibilities are realized.

Source: Stoker (2006:50).

Since PVM is not a solution to all complex problems that confront government and society, Stoker (2006:54) maintains that PVM will always form part of a combination of management approaches adopted by government – thus providing justification for Christensen and Laegreid’s (2010a:13) conception of hybrid public organisations, as described in chapter one, section 1.3 of this thesis. Furthermore, an analysis of the PVM framework and its associated collaborative management approach highlights important governance concepts such as coordination, networked governance as well

as collective processes and outcomes, which are explored further in sections 2.2.4.3 and 2.3 below. The analysis also alludes to the management skills and leadership competency implications of networked governance, which are expanded upon in chapters three and four of this thesis.

2.2.4.3 Networks, collaboration and the new public governance

The post-NPM era is also characterised by a growing focus on governance to signal the need for change on how government governs (Rhodes 1996:652-653). Rhodes (1996) notes that governance is used in many ways to refer to different things such as a minimal state, corporate governance, good governance, self-organisation, the NPM approach and network management. According to Koliba (2012:74-75), governance network management is an amalgamation of TPA, NPM as well as Agranoff and McGuire’s (2003) CPM, of which the latter is discussed in section 2.2.4.2 above. Hughes’ (2010:91,102) critical response is that the various uses of governance do not add any significance to the original dictionary definition of governance as a process of running organisations. Explaining the various descriptive and theoretical uses of governance is beyond the scope of this thesis, but Table 2.3 below highlights the multiple uses of governance in the literature to appreciate the richness and complexity of the concept. Furthermore, Table 2.3 illustrates linkages between the multiple uses of governance and the democratic values and principles of participation, inclusivity and accountability, as discussed by Denhardt and Denhardt (2011) and Stoker (2006).

Table 2.3: Multiple uses of governance

	Cited Authors
governance model	Peters and Pierre (1998:233); McNabb (2009:5)
networked governance	Stoker (2006:41); Bovaird and Löffler (2009b:22); Christensen and Laegreid (2010:453); Bryson <i>et al.</i> (2014:445)
collaborative governance	Bryson <i>et al.</i> (2014:445); Amsler (2016:700)
participatory governance	Lovan <i>et al.</i> (2004:13); Peters (2010:40)
public governance	Bovaird and Löffler (2009a:11); Löffler (2009:220)
good governance	Bovaird and Löffler (2009a:5); Löffler (2009:229); McNabb (2009:xvi)
global governance	Kennett (2007:27); Bovaird and Löffler (2009a:10)
intergovernmental governance system” or “multilevel governance”	Peters and Pierre (2001:131); O’Toole and Meier (2004:33); Smith (2007:384)

Source: Author’s own illustration.

As noted by Loffler (2009:216), governance is not a new concept; the World Bank promoted it in 1989 to signal a new approach to economic development in a democratic and law abiding context. The World Bank defines governance as “the exercise of political power to manage a nation’s affairs” (Rhodes 1997:656). As a theoretical construct, governance is, according to Peters and Pierre (1998:232) as well as Morgan and Shinn (2014:4), a political theory that is concerned with inter-organisational processes and the governance of collective interests and outcomes. The governance perspective is fundamentally concerned with questions of how democratic processes of public participation in decision-making, policy development and other administrative functions can be adapted to create public value and resolve complex public issues (Lovan *et al.* 2004:xv; Thornhill and Van Dijk 2010:106).

As indicated in the preceding discussion and further illustrated in Table 2.3 above, the underlying governance principles are incorporated in multiple governance constructs, including the NPG. Osborne (2006, cited in Hughes 2010:97) asserts that the NPG, which is still ill-defined, focusses on inter-organisational relationships and their associated governance processes because it is concerned with “a plural state, where multiple interdependent actors contribute to the delivery of public services and a plural state, where multiple processes inform the policy making system” in relation to service effectiveness outcomes. The assertions by Osborne’s (2006, cited in Hughes 2010), demonstrate the link between NPG and the principles of democratic participation and accountability that are central to CPM (Agranoff and McGuire 2003; Agranoff 2017), network governance (Bovaird and Loffler 2009; Koliba 2012; Bryson *et al.* 2014), and PVM (Stoker 2006).

According to Xu *et al.* (2015:18), emphasis on a democratic context that is characterised by cultural diversity and active civil society suggests that the NPG may not be a practical public management framework for non-democratic states such as China. The NPG is also criticised for being premised on the assumption that citizens and civil society groups have the capacity to participate in policy development and implementation, and that everyone in a networked environment will behave ethically (Moynihan 2014:65). The premise for this thesis is that the defining elements of the NPG capture the complexity and challenges that confront public administration in the 21st century, especially in a democratic context such as South Africa.

Notwithstanding the criticism, several authors (Lovan *et al.* 2004:3; Bovaird and Loffler 2009b:22; Loffler 2009:222; Amsler 2016:701) concede that networked and collaborative governance are variations of many public and private governance constructs and narratives, along with market, hierarchy and community governance narratives. Networked and collaborative governance are concerned with the processes and systems through which government institutions work together, in addition to civil society structures, the private sector and other interest groups. Accordingly, in a series of chapters authored by various scholars and practitioners, Osborne (2010:6) presents the NPG as a conceptual framework to make sense of complex challenges in public administration, but does not prescribe or claim that the NPG is a paradigm.

In Osborne's (2010:9) view, the NPG is rooted firmly within the internal consideration of institutional theory and external focus of network theory, and it is a response to the 21st century's complex, fragmented and pluralistic nature of policy design and implementation. The governance construct and context provide a constitutional foundation for public administration and place emphasis on the interaction of administration with politics and influences from other fields (Uveges and Keller 1998:30). Cognisant of the various uses of governance outlined in Table 2.3 above, Osborne (2010:7) contends that public governance is not a paradigm or distinctive regime on its own, because it has always been an element of TPA and NPM, but it is now a dominant focus area, as illustrated in Table 2.4 below. This observation confirms Zalmanovitch's (2014:1) assertion, made in section 2.2.1 above, that the different pillars of public administration will be prominent at different stages.

Table 2.4: Core elements of the NPG, in contrast to TPA and NPM

Paradigm / key elements	Theoretical roots	Nature of the state	Focus	Emphasis	Resource allocation mechanisms	Nature of the service system	Value base
Old/Traditional Public Administration	Political science and public policy	Unitary	The political system	Policy creation and implementation	Hierarchy	Closed	Public sector ethos
New Public Management	Rational / public choice theory and management studies	Regulatory	The organisation	Management or organisation resources and performance	The market classical or neo-classical contracts	Open rational	Efficacy and competition and the market place
New Public Governance	Institutional and network theory	Plural and pluralistic	The organisation in its environment	Negotiation of values, meaning and relationships	Networks and rational contracts	Open closed	Dispersed and contested

Source: Adapted from Osborne (2010:10).

A closer analysis of the key features of TPA, NPM and NPG in Table 2.4 above clarifies the connections between the three conceptual frameworks, especially on the dimensions related to focus, resource allocation mechanisms and the nature of the service system. The NPG framework emphasises the importance of asking relevant questions for the complex environment without neglecting old questions (Osborne 2010:425) and “is offered as a conceptual model” to deal with contemporary public service delivery issues, policy-making, intergovernmental challenges and network-based modes of service delivery (Osborne 2010:413). Emphasis on interactive relations enhances the capacity of the governance perspective to address issues of effectiveness and legitimacy, but creates accountability and control challenges due to the diverse and pluralistic nature of stakeholder interests and influence (Peters and Pierre 2007:4). Therefore, the complexity of the governance context makes CLT appropriate for exploring the development of a complexity leadership competency framework.

Implied in the multiple uses of governance alluded to above is the emergence of alliances, networks and partnerships that have the capacity to initiate, influence and/or control the development of policy through various forms of engagement (Keast and Brown 2002; Agranoff 2003:8; Laegreid and Verhoest 2010:18; McGuire and Agranoff 2011:265; Tshiyoyo 2018:87). McGuire and Agranoff (2011:265-266) define networks as clusters of interconnected organisations that seek to share resources to solve complex problems that can only be addressed through the efforts of multiple organisations. In spite of his criticism of the different uses of governance, Hughes (2010:101) acknowledges the relevance of the network approach as an organising principle or governance approach, but cautions that this does not equate networks to governance. Central to this thesis is that the recognition of networks in the governance context justifies the use of networked governance as a theoretical construct to denote a governance approach that is predominantly network based.

While networks can be formal, O’Flynn (2009:114) notes that they are generally considered to be less structured and less labour intensive when compared to the 3Cs approach to integration (i.e. cooperation, coordination and collaboration – as explained in section 2.3.1 below). The inherent benefits of participating in networks include shared expertise irrespective of hierarchical rank, information sharing plus

innovation and creativity in a less structured environment (Keast and Brown 2002:9; Mandell and Keast 2008:729). The external benefits of networks for non-governmental stakeholders include financial support from government and donors, whereas for government they include strong relations with external stakeholders and acceptance by the broader community (Keast and Brown 2006). These observations demonstrate the importance of networks in promoting and sustaining the collective and democratic public values of collaboration, participation, inclusivity and accountability (Lovan *et al.* 2004:5-7; Stoker 2006:41-42; Bryson *et al.* 2014:447; Amsler 2016:702).

Though networks have advantages, they are not a replacement for bureaucracy because they have limitations due to their predominant operations without formal agreements and governance structures, plus their tendency to be intensive on process matters whilst delaying delivery on specific results (McGuire and Agranoff 2011:276, 280). Rhodes (1996:666) associates networks with a third governing structure, together with bureaucracies and markets; hence, they exist within and coexist alongside bureaucratic and hierarchical organisations (Agranoff 2017:221). Networks have different features and they are suitable for some policy areas, as is the case with hierarchy and markets (Rhodes 1996:665). In the IGR context which is discussed in section 2.3 below, networks are the defining feature of IGM in the 21st century (Agranoff 2017:166) and they place emphasis on “managerial arrangements and behaviours that contribute to public management theory within the larger but less direct issues of democratic participation and governance” (Agranoff 2017:190).

Several authors (Lovan *et al.* 2004:10; Stoker 2006; Bovaird and Loffler 2009:10; Bryson *et al.* 2014:447) note that the emergence of networks to advance democratic values cannot be prohibited by government and their existence cannot be ignored. As such, government should engage with networks through appropriate mechanisms such as listening, steering, coordinating and partnering. Networks, according to Agranoff (2017:203), are an integral part of a CAS that require more than “signatory” participation, but require robust deliberations on the technical issues that are core to the underlying challenges. Agranoff’s (2017) perspective is consistent with Dooley’s (1996) and Uhl-Bien *et al.*’s (2017) description of a CAS in chapter one of this thesis as a dynamic, fluid, interlinked and adaptable open system that can be found in hierarchical and network structures. Therefore, the existence of networks has

implications for the role and capacity of public administrators because, as critical agents for public administration reform, they are expected to support and/or participate in such networks (Stocker 2006:41; Tshiyoyo 2018:87, 91).

Given the multiplicity and complexity of post-NPM concepts and frameworks, in this thesis the NPG is regarded as an umbrella framework within which the democratic principles and values of participation, inclusivity, public value and collaboration can be addressed within a network based and hybrid governance system. As such, within the broader governance context, networks have implications for leadership practice and theory, as noted by both Denhardt and Denhardt (2011) and Stoker (2006) in sections 2.2.4.1 and 2.2.4.2 above. Furthermore, Morgan *et al.* (2014:320) affirm the need for research on the implications of the centrality of values and politics on individual and collective leadership competencies within horizontal and vertical structures.

The need for research on leadership theory and practice in complex environments supports the assertions made by several authors (Uhl-Bien and Arena 2018; Baltaci and Balci 2018) in chapter one of this thesis. Therefore, the implications of the NPG framework for organisational leadership and management of internal processes to network and collective leadership, as well as the management of internal and external relations (Stoker 2006:41-42; Loffler 2009:220; Amsler 2016:701) are explored in chapters three and four of this thesis. Section 2.3 below elaborates upon the evolution of IGR and IGM from the early 1900s in order to locate the G&A Cluster within the broader governance system of the state and public administration in South Africa.

2.3 INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS AND GOVERNMENT SYSTEMS

Governance is central to public administration discourse in the 21st century and has affirmed the centrality of public administration in the “process of governing, no matter what form that governance may take” (Peters and Pierre 2003:8). The governance approach has also highlighted the importance of a strong bureaucracy in the realisation of the values and objectives of democracy (Peters and Pierre 2003:5). This is the reason why it is essential to appreciate the complex relationship between state governance and public administration through the IGR perspective.

As briefly alluded to in section 2.2.4.3 above, Agranoff (2017:3, 6) is of the view that the governance construct has expanded the IGR and IGM concepts, which traditionally

were more focused on relations between government officials, institutions and spheres of government. Accordingly, Meek (2012:313) expects IGR to increase extensively in the governance context as a result of contracting arrangements and intensive interactions within governments and between governments and external parties such as the private sector and civil society groups.

There is also a view that the growth of IGM and its distinguishing problem solving, intergovernmental games and networking features, provide government with tools to bridge the gap between NPM mechanisms and the emerging governance requirements (Rhodes 1996:664). However, there is a concern that the theoretical contribution of IGM to public administration is developing slowly (O'Toole and Meier 2004:1). Mindful of these mixed views, section 2.3.1 below demonstrates the importance of IGR within the governance context through providing an international perspective on the evolution, goal, key drivers and institutional mechanisms of IGR as a prelude to a discussion about the relevance of IGR in public management and administration.

2.3.1 The evolving nature of intergovernmental relations

Intergovernmental dependencies and relations can be traced to the classical federal states of the USA (1789), Switzerland (1848), Canada (1867) and Australia (1901) (Watts 2006:204-205). Nevertheless, IGR should not be confused or exclusively associated with federalism, even though its origins and evolution are mostly discussed within the context of various forms of federalism (Agranoff and McGuire 2003:17; Trench 2006:226; Agranoff 2017:4). Wright (1978:30) maintains that federalism puts emphasis on, amongst others, formal authority and power relations plus the sovereignty of residual powers for states and localities in relation to central authority, and IGR promotes neutrality on issues of power and authority - hence its emphasis on interactions, connections and integration.

The recognition of interdependencies and interrelations between government levels as an early 20th century phenomenon was predominantly influenced by focus on the ratification of intergovernmental legislative instruments and constitutional requirements, but not the actual practice of "political and administrative interactions between governments" (Watts 2006:205). According to Wright (1974:3; 1978:13), the

political anchoring and policy orientation of IGR in its current form emerged from William Anderson's work in the 1930s in the USA. Anderson (1960:3, cited in Wright 1978:5) defines IGR as a combination of diverse sets of practices, processes, activities and interactions that occur between appointed and elected officials across all units and levels of government within the [USA] federal system. In his definition and description of what constitutes IGR, Anderson (cited in Wright 1974:2) asserts that "it is human beings clothed with office who are the real determiners of what the relations between units of government will be. Consequently the concept of intergovernmental relations necessarily has to be formulated largely in terms of human relations and human behaviour...".

Anderson's work and Wright's first publication in 1978 entitled "Understanding Intergovernmental Relations" are credited for establishing IGR as a statutory concept and systematic field of study and research in Public Administration and Political Science, as well as a generic concept to describe interactive activities and processes between officials and institutions (Wright 1978:6; Agranoff and Radin 2014:3; Hamilton and Stenberg 2018:6). Building on Anderson's work, Wright (1978:5) argues that IGR can be associated with what Senator Edmund Muskie (cited in Wright 1978:8-9) described in 1962 as the "hidden dimension of government", or the fourth branch of government. Wright's (1978:8-9) assertion is informed by the complexity arising from the increasing number of governmental units, the variety and attitudes of participating officials, diversity of policy issues as well as the frequency and intensity of interactions between officials and levels of government.

As illustrated in Figure 2.1 below, Wright (1988:40) identifies three generic authority relationship models. The co-ordinate authority model portrays separate and distinct powers and boundaries between national government and other levels of government and the inclusive authority model depicts IGR in a nested hierarchical manner that gives more power to national government over provincial and local governments. The overlapping authority model is characterised by high levels of interdependency, cooperation and bargaining across all levels of government.

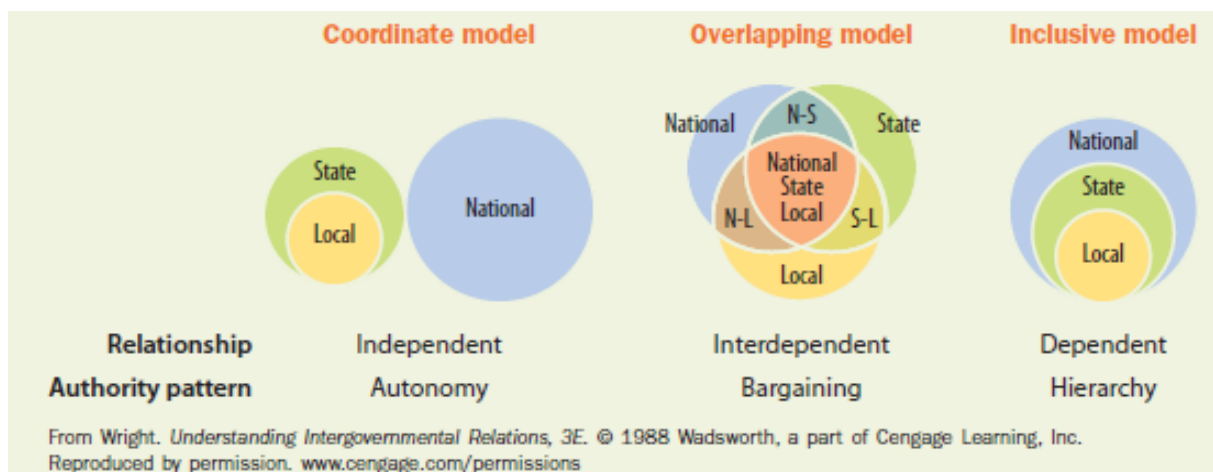


Figure 2.1: Intergovernmental relations models

Source: Wright (1988:40) and diagram extracted from <http://www.chegg.com>.

The observation by Phillimore (2013:228) and Burke (2014:74) is that in the current context many states (and organisations) cannot be exclusively and neatly placed into one specific authority relationship model because many unitary states have embraced decentralised features and some federal states have centralised some of their policies and programmes. This supports Wright's (1978:20) view that the generic authority relations models do not describe the complexities and realities of governance. Equally, several authors (Agranoff and McGuire 1999:355; Agranoff and McGuire 2003:vii; Agranoff and Radin 2014:5,15; Burke 2014:68, 74) assert that the prevalence of intergovernmental, inter-organisational and intersectoral collaboration makes the overlapping authority model more relevant in the governance era due to its capacity to transcend bilateral and multilateral IGR. The cited authors argue that the overlapping authority model has capacity to include third parties such as non-governmental, private sector and civil society organisations through formal and informal networks, partnerships and agreements.

As demonstrated in section 2.5 of this chapter, the overlapping authority model is more applicable for South Africa's governance and IGR system. Due to its dynamic nature and relevance in various federal, unitary or quasi-federal forms of government systems (Reddy 2001:25; Bello 2009:66; Phillimore 2013:229; Wright 1998:37 in Agranoff and Radin 2014:4), Wright (1974) views IGR as a unique dimension in the political, administrative and policy actions of officials. On the contrary, Trench (2006:226) argues that IGR should be treated as a distinctive area of knowledge in politics, a view that could be criticised for not recognising the interdisciplinary nature of IGR.

According to Wright (1978:323,329), IGR is continuously under construction, adjustment and extension and its scope is influenced by changing social forces, political systems, economic dynamics and other international trends. Consequently, Wright's (1988:67) analysis, as depicted in Table 2.5 below, divided IGR developments into seven phases – which is a refinement and expansion of the five phases he outlined in 1978 (Wright 1978:41).

Table 2.5: Expanded phases of intergovernmental relations

Phase Descriptor	Main Problem	Participants Perceptions	IGR Mechanisms	Federalism Metaphor	Approximate Climate Period
Conflict	Defining boundaries Proper spheres	Antagonistic Adversary Exclusiveness	Statutes Courts Regulation	Layer cake federalism	19 th century-1930s
Cooperative	Economic distress International threat	Collaboration Complementary Mutuality Supportive	National planning Formula grants Tax credits	Marble cake federalism	1930s-1950s
Concentrated	Service needs Physical development	Professionalism Objectivity Neutrality Functionalism	Categorical grants Service standards	Water taps (focused or channelled)	1940s-1960s
Creative	Urban-metropolitan Disadvantaged clients	National goals Great Society Grantsmanship	Program planning Project grants Participation	Flowering (proliferated and focused)	1950s-1960s
Competitive	Coordination Program effectiveness Citizen access	Disagreement Rivalry	Grant consolidation Reorganization	Picket-fence (fragmentation) federalism)	1960s-1970s
Calculative	Accountability Bankruptcy Constraints Dependency Federal role Public confidence	Grantsmanship Fungibility Overload	General aid - entitlements Bypassing Loans Crossing regulations	Façade (confrontational federalism)	1970s-1980s
Contractive	Borrowing and balanced budgeting Federal aid cuts and changes Juridical decision making Managing mandates	Aggressive Contentiousness Defensiveness Litigiousness	Congressional statutes/Court decisions Information sources Negotiated dispute settlement Privatization	De facto federalism Telescope(s) federalism Whiplash federalism	1980s-1990s
Kaleidoscope	<i>Redefining boundaries Economic decline Fiscal woes Globalization Pension reassessment</i>	<i>Polarization Inaction Indecisiveness Convolution Collaboration</i>	<i>State legislation Court challenges Mandates Interlocal/ agreements</i>	<i>Fragmented federalism Push-back federalism Nuanced federalism Fend-for-yourself federalism Collaborative federalism</i>	1990s-2010s

Source: Wright (1988:67), as expanded by Benton (2018:16-17).

Developments and attempts to cope with complexity in the 1990s until the 21st century have resulted in various authors proposing additions to Wright's phases, as illustrated

by Benton's (2018:16-17) eighth phase, entitled "Kaleidoscope". This phase is influenced by the co-existence and emergence of diverse, complementary and conflicting interactions that can be described through various federalism metaphors such as "fragmented federalism", "push-back federalism" and "collaborative federalism" (Benton 2018).

A closer analysis of public administration reforms as discussed in section 2.2 above and IGR developments as depicted in Table 2.5 above illustrates a disjuncture between public administration practice in general and governance developments as represented by the IGR phases, thus justifying O'Toole and Meier's (2004:1) observation about the slow development of IGM – as alluded to in section 2.4 below. The exception is that the contractive phase's (1980s-1990s) mechanisms and challenges are closely linked with the NPM contextual issues, while the Kaleidoscope phase's (1990s-2010s) challenges and mechanisms are more relevant for the NPG context. The implication of the changing IGR phases is that the actions and interactions of politicians and appointed officials should change according to the legislative regime, and the competencies of officials who are involved should be adaptable (Thornhill, 2002:50). Thus, the development of a competency leadership framework for a meso organisational structure such as the G&A Cluster seeks to address the competency gap between IGR and public administration developments.

2.3.2 The goal of intergovernmental relations and key concepts

The interactive nature of IGR makes it a means to ensure good governance, cooperation, coordination, integration, alignment, public value and superior performance, but does not denote an end state (Tapscott 2000:121; Thornhill 2002:50; Agranoff 2011:68; Malan 2014:56; Stenberg and Hamilton 2018:xiv). This is because "in a world of growing functional complexity, policy overlap and citizen demand, IGR is 'the oil in the federal machinery'" (Poirier and Saunders, cited in Behnke 2017:509). As articulated by various sources (Thornhill *et al.* 2001:8; Watts, 2006:205; Ile, 2007:24; Verhoest *et al.* 2014:3; *Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act, 2005* [Act 13 of 2005]: section 4; The Presidency 2008:10), the objective of IGR is to promote vertical and horizontal cooperative governance, coordination and alignment of policies, programme implementation and budgets between and within the spheres of government.

The alignment of the objective of IGR to the objectives of the cluster system, as outlined in section 1.3 of this thesis, makes an understanding of the IGR framework and context essential for the study. In particular, IGR seeks to facilitate effective and efficient service delivery without undermining the independence of governments and institutions or overlooking the uniqueness of their constituencies. Although integration, cooperation, coordination and collaboration (the latter three are referred to as the 3Cs henceforth) are central to the goal of IGR, Keast *et al.* (2007:11-12) note that there is a tendency to use these concepts interchangeably, whereas service integration is concerned with the creation of interdependencies. As such, integration encompasses the 3Cs as depicted in the horizontal integration continuum in Figure 2.2 below.

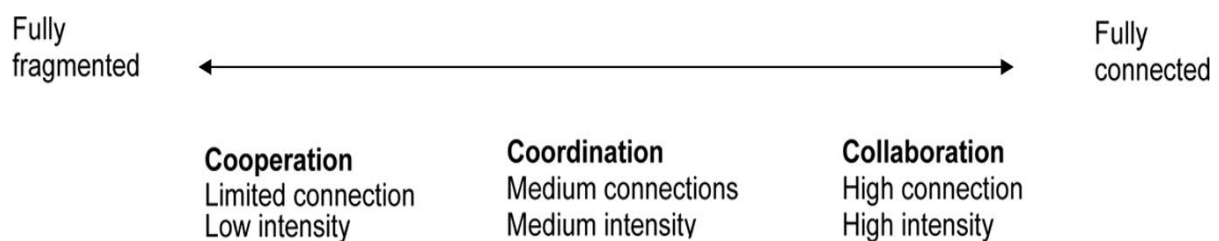


Figure 2.2: Horizontal integration continuum

Source: Keast *et al.* (2007:12).

As depicted in Figure 2.2, cooperation is regarded as a weak or less structured form of integration because it is voluntary (Keast *et al.* 2007:17), whereas coordination is fairly structured because it involves attempts at developing “mutually acceptable common policies and objectives” (Watts 2006:208). As a multi-dimensional concept, coordination entails negative and positive approaches or a combination of both (Peters 2018:2). Negative coordination entails the avoidance of conflict or adverse effects of an institution’s decision or one policy over other institutions or policies through making adjustments after considering the decisions or policies made by other institutions, whereas positive coordination entails agreeing on mutually beneficial solutions to cooperating institutions and their respective clients. As a policy instrument, coordination can also be addressed according to Metcalfe’s (1994:281) nine-point scale, which measures policy coordination between ministries by providing a sequence of qualitative components from low levels of independent decision-making to the highest level of strategy integration as illustrated in Table 2.6 below. The depiction of the scales with a flight of steps illustrates the interdependence and cumulative nature of the scales as coordination levels increase or decrease.

Table 2.6: Metcalfe's policy coordination scale

-
9. Government strategy
 8. Establishing central priorities
 7. Setting limits on ministerial action
 6. Arbitration of policy differences
 5. Search for agreement among ministries
 4. Avoiding divergences among ministries
 3. Consultation with other ministries (feedback)
 2. Communication to other ministries (information exchange)
 1. Independent decision-making by ministries
-

Source: Metcalfe (1994:281).

As observed by Peters (2018) as well as Candel and Biesbroek (2016), although Metcalfe's scale was created to deal with policy coordination within the European Union, it can be applied in any organisation or government. Like many other integration frameworks such as the 3Cs hierarchy of integration, Metcalfe's scale is difficult to apply due to conceptual and methodological weaknesses resulting from the lack of criteria to differentiate between levels; therefore various coordination instruments should be thoroughly conceptualised and contextualised (Candel and Biesbroek 2016:214). As a basis to develop a complexity leadership competency framework for the G&A Cluster, the study draws on key aspects of the various coordination frameworks discussed in this section as well as the public administration reform principles alluded to in section 2.2 above to elaborate on the relevance of integrative and collective leadership in chapters three and four.

Unlike coordination, Keast *et al.* (2007:19) argue that collaboration is difficult to implement because it is characterised by, amongst others, the intensity of connections, resource and risk sharing in addition to formalisation of processes and procedures. Despite claims by some scholars that accountability in these types of arrangements is shared, the reason why collaborative partnerships between government, civil society and the private sector remain elusive is that there is rarely a true sharing of risks and rewards. Often, private sector partners receives a disproportionate share of rewards while the public sector partners assume responsibility for most of the risk and remain more accountable private sector partner. The observation made by various authors (Klijn and Koopenjan 2001, cited in Keast

et al. 2008:20; Keast and Brown 2002) is that when organisations struggle to adjust or transform their cultures and systems within a collaborative setting, they revert to coordination because it is comfortable and manageable. In spite of their differences, Malone and Crowston (1994) state that the 3Cs are concerned with managing dependencies; therefore, coordination is used in an inclusive manner. In addition, amongst the 3Cs, coordination is extensively used in literature, especially in the IGR, public administration and governance contexts. Likewise, coordination is used inclusively in this thesis, and if necessary to demonstrate emphasis, it is used in conjunction with cooperation, collaboration and/or integration.

The preceding discussion has demonstrated that coordination, as an important part of IGR, is theoretically sound, but in practice it is complex and challenging due to sensitivity to different contextual factors, inclusive of governance systems, policy instruments, structures, levels of intensity as well as organisational and human capacity. Although the success of coordination is dependent on multiple factors, the analysis has demonstrated the centrality of multiple forms of human capabilities in making coordination effective or ineffective. Since the required capabilities are vaguely defined, chapters three and four will explore these with a specific emphasis on leadership. Section 2.4 below elaborates on the role of IGR in public administration.

2.4 THE ROLE AND INFLUENCE OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

As explained in section 2.2, the relationship between public administration and politics is an accepted reality because of the trilateral relationship between its legal, managerial and political pillars (Zalmanovitch 2014:1). Since public administration is required to be responsive to contextual factors (Thornhill and Van Dijk 2010:97) and IGR deals with the nature of interactions within and between institutions and spheres of government in specific contexts, this section demonstrates the role of IGR in public administration through exploring its historical and constitutional underpinnings as well as its IGM dimension. In particular, the relationship between IGR and IGM has implications for public administration and management, including leadership practices.

2.4.1 The role of intergovernmental relations and intergovernmental management in P(p)ublic A(a)dministration

Although IGR cuts across the legislative and executive branches of government, Phillimore (2013:232) asserts that the legislature is a “junior player to the executive” in this field, given that most of the formal and informal IGR mechanisms belong to the executive branch of government. This, according to Poirier and Saunders (2010:6, cited in Phillimore 2013:234), makes the public service the “engine room” for IGR in all countries because through the actions, conduct and transactions of officials and politicians, it influences the character, effectiveness and efficiency of IGR mechanisms and the government systems which they support. The public service operationalises the objectives of IGR even when there are tensions and political deadlocks between institutions, levels of government and different stakeholders (Poirier and Saunders 2010:6, cited in Phillimore 2013:234).

The dominance of elected and appointed officials in IGR does not mean that IGR is depoliticised because elected officials have a political and administrative responsibility, and at the core of its activities by both elected and appointed officials is policy implementation (Trench 2006:235-236; Agranoff 2017:45, 51-52). The significance of politics in IGR aligns with the centrality of politics in the NPG context, as articulated by various authors (Stoker 2006:41; Osborne 2010:413; Spicer 2014:76; Agranoff 2017:229) in sections 2.2.4.2 to 2.2.4.3 above.

Scholars such as Agranoff and McGuire (1999:355-360), Radin (2007:365), Burke (2014:67) as well as Hamilton and Sternberg (2018:5) describe the horizontal and vertical inter-organisational, intersectoral and interjurisdictional activities, processes and systems that public service officials engage in as intergovernmental management (IGM). The concept of IGM, according to Burke (2014:67), was introduced by Wright’s 1988 publication: “Understanding Intergovernmental Relations”. Although Wright is credited for being the inventor of the concept, it is acknowledged by Wright and Krane (1998:1162-1164) that the practices, systems, policies and problems that constitute IGM can be firmly traced back to the top-down practices in the 1970s (i.e. the contractive phase of IGR as depicted in Table 2.5 above), and possibly the 1940s and 1950s. However, the concept remained largely unexplored until the 1990s when Deil Wright and authors such as Dale Krane and Robert Agranoff attempted to clarify and

locate IGM as the active realm of public administration professionals within the broader IGR field (Burke 2014:67).

In spite of emerging literature on IGM, in 1998 Wright and Krane (1998:1162) aptly noted that the concept and character of IGM is elusive because it is of “recent vintage, specialized usage, limited visibility, and uncertain maturity”. In spite of this, they (Wright and Krane 1998:1162) proceeded to define IGM as “the process of solving intergovernmental problems under conditions of high uncertainty and complexity through the creation and use of governmental and nongovernmental networks”. This demonstrates the practical relevance of IGM for the success of IGR within a political system and the underpinning public administration systems and structures such as the G&A Cluster and further demonstrates the importance of engaging with the legal systems within which IGM operates and the politics that underpin the law (Agranoff 2017:30).

Figure 2.3 below provides an overview of the origins of IGM in relation to federalism and IGR.

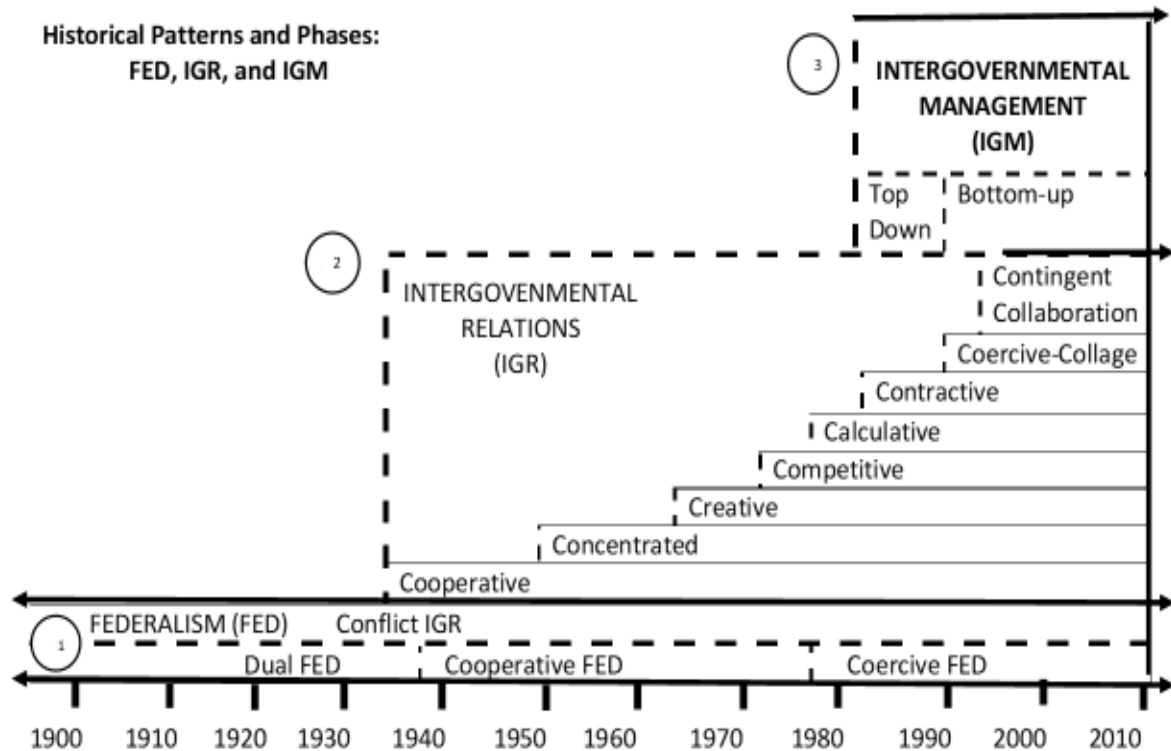


Figure 2.3: Historical phases and patterns: federalism (FED), IGR, and IGM
 Source: Wright and Sternberg (2007:412).

According to Radin (2007:367) and Agranoff (2017:159), the rapid development of IGM in the 1980s - as depicted in Figure 2.3 above, coincided with and was influenced by the rapid development of the NPM movement and its bottom-up orientation in the 1980s and 1990s. This is because some of the NPM key features, such as contracting, decentralisation and devolution of power had implications for IGM as would be the case with post-NPM coordination mechanisms. This partly explains why coordination and integration are central to the goal of IGR and equally imperative to the transformation of public administration in the 21st century (Metcalf 1994:271; Peters 2006:135; Johns *et al.* 2007:39) and further explains why IGM instruments are affected and influenced by changes in the political and public administration environment (Radin 2007:375).

According to Agranoff (1989:132), IGM is more focused on the goal achievement processes that are inherent in IGR, whereas IGR is more focused on the “connecting behaviours” of governments as they share responsibility for expanded functions. For Agranoff and McGuire (1999:386) IGM is about “seeking, adjusting, coping, partnering, brokering, contracting, exchanging, informing, and many other managerial actions across the boundaries of organizations”. Within the IGR framework and behind the political headlines of administration challenges (Agranoff 2017:2), IGM is a dynamic, interactive and collective process of organising, decision-making and programming. The ultimate purpose of IGM is to ensure collaborative advantage and superior public value for all parties who are directly or indirectly involved and affected by the intergovernmental interactions (Vangen and Huxham 2010:163-164; Agranoff 2011:74). IGR is thus not an occasional task and is more complex than coordination (Agranoff and McGuire 1999:367; McGuire 2006:678; Krane and Leach 2007:492). As such, the CAS approach, asserts Agranoff (2017:245), can enhance the understating of IGR and IGM operations.

Although elected officials are involved, the IGM space is the domain of non-elected heads of institutions and street level bureaucrats (Stenberg and Hamilton, 2018:7; Agranoff 2017:103). IGM is more concerned with the incremental adjustment and/or innovation of service delivery enhancement processes and activities within a given political, social and economic context (Wright and Sternberg 2007:446). This means that “IGM is embedded in political systems and structures” but it is not the primary

determinant of such systems and structures (Wright and Krane 1998:1162). Thus, IGM practices are consistent with the ideas, normative principles and frameworks that form an integral part of post-NPM reform initiatives that are discussed in section 2.2.4 above, especially the NPS, PVM and NPG. The study argues that there is a connection between the bottom-up orientation of IGM in the 1980s and the widespread adoption of NPM in many countries, coupled with the emergence of cooperative governance during the same period, as discussed in sections 2.2.3 and 2.2.4 above.

In particular, IGM underscores the importance of the skills required in managing processes and stakeholders involved in inter-organisational, intersectoral and IGR mechanisms (Radin 2007:365; Agranoff 2017:163-164; Stenberg and Hamilton, 2018:5). This point is encapsulated in a longstanding and striking assertion by Allen Pritchard Jr (1972:12, cited in Wright 1978:317) - who was the Executive Vice President of the National League of Cities - that an effective public administrator in IGR would be one "...who comprehends that IGR is not a seminar topic, an academic study, or a once-a-month dinner meeting. He will understand that IGR are in fact intergovernmental 'negotiations' in which the parties are negotiating in dead earnest for power, money and problem solving responsibility. He will be fully aware that in virtually every major public policy issue the elements of power, money and responsibility are on the bargaining table". This quotation illustrates that lack of appropriate skills, and the reduction of IGR to meeting attendance and basic information exchanges can result in challenges experienced with the South African government cluster system, as alluded to in chapter one, section 1.3 of the study.

IGM, which, according to Krane and Leach (2007:492-493), is an extension of traditional administration and an integral part of administrative federalism, does not follow specific patterns of coordination and relationships, but it "is marked by diversity, trial and error, and experimentation on the one hand, and it is problem-oriented on the other" in response to emerging challenges. This places extreme pressure on officials to continuously find ways to maximise the outcome and impact of the time, financial resources and other inputs, as well as the processes associated with formal and informal IGR and IGM mechanisms. To illustrate the labour intensiveness of IGR and IGM, Agranoff and McGuire (1999) conducted a study on economic policy development and implementation from 237 cities that were selected from five USA

mid-western states. The study (Agranoff and McGuire 1999:365) revealed that IGM can take up to 20% of most administrative managers' time, of which 64% can take the form of vertical engagements, information sharing, technical support, policy or implementation coordination and structured collaboration, whereas the remaining 36% would be focused on the horizontal dimension of IGR. The time spent on coordination would increase substantially for the specialist "boundary spanners" who spend most of their time in intergovernmental, inter-organisational and intersectoral work (McGuire and Agranoff 2011:279; Agranoff 2017:233). As is the case with IGR, the vertical dimension of IGM incorporates the "top-down and bottom-up approaches to policy" development and programme implementation (Agranoff and McGuire 1999:353).

Although there is recognition that in practice IGM has intensified over the years, its theoretical basis as a complex element of public administration remains under developed; hence, research in the area of IGR has not adequately demonstrated how public administrators influence and navigate the parallel coexistence of hierarchical and collaborative management structures in different political contexts (Agranoff 2011:572; Agranoff 2017:239). This is despite the recognition of the importance of collaborative management techniques in public value creation and networked governance by various scholars (Stoker 2006:54; Morse 2012:160; Bryson *et al.* 2014:452; Amsler 2016:704) as alluded to in section 2.2.4.2 above. The reason for this is that although media and academic publications are replete with IGM related stories concerning the conduct of appointed and elected officials, as well as the (in)effectiveness and responsiveness or lack thereof of government in dealing with cross-cutting issues, there is lack of recognition and understanding of the underlying IGM features (Agranoff 2017:30,118).

Since IGM activities are conducted in a complex and rapidly changing political, economic, social and technological environment, appointed public administrators are expected to have the necessary technical and relational competencies to fulfil roles assigned by political heads and administrative or functional superiors, while still being responsive to the conflicting needs of citizens and various interest groups (Perry 1989:5-7). The capacity to be responsive to diverse and conflicting needs would be improved only if officials and government institutions perform reactive, proactive and discretionary functions in response to the demands of the environment and work as a

collective to overcome the inadequacies of individual competencies and organisational specialisation (Perry 1989:8). Perry's (1989) emphasis on collective effort resonates with the fundamental features of the NPG framework that are discussed in section 2.2.4 above, namely, collaboration, networks and partnerships (Lovan *et al.* 2004; Stoker 2006; Löffler 2009; Amsler 2016; Christensen and Laegreid 2010b). In addition, as stated in chapter one and elaborated further in chapters three and four of this thesis, collective action has implications for leadership theory and practice.

2.4.2 The causes of ineffective coordination in public administration

As shown in sections 2.3.3 and 2.3.4, there is no shortage of mechanisms to facilitate integration and coordination. These include initiatives such as one-stop shops that were implemented as part of JUG and WOG, networks and alliances of public service officials and collaborative partnerships as well as horizontal and vertical structures and procedures (Keast and Brown 2002:8,27; Candel and Biesbroek 2016:212; Peters 2018:8). The success or failure of coordination according to Peters (2018:9-10), is dependent on context, policy area and other factors such as institutional capacity in terms of human capabilities and systems to coordinate what needs to be coordinated. There are therefore many reasons why integration and coordination mechanisms have not been effective in some instances, despite the time and resources invested in the creation of various coordination mechanisms.

One of the reasons is that although coordination is important in public administration, so is specialisation (Wegrich and Štimac 2014:44; Peters 2018:8). Specialisation in terms of individual, functional and organisational competencies precedes coordination, guarantees superior technical expertise and legitimises organisational structure and functional silos (Christensen and Laegreid 2008:101). The problem is not specialisation *per se*, but failure to coordinate and integrate specialist functions and expertise into a collaborative advantage (Vangen and Huxham 2010:163) and public value (Agranoff 2011:74; Agranoff 2017:234) due to turf wars and bureaucratic competition (Wegrich and Štimac 2014:44). Equally, specialisation can also result in policy “under- or overreaction” (Candel and Biesbroek 2016:212) plus “underlap” or “overlap” coordination problems (Wegrich and Štimac 2014:45).

“Underlap” coordination challenges arise when specialist institutions refuse to deal with an emergent pressing issue that does not neatly fall within the mandate of any institution, whereas “overlap” challenges result from the conflicting objectives of multiple organisations in dealing with policy issues that are related to their mandates (Wegrich and Štimac 2014:47). Though both “underlap” and “overlap” coordination challenges can be addressed through vertical (i.e. hierarchical power) or horizontal (i.e. network) interventions, the success of the interventions will be determined by the prevailing “coordination culture” and capabilities of the parties involved (Christensen and Laegreid 2007:1062; Wegrich and Štimac 2014:60).

The observation made by other scholars (Wegrich and Štimac 2014:54; Peters 2018:5) is that the existing performance management and financial accountability systems, which were introduced as part of NPM, continue to put emphasis on individual goals, performance and rewards at the expense of collective goals and performance. Other inhibitors of effective coordination include turf protection, information hoarding, tenure of appointed officials, ideological differences and lack of trust, especially in multi-party governance systems, plus reliance on traditional hierarchical systems in dealing with complex cross-cutting issues that require horizontal or hybrid coordination approaches (Johns *et al.* 2007:39; Candel and Biesbroek 2016:212; Peters 2018:5). These observations indicate that coordination is not linear and it is not limited to tangible things such as outputs and structures.

Having discussed the relationship between IGR and P(p)ublic A(a)dmistration reform in the preceding sections, section 2.5 below elaborates upon South Africa’s IGR system, as the basis for contextualising the G&A Cluster within the broader governance and public administration system of the country.

2.5 SOUTH AFRICA’S INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS SYSTEM

This section outlines the evolution of South Africa’s IGR system, taking into consideration the country’s political history as well as its constitutional and legislative foundations (Thornhill 2002:10; Moynihan 2014:2014:58-59; Newbold 2014:14-160). The operationalisation of IGR in public administration and the South African Public Service in particular is discussed in relation to the effectiveness of the various institutional structures and other non-institutional mechanisms.

2.5.1 The influence of history on South Africa's intergovernmental relations system

The current features of South Africa's IGR system are influenced by the country's complex history of colonialism and discrimination, as well as the various forms of state reorganisation in different periods. Tapscott (2000:121) and Thornhill (2012:29) argue that the current IGR system can be traced back to the *Union of South Africa Act, Constitution, 1909* (2 December, 1909 [South Africa 1909]), which introduced the provincial sphere of government in the form of four provinces, in addition to the central and local government spheres. The *Union of South Africa Act, Constitution, 1909* (2 December, 1909) sought to unite the Cape and Natal British colonies with the Transvaal and Orange Free State Boer republics into one sovereign state, thus resulting in the adoption in 1910 of the notion of a unitary state with federal features. Supporting the latter assertion is the fact that though the four provinces operated in accordance with the laws of the Union, they had powers to pass legislation on matters related to provincial affairs such as education, health, agriculture and municipal institutions, subject to the conditions set by Parliament where applicable (South Africa 1909: section 85-88; Mathebula 2004:74-75).

A shift in the intergovernmental political system was further strengthened when the Union of South Africa was declared a Republic through adoption of the 1961 *Republic of South Africa Constitution Act* (Act 32 of 1961 [South Africa 1961]). According to Mathebula (2004:10), the *Constitution Act* (Act 32 of 1961) represented a radical departure from traditional colonial government by introducing constitutional democracy elements such as respect for the rule of law, regular elections, and the legal approach to dispute resolution and arbitration. During this period, the IGR system was complicated further by the declaration of some of the racially and tribally segregated homelands into self-governing territories in the 1970s and the creation of the Tricameral Parliament in 1983, which consisted of the Houses of Assembly for Whites, Delegates for Indians and Representatives for Coloureds (Tapscott 2000:120-121; Mathebula 2004:93-97).

The observation by Tapscott (2000:120-121) is that after the abolishment of provincial legislatures in 1986, IGR between the central and provincial governments became "a technocratic issue, concerned with the coordination of activities and integration of

concurrent responsibilities such as health, education, roads, etc”. In addition, the state of IGR between local and central government continued to be characterised by regular conflicts because some of the local council members opposed the central government’s policies, whereas in the self-governing territories, IGR remained poorly defined due to the political and administrative dominance of the central government. Nevertheless, there is consensus (Tapscott 2001:119; Reddy 2001:23,29; Mathebula 2004:220; NPC 2012:431) that in response to the country’s complex historical system, South Africa’s IGR system has been evolving from the 1990s multi-party negotiations through to the adoption of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa*, (1996), (hereafter referred to as the *Constitution*), which is discussed in the next section.

2.5.2 Constitutional imperatives for intergovernmental relations and cooperative government

As stated earlier, IGR mechanisms can be legislated or established through executive decisions, cooperative agreements and other formal or informal arrangements (Thornhill 2002; Malan 2005; Phillimore 2013; Behnke and Mueller 2017). Consequently, section 1 of the *Constitution*, (1996), establishes the Republic of South Africa as a “unitary, sovereign, democratic state” while section 40 sets the basis for the current IGR system through the division of government into “distinctive, interdependent and interrelated” national, provincial and local spheres (South Africa 1996). The distinctiveness accords each of the three spheres equal status (Reddy 2001:26), while section 41 guarantees each sphere some level of autonomy within a framework of cooperative government and IGR because of the inherent interrelations and interdependence of the spheres upon each other. The study argues that the unitary and federal features of the South African state (Reddy 2001:25; Thornhill 2012:29) make Wright’s (1988) overlapping authority model, as explained in section 2.3.1 of this chapter, suitable for application to the South African governance system.

In particular, section 41(1) of the *Constitution*, (1996) outlines in detail the key principles of conduct for all spheres and organs of state, which include the preservation of national unity and “loyalty to the Constitution, Republic and its people”; execution of responsibilities and powers without encroaching on each other’s terrains and cooperating in good faith. Additionally, section 195 of the *Constitution*, (1996), outlines the values and principles that should govern public administration across all

spheres of government. Newbold (2014:20-21) states that democratic constitutionalism informs the practical development of public administration and this makes the conservation of democratic constitutional values and principles a prerequisite for public administration leadership in the governance context. In turn, this makes “constitutional competence” essential to understanding the connection between the constitution and public administration theory and practice, as well as boundary management and the preservation of democratic processes, values and rights (Newbold 2014:14-16).

Although chapter 3 of the *Constitution*, (1996) outlines the principles of co-operative government and IGR that are applicable to all spheres of government and institutions within each sphere, Malan (2008; 2012) states that there is a conceptual difference between the two. Co-operative government is a fundamental philosophy that guides government action and “includes the deconcentration of power to other spheres of government and encompasses the structures of government as well as the organisation and exercising of political power” (Malan 2008:78). According to the Audit Report (1999:12 in Malan 2014:56), IGR “is one of the means through which the values of co-operative government may be given both institutional and statutory expression”. In short, IGR is a constitutional instrument and a means for realising the fundamental human rights that are enshrined in the Bill of Rights and the country’s developmental objectives.

2.5.3 Intergovernmental relations structures in South Africa since 1994

As early as 1994, several vertical and horizontal IGR structures were constituted through executive decisions to promote structured intergovernmental support, integration, coordination and information sharing (Tau 2015:807). As observed by Malan (2012:116), the South African government’s IGR system advanced from a predominately informal system to a formal statutory system and some of the structures were formalised through the *Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act, 2005* (Act 13 of 2005), in line with section 41(2) of the *Constitution*, 1996. The objective of the *IGR Framework Act, 2005* (Act 13 of 2005) as stated in section 4, is to “facilitate co-ordination in the implementation of policy and legislation”, which is consistent with the broader goal of IGR as outlined in section 2.3.1 of this chapter.

The developments are illustrated by the fact that as at 2001, there were approximately 80 IGR structures, some of which were informal/non-statutory such as the Committees of Minister and Members of the Executive Council (MINMECs), while others were statutory, for example, the Budget Council (Reddy 2001:29; Thornhill *et al.*, 2002:1). The IGR mechanisms established between 1994 and 1998 to coordinate and integrate specific functions created additional levels of complexity. Consequently, some of the mechanisms had to be reviewed and super-coordinating mechanisms such as clusters were put in place. An overview of the various IGR structures is outlined below.

The Inter-Governmental Forum (IGF) was established in 1994 to deal with the implementation of budget priorities at national and provincial spheres; the creation of a climate for economic development; provincial boundary issues; and strategic issues such as emergency and disaster management (Tapscott 2000:124). Its membership included the President, the Deputy President, 9 Provincial Premiers, the then Minister of Provincial Affairs and Constitutional Development, the Minister of Finance, the Minister for Public Service and Administration and the Director-General in the President's Office (Tapscott, 2000:124). According to the IGR Audit Report (1999:16, cited in Mathebula 2004:161), other non-permanent members of the IGF included the chairpersons of the National Council of Provinces (NCOP) and Portfolio Committee on Constitutional Affairs, the representative of the Independent Electoral Commission and chairpersons of the Public Service Commission plus the Finance and Fiscal Commission.

Due to weaknesses such as unclear focus, excessive costs resulting from its size and lack of links with MINMECs, the IGF was replaced with the President's Coordinating Committee (PCC), which was established in 1999 (Sizane 2000, cited in Reddy 2001:30-31; DPSA 2003:31-32, 35; Levin 2009:952). The PCC's functions were similar to those of the IGF, and its additional functions included strengthening local government through supervision, support and intervention, in line with section 155(7) of the *Constitution*, 1996. The size of the PCC was reduced when compared to the IGF in the sense that its membership comprised of the original core members (with the Minister of Provincial Affairs and Constitutional Development being replaced by the newly created portfolio for the Minister of Provincial and Local Government), as well as a representative of the South African Local Government Association (SALGA).

Additional representatives from structures such as the NCOP and constitutional bodies were excluded. But the President, as chairperson of the PCC, could invite anyone who was not a permanent member of the structure. SALGA, which is an association (Thornhill, 2002:48), was established through the *Organised Local Government Act, 1997* (Act 52 of 1997 [South Africa 1997]). Its role is, amongst others, to represent local government's interests in national and provincial structures such as MINMECs, the Budget Forum and the NCOP (Tapscott 2000:125; Reddy 2001:33; Layman 2003:13) by coordinating the deployment of representatives to various national and provincial IGR structures. SALGA's participation in the PCC was an improvement, when compared with the non-representation of local government in the IGF.

The FOSAD, which is a horizontal coordination structure, was established in 1998 to promote horizontal and vertical coordination at the national and provincial spheres of government. The FOSAD was also mandated to facilitate coordination and information sharing at the top administrative level; foster dynamic interactions and broker sound relations amongst DGs and national Cabinet members; and direct the transformation of the public service (Thornhill *et al.* 2002:21; Malan 2005:236; Levin 2009:951). According to Tapscott (2000:124), at the technical level, the FOSAD performed better and was more recognised than the IGF.

In addition, twelve MINMECs were also constituted in 1998 as informal mechanisms to horizontally coordinate sectoral policy implementation for each area of concurrent competence between national and provincial government (Tapscott 2000:124; Reddy 2001:32). Though some operated well, the narrow sectoral focus of the MINMECs resulted in lack of integration in areas where intersectoral coordination would have enhanced the effectiveness of government (Tapscott 2000:124; Reddy 2001:32). The general weakness of most MINMECs relates to their perceived dominance by national Ministers, poor attendance and non-binding decisions (Reddy 2001:32). Apart from the local government MINMEC, local government was not represented in most MINMECs. In instances where it was represented, this was done through SALGA. Reddy (2001:34) and Layman (2003:81) note that lack of capacity, poor coordination of IGR at the provincial sphere and non-permanent representatives in the NCOP and many MINMECs weakened SALGA's effectiveness in IGR structures.

In response to concerns raised by the Presidential Review Commission (PRC) in 1998 regarding the lack of coherent coordination at the level of national Cabinet and the recommendation to cluster service delivery into manageable portfolios (PRC 1998:33), President Mbeki established six Cabinet Clusters (or Committees) in 1999. The mandate of the Cabinet Clusters is to facilitate cross-sectoral deliberations and integration in respect of policy development, governance and programme implementation within the broader framework of cooperative government and IGR (DPSA 2003:33-35; Mathebula 2004:63, 177; Malan 2005:234). Koma and Tshiyoyo (2015:36) define clustering as the “grouping together of departments with similar, related or shared objectives, or departments that are physically proximate to each other, to ensure a closer cooperation and coordination with the purpose of achieving an integrated system of governance”. Departments within a cluster are expected to cooperate and collaborate with each other through sharing information, technical expertise and other resources to maximise efficiency and effectiveness for the benefit of citizens. The PRC (1998:35) recommended the grouping of departments and ministries into clusters with caution due to the need to improve coordination without necessarily undermining the importance of specialisation. Accordingly, Khalo (2008:223) maintains that the decision on how to cluster government services for the convenience of citizens is not easy because different services and departments that render such services would result in different clustering arrangements.

Clustering is not necessarily unique to the South African Public Service as it has been used in various areas, especially the economic sector in South Africa and other countries (Waits 2000). Clustering in economic sectors takes different forms, from industry-specific clusters within states to cluster collaborations between states and regional economic blocks (Waits 2000:37). In the economic field, Michael Porter (2000:16, cited in MacGregor and Madsen 2018:2) defines clusters as “groups of geographically proximate, interconnected firms and associated institutions, operating in a field” and “linked via commonalities and complementarities”. This definition is not radically different from the one provided by Koma and Tshiyoyo (2015), however, in the public administration context, the cluster or Cabinet Cluster is sometimes used interchangeably with concepts such as Cabinet Networks (McGuire and Agranoff, 2011:265), Cabinet Committees (Mathebula 2004:177; Peters 2006:129; Levin 2009:951; Phillimore 2013:231) and Intergovernmental Councils (Behnke and Mueller

2007:507). In spite of the different labels, the thesis maintains that in terms of the IGR dimensions discussed in section 2.3.3 above, Cabinet Clusters in the South African Public Service are essentially formal, horizontal and multilateral network-type coordination mechanisms that operate at the national sphere of government.

Developments from informal and formal executive decisions resulted in structures such as the PCC, the Premier's Intergovernmental forum, MINMECs and their provincial equivalents being formalised through the *IGR Framework Act, 2005* (Act 13 of 2005 [South Africa 2005]). Sections 9 and 10 of the *IGR Framework Act, 2005* (Act 13 of 2005) provide for the establishment of IGR forums by relevant Cabinet members to address issues of national interest, coordination and alignment between national and provincial spheres of government, and section 21 provides for the establishment of provincial intergovernmental forums to deal with IGR related matters between provincial and local governments (*IGR Framework Act, 2005* [Act 13 of 2005]; Du Plessis 2008). Although the *IGR Framework Act, 2005* (Act 13 of 2005) does not spell this out clearly, it can be inferred that section 9 is referring to the MINMECs. In addition, section 30 of the *IGR Framework Act, 2005* (Act 13 of 2005) makes provision for the establishment of intergovernmental technical support structures at national and provincial levels; section 15 provides for joint meetings of two or more national intergovernmental forums to deal with intersectoral issues; while section 22 provides for two or more interprovincial forums to deal with interprovincial matters. Cabinet and FOSAD clusters were not formalised through the *IGR Framework Act, 2005* (Act 13 of 2005), despite their recognition as legitimate coordination mechanisms that are established through executive decisions (DPME 2014:6-7).

The observation made by several authors (Tapscott 2000:124; Reddy 2001:32) is that in the South African Public Service, the composition of Cabinet Clusters does not include provincial representation, but Cabinet members who are responsible for convening MINMECs in terms of section 9 of the *IGR Framework Act, 2005* (Act 13 of 2005) are expected to create a link between national and provincial priorities in their specific areas of responsibility. The challenge is that although Cabinet Clusters could set priorities, implementation would be limited by lack of funding for cross-cutting issues due to the nature of the budgeting system as well as lack of alignment between national cluster priorities and provincial priorities (Malan 2005:235). According to

Sokhela (2014:107), the key challenge is that there is no Accounting Officer in a cluster, in line with the requirements of the *Public Finance Management Act*, 1999 (Act 1 of 1999 [South Africa 1999]), and there is no incentive for heads of department to commit financial resources to integrated programmes, as this might create accountability challenges later. This challenge is similar to Wegrich and Štimac's (2014:54) observation that some of the financial management and accountability mechanisms introduced as part of NPM do not promote collective performance.

Other stakeholders also highlighted challenges with the South African Public Service cluster system. According to Kraak (2011:254), in 2008 the then Deputy Minister of Public Works, Mr Jeremy Cronin, was cited in the media stating that the cluster system was not functionally effective because cluster plans comprise of an aggregation of individual departmental plans and there is no strategic intervention to resolve deadlocks between ministers. The 2014 "Impact and Implementation Evaluation of Government Coordination Systems" (DPME 2014), which is discussed in section 1.3 of chapter one of this thesis, alluded to the cluster system's continued coordination challenges. However, the nature of the challenges progressed from basic administrative issues of lack of attendance of cluster meetings that were highlighted in the 2008 evaluation (The Presidency 2008). The challenges identified in the 2014 review report include behaviour as well as skills to make the cluster system effective, and unevenness or absence of appropriate leadership competencies (DPME 2014:61).

In addition, the South African National Development Plan (NDP) highlights coordination challenges across all government spheres and clusters, as well as between government and other non-governmental sectors (NPC 2012). Specifically, chapter 13 of the NDP, which deals with building a capable and developmental state, found coordination problems to be more severe "between national departments with overlapping or interdependent responsibilities", especially amongst the G&A Cluster departments (NPC 2012:429-430). This is contrary to the perceived effectiveness of the cluster system in enhancing delivery on cross-cutting programmes (Levin 2009) after its inception.

In spite of their limitations, Mathebula (2004:210,223) contends that Cabinet Clusters have a critical role in the IGR system, given their direct link and immediate location

below the PCC and national Cabinet, and a Minister responsible for IGR from within The Presidency should politically lead them. (The study notes that there has never been a Minister for IGR but the IGR function, as highlighted in the composition of the IGF and PCC in section 2.4.3, formed part of the portfolio for the Minister of Provincial Affairs and Constitutional Development. It was later transferred to the newly created portfolio for the Minister of Provincial and Local Government, which was later changed to the Minister of Cooperative Governance.) In recognition of the dynamic nature of Cabinet Clusters, Mathebula (2004:210) proposes that “the definition and redefinition of clusters should be a dynamic and changing process, guided by national priorities of the historical moment”.

2.6 THE LIMITATIONS OF COORDINATION AND PRE-REQUISITES FOR EFFECTIVE INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS

IGR emerged from and continues to be dominated by informal processes (Wright 1974; Reddy 2001; Phillimore 2013; Agranoff and Radin 2014; Behnke and Mueller 2017; Peters 2018). In response to increasing environmental complexity, as well as the size and structures of governments around the world, IGR has evolved to incorporate constitutional and legislative requirements, formal procedures and agreements plus institutional mechanisms (Watts 2006:205; Phillimore 2013:233). As such, in various countries, IGR institutional mechanisms include, amongst others, constitutional and legislative structures and sub-structures such as portfolio committees, central coordination agencies instituted through executive decisions as well as support committees involving officials (Thornhill *et al.* 2002:10; Phillimore 2013:231-234; Behnke and Mueller 2017; 512). The importance of these formal IGR mechanisms cannot be underestimated, even though the measures are insufficient (Tapscott 2000:127; Thornhill 2002:50; Johns *et al.* 2007:39; Du Plessis 2008:106; Phillimore 2013:236) because IGR is not an end or a once-off event. In the South African context, Reddy (2001:36) has observed that even prior to their formalisation through legislation; many IGR structures had become bureaucratised, costly and inefficient due to lack of clear mandates as well as poor attendance and communication.

As a key feature of IGR, coordination has the potential to create accountability challenges (Williams 2013:18), especially when multiple departments fund major cross-cutting programmes that fail and can also lead to inefficiencies and ineffectiveness if all resources are invested into one or two major initiatives that fail to achieve the desired results. Other reasons for poor coordination and cooperation, according to Du Plessis (2008:106), include, amongst others, mandate overlaps and duplications, ineffective communication channels and decision-making, as well as a lack of will to cooperate and implement the decisions and recommendations of the various IGR structures. This is the reason why Malan (2005:238) supports the view that “too much or poor coordination undermines performance and risks confusing mandates, responsibility and accountability”. Therefore, sometimes uncoordinated performance might result in efficiency but not effectiveness and coordinated performance might result in effectiveness but not efficiency.

Coordination can also undermine the benefits of organisational specialisation and may be perceived as a threat to privacy and civil liberties, especially when data systems across multiple institutions are integrated and shared with different parties (Wegrich and Štimac 2014:60; Peters 2018:8). As noted by Peters (2006:134), “there may be some circumstances in which competing and incoherent approaches are functional, rather than dysfunctional, for both government and the governed”, such as funding for research to create new vaccines and emergency management situations as noted by Clarke and Campbell (2012). So coordination cannot be preferred over specialisation because “there is a stimulus-response pattern between specialisation and coordination” in the sense that vertical or horizontal specialisation may lead to improved performance in some instances, but it can also intensify the need for vertical and/or horizontal coordination (Christensen and Laegreid 2012:580).

While vertical specialisation tends to be informed by hierarchical organisational structures in a narrowly defined policy area that leads to vertical coordination, horizontal specialisation and its associated coordination mechanisms can be done according to Gulick’s (1937, cited in Christensen and Laegreid 2012:581-582) four proto-types, namely: “purpose, process, clientele and geography”. Christensen and Laegreid (2012:581-582) acknowledge that specialisation according to purpose is more prevalent in public organisations. Also dynamic interactions between

specialisation and coordination result in the mutual or parallel coexistence of different types of specialisation and coordination (Christensen and Laegreid 2012:582), and thus create hybrid organisational models with complex challenges that practitioners and researchers struggle to comprehend and resolve. This observation illustrates that though coordination is central to the purpose of IGR and is essential, it is not always a solution to complexity because it has “inherent complications” that require careful design, management and governance (Keast and Brown 2002:12).

According to Malone and Crowston (1994:87, 90), since coordination is concerned with “managing dependencies between activities”, it is then logical that “if there is no interdependence, there is nothing to coordinate”. Therefore, the decision to commit to and invest in any formal or informal IGR mechanism in the form of time, human and financial resources should be thoroughly considered to avoid engaging in IGR for compliance purposes or for the wrong reasons. Since IGR processes and mechanisms are not static, their effectiveness and efficiency should be monitored and adjusted in response to environmental changes to avoid obsolescence and inappropriateness, or terminated once the objectives for coordination are achieved (Lasker *et al.* 2001:180; Keast *et al.* 2007:26; Mandell and Keast 2008:729).

In a study conducted in the health sector, Lasker *et al.* (2001:180,191) observed that collaborative partnerships have the potential to benefit partners and the broader community through: facilitating access to financial resources and unique technical expertise; developing and enhancing new competencies; and strengthening capacity to address complex challenges in addition to meeting organisational goals and community needs. The study revealed that the downside of collaborative partnerships is that they are “time consuming, resource intensive and very difficult” to operationalise hence they can generate frustrations if not properly governed (Lasker *et al.* 2001:180). Therefore, “balance rather than extremisms” (Goodsell 1989:583) is the key in striking “the right balance between coordination, performance and accountability” (Malan 2005:238) through clarifying the goals of coordination where it is required and ensuring the availability of capacity and processes to implement coordination mechanisms. According to Mandell and Keast (2008:729), success in building strong relations in organisational networks should be recognised as a legitimate achievement in conjunction with the completed outputs and concrete outcomes of the network. As

such, an evaluation of the effectiveness of networks and collaborations should also focus on the quality of the relationships forged including their management and sustenance (Mandell and Keast 2008:729; Popp *et al.* 2013:69).

Since IGR is a deliberate and continuous process of interaction, information and resource sharing and influence on policy direction (Wright 1978:2; Agranoff and McGuire 2003:189; Malan 2014:56), its effectiveness is dependent on the flexibility of the IGR framework adopted in each country (Tapscott 2001:127; Lasker *et al.* 2001:194) and the existence of informal relations. In particular, though informal IGR mechanisms are more organic, less structured and difficult to discern, they have the power to enhance or destroy governance systems and formal IGR mechanisms (Johns *et al.* 2007:34; Phillimore 2013:231). The dynamic relationship between formal and informal mechanisms makes IGR inherently complex (Wright 1974:16) and more dependent on “soft skills, values and competencies” such as individual and institutional capacity to engage, leadership, trust, respect, commitment, tolerance for diversity, willingness to cooperate, as well as recognition of the legitimate interests and position of the other parties (Lasker *et al.* 2001:193-194; Christensen and Laegreid 2008:114; Johns *et al.* 2007:37; Malan 2012:120; NPC 2012:431; Phillimore 2013:237).

According to Watts (1999:21, cited in Reddy (2001:23), the basic requirements for effective IGR can be grouped into “(1) a culture of cooperation, mutual respect and trust and (2) capacity development - relative to human/financial and technological resources”. Therefore, it is crucial to invest in IGR capacity in order to achieve improved outcomes for each level of government and the entire system (Phillimore 2013:237). These two aspects, according to Watts (1999, cited in Du Plessis 2008:106), are more important than the formal mechanisms provided by a constitution or legislation. In particular, the management and leadership of inter-organisational, intersectoral and intergovernmental networks and collaborations require different capacities to those required to successfully manage or operate in a single organisation (Agranoff and McGuire 2003:175; Mandell and Keast 2008:729; Kraak 2011:60; Müller-Seitz 2012:430; Agranoff 2017:163). As observed by Agranoff and McGuire (2003:175), the IGR multi-dimensional connections, activities and policy tools suggest that the “capacities needed to succeed at managing in collaborative settings are

different from those required from the capacities needed to succeed at managing a single organisation”.

Insights from practitioners and available research suggest that boundary spanning competencies have an individual and organisational dimension and they are derived from intra- and inter-organisational experience, cognitive ability and transdisciplinary knowledge (Williams 2002:119-122; Williams 2013:25-26). The available literature on IGR identifies multiple competencies required to make coordination structures effective. These include “dialogic interaction with private and civil society actors so as to acquire expert ‘situated knowledge’ of conditions occurring ‘on the ground’” (Kraak 2011:360); group cohesion and collective influence without power; and trust in “boundary spanners” who can mobilise diverse teams across silos (Agranoff and McGuire 2003:189). The ability to maintain balance between the professional, administrative and political logics is also an essential competency (Lasker *et al.* 2001:189,194; Ile 2007:v; Christensen and Laegreid 2012:592).

These observations, and proposed competencies, support Anderson’s assertion regarding the importance of the human factor in the success or failure of IGR (Wright 1974:2; Agranoff 1999:6; Malan 2008:78). The human factor justifies the need for more research to understand and prepare public administrators for IGR collaborative processes and activities (O’Toole and Meier 2004:1). Furthermore, the intricate relationship between the pre-requisites for and limitations of coordination demonstrate the relevance of CLT in understanding, operationalising and enhancing the adaptive capacity of post-NPM coordination and integration mechanisms (Hazy and Uhl-Bien 2015; Rhodes and MacKechnie 2003; Christensen and Laegreid 2010b) such as the G&A Cluster, as articulated in section 1.5 of this thesis.

2.7 CONCLUSION

As part of creating a conceptual framework for the thesis, the chapter provided a broad overview of the evolving nature and scope, as well as the incremental effects of various paradigms, reforms and frameworks on the complexity of P(p)ublic A(a)dministration in the 21st century. The thesis was also contextualised through a discussion of the historical and constitutional perspective on IGR and governance systems, as well as the legislative and policy frameworks that underpin the South African government’s

cluster system and other coordination mechanisms. The connections between P(p)ublic A(a)dministration and management reforms as well as IGR developments over the years were demonstrated, with specific reference to the key concepts of coordination, integration, collaboration, networks and governance.

Drawing on insights from scholars such as Williams (2002), Rhodes (1996), Morgan *et al.* (2014) and Agranoff (2017), the need for more research on individual and collective leadership competencies in the 21st century governance era was also highlighted throughout the analysis. As such, chapter three to six will elaborate upon the implications of P(p)ublic A(a)dministration governance on leadership theory and practice as well as collective leadership competence in a CAS such as the G&A Cluster. In particular, chapter three below will provide a detailed analysis of the evolution of leadership theory and practice in general and within the context of P(p)ublic A(a)dministration in an attempt to illustrate the areas of convergence or divergence between contextual developments and theory development and practice.

CHAPTER THREE: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR LEADERSHIP THEORY AND PRACTICE

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Since chapter two has conceptualised and contextualised the study within P(p)ublic A(a)dmistration, the central focus of this chapter is to create a conceptual framework that will inform the development of a complexity leadership competency framework that should underpin a CAS such as the G&A Cluster in the South African Public Service. To develop the conceptual base, selected persistent debates that have shaped leadership theory over the years are highlighted and a detailed analysis of the evolution of leadership theory and practice in general and within the context of P(p)ublic A(a)dmistration is conducted, in order to illustrate the areas of convergence or divergence between theory development and practice.

A broad organising framework that groups leadership theories into three categories is explained and then utilised to succinctly analyse the emergence, endurance and impact of selected leadership theories, from the great man and trait theory to integrative theories and plural forms of leadership. The analysis of collective and integrative theories in this chapter expands on the call for a conceptual and practice-based shift from placing emphasis on leadership as an individual phenomenon to collective leadership that is alluded to in chapter one. The analysis also puts emphasis on the importance of individual leadership of the “self” and “others”, as well as other foundational competencies, along a technical-management-leadership continuum, as pre-requisites for collective leadership in inter-organisational arrangements.

Whilst the analysis proceeds from the mainstream leadership perspective, the advancement in administrative literature is also addressed as a basis to demonstrate the uniqueness of the public administration context as elaborated upon in chapter two, and the potential contribution of administrative leadership literature to mainstream leadership literature. The issues alluded to in relation to various theories are thus consolidated as part of analysing the background, key features, strengths and weaknesses of CLT within the mainstream and public administration environment.

3.2 ADVANCEMENTS IN CONCEPTIONS OF LEADERSHIP

The study of leadership is a multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary field whose evolution over the years has benefitted from multiple disciplines such as political science, management, psychology, sociology, education, law, philosophy, history and many others (Rost 1991:64-65; Sorenson *et al.* 2011:33-36; Rhodes 2014:101; Riggio 2019:2), with the latest addition being complexity science (Blandin 2007:138; Sorenson *et al.* 2011:36; Rosenhead *et al.* 2019:19-20). Clearly, the leadership literature is vast, and not all is academic or practical, but reading through the different texts is essential to develop a sophisticated and mature understanding of ideas, theories and practices that constitute the leadership field (Fairholm 2006:342; Storey *et al.* 2017:597; Banks *et al.* 2018:236). To illustrate its vastness, DuBrin (2016:3) notes that a google search on organisational leadership reveals more than 123 million entries of articles and books, while Pfeffer's (2015:3) search on leadership reports 2,6 million entries on google scholar and 148 million links on google. According to Storey *et al.* (2017:196-197), there are more than 10 000 notions of leadership due to the adjectives and prefixes appended to the concept, each with its own philosophy, model, success stories, lessons, and 'to do' and 'not to do' lists'. In addition, there are over 1500 definitions of leadership (Kellerman 2012:13) that are influenced by multiple factors, including the underlying disciplines, schools of thought, theories as well as historical and generational contextual factors (Northouse 2016:5; University of Cambridge 2017:5).

Construct proliferation and improvements in conceptions of leadership from the heroic acts of individuals to processes of mobilising by many for the common good (Hartley and Benington 2011:5) have also had an influence on the variety of leadership definitions developed and adopted by various authors. Multiple authors (Rost 1991:49-65; Bass and Bass 2008:52; Yukl 2013:2-3; DuBrin 2016:3) attest that leadership definitions have progressed from an initial emphasis on control, power, traits, skills and behaviours of individual leaders to relational and shared processes, systems and competencies. According Bass and Bass (2008:52), in the absence of a standard definition, narrow and broad definitions of leadership should be acceptable, as long as it is clear which definition is used in a particular context. This affirms Stogdill's (1974:259, cited in Bolden 2004:4 and Yukl 2013:2) most quoted assertion that leadership is a complex construct that is open to multiple and subjective interpretation;

hence, there are as many definitions of leadership as there are people who have attempted to define it.

In his critique of historical debates, literature and definitions on leadership, Rost (1991:102) argues that “Leadership for the 21st century” is defined as “an influence relationship among leaders and collaborators who intend significant changes that reflect their mutual purpose”. It is important to note that relational and shared conceptions of leadership are not entirely new. As early as 1978, Burns (1978:28, 551) was amongst the first to define leadership as relational, collective and purposeful in view of the reciprocal process of mobilising and influence between leaders and followers. Expanding on earlier pronouncements by Burns (1978) and Rost (1991), there is general agreement amongst several scholars and practitioners (Bolden 2004:30; Drath 2004:160-161; Hartley and Benington 2011:35, 38; DuBrin 2016:3; Northouse 2016:6) that leadership is not a position, job title, person or static concept. Leadership is a complex, dynamic, contested and interactive social process of collaboration and influence, which results in the achievement of shared goals.

According to Goldstein *et al.* (2010:15), modern conceptions of leadership are grounded on the premise that any individual has the capacity to effect change through the practice of mutual influence or generative leadership. This is consistent with the view that leadership “emerges” from influential interactions amongst (formally) assigned and/or emergent/informal leaders throughout and between organisations (Goldstein *et al.* 2010:2; DuBrin 2016:3; Northouse 2016:6). The shift from leadership as acts of individuals to conceptions of leadership as a dynamic, interactive, social process supports the view that scholars and practitioners should develop an interdisciplinary perspective to deal with leadership theory and practice holistically. Single lens perspectives of leadership have not worked in the past, and will not work in the post-industrial (Rost 1991:182-184; Riggio 2019:2-3), globally connected and continuously evolving society that is characterised by hybrid governance and inter-organisational arrangements (Rost 1991:182-184; Hartley and Benington 2011:5; Sorenson *et al.* 2011:35-36; Rhodes 2017:221).

As alluded to in section 1.4 of chapter one and further demonstrated in the sections below, relational, shared and collaborative definitions of leadership are particularly relevant for the study given the inter-organisational nature of the G&A Cluster and the

integrative nature of CLT, as well as its underlying definition of leadership. In particular, CLT defines leadership as a dynamic and social influence process that is shaped by dynamic interactions that transcend (but do not exclude) individual capabilities, formal authority and hierarchy (Lichtenstein *et al.* 2006:3; Avolio *et al.* 2009:432; Reiche *et al.* 2017:554; Murphy *et al.* 2017:692; Uhl-Bien and Arena 2018:95). Another reason why relational and shared definitions of leadership are relevant for this study is because administrative leadership, which refers to all networks of appointed officials, frontline service delivery supervisors and heads of organisations in public sector organisations (Van Wart 2013:521; Rhodes 2014:101), is broadly distributed, collaborative and collective in the pluralistic, political and networked governance context (Sindane 2011:755; Van Wart 2015:13-17; Ospina 2016:280-281).

The governance context within which public administration operates, which is discussed in section 2.2.4 of chapter two, makes administrative leaders the bearers of (formal) state authority, while non-public administration parties who participate in collaborative programmes with public sector institutions are assigned or emergent leaders whose influence cannot be ignored (Rhodes 2014:112-113). The involvement of non-public administration parties in various aspects of public administration such as policy development and programme implementation serves as justification for why administrative leadership literature should explore lessons from other disciplines, and simultaneously contribute towards the mainstream leadership field (Rhodes 2014:101; Ospina 2016:284; Crosby and Bryson 2018:1277).

Cognisant of Bass and Bass's (2008:52) appeal for clarity on the definition used in a particular context, whilst being consistent with CLT's conception of leadership as outlined in chapter one, the study adopts a broad definition of leadership that puts emphasis on the relational, collective and inter-organisational perspectives, but does not reject the importance of individual and intra-organisational leadership.

3.3 PERSISTENT DEBATES THAT INFLUENCE THE LEADERSHIP FIELD

Leadership definitions, theories and practices are partly influenced by what Van Wart (2015:21) calls perennial debates. Accordingly, Rost (1991:6) says leadership scholars and practitioners do not know what leadership is because they have been dealing with peripheral issues such as personality characteristics, style, management

of organisations, goal achievement and born or made issues, and have even confused leadership with management. Whether perennial or peripheral, the debates deal with several interconnected issues. For the purpose of this study, only two of the issues are briefly addressed below given their relevance for public administration reform, as well as the design and implementation of a leadership competency framework.

3.3.1 The leaders are born or made debate

One of the persistent debates that has shaped leadership research and theories over the years, as noted by Van Wart (2015:2) and Bolden (2004:4), is whether leaders are born or made. Sections 3.4.2.1 and 3.4.2.2 below will demonstrate that the 'leaders are born' debate is intricately linked with the great man and trait theory, which dominated the leadership literature for many years in the early-to-mid 20th century (1900s) (Dalakoura 2010:437; Day and Liu 2019:232-233; Murphy 2019:210). Additionally, the discussion shows that the 'leaders are made' debate was influential in the development of the behavioural, contingency, transactional and transformational theories, as well as leadership development programmes from the 1960s to date (Dalakoura 2010:437; Day and Liu 2019:232-233; Murphy 2019:210).

Though the debate is somewhat stale, there is scientific evidence that leadership can be explained in terms of approximately 30% genetics and 70% nurture (House and Aditya 1997:418-419; Avolio *et al.* 2009:429; Van Wart 2015:26). As such, Heifetz and Laurie (2001:37) assert that it is a myth that everyone can be a leader - but many people can be leaders. Although genetic traits cannot be completely ruled out, Boyatzis (2008:309) and Avolio *et al.* (2009:424-426) concur that anyone with the will to develop self-awareness and other cognitive and social behaviours and habits of effective leaderships can learn to be a leader. In spite of limited evidence to ascertain the link between leadership training and effective leadership practice, the view that many people can learn to be leaders is illustrated by growth in the number of leadership training programmes and models over the years, as well as billions of dollars spent on such programmes annually (Pfeffer 2015:6; Day and Liu 2019:232). The leaders are born or made debate is relevant for this study because many programmes, as discussed in chapter four, seek to develop specific leadership competencies based on leadership competency frameworks and models, in addition

to addressing generic leadership issues (Intagliata *et al.* 2000:19; Bolden 2004:14; Tubbs and Schulz 2006:32).

A detailed discussion of leadership development is beyond the scope of this study, but the study notes that leadership cannot be learned through classroom teaching only; it must be incorporated into everyday work-based practices (Dalakoura 2010:438). Yet, not all work experience is developmental. For example, doing the same job over a long period contributes less to development and contributes more to rigidity and stagnation (Eckert and Rweyongoza 2015:11). The University of Cambridge (2017:22) argues that the 70:20:10 learning ratio, as proposed by the Centre for Creative Leadership in the 1990s, is still relevant for individual and collective leadership development. The ratio suggests that 70% learning comes from workplace experience, 20% developmental learning from others and 10% structured or formal learning influences effective leadership development.

Equally, focusing on one's strengths only or what has worked before leads to the hardening of routines, unproductive practices and derailment (Eckert and Rweyongoza 2015:13; Veldsman and Johnson 2016:1). Consequently, continuous learning and self-development are essential requirements for effective leadership in a continuously changing environment (Dalakoura 2010:435; Broussine and Callahan 2016:496). Without continuous learning, Eckert and Rweyongoza (2015:9) assert that leadership can stall, hit a plateau and derail due to narrow functional orientation, difficulty in building and leading dynamic teams, interpersonal relationship problems and the inability to adapt. As much as leadership weaknesses should be addressed, argues Eckert and Rweyongoza (2015:12), leadership strengths must be upskilled through formal and systematic development, assessment and feedback, as well as exposure to new challenges and structured support.

3.3.2 The management and leadership debate

The debate regarding the distinction between management and leadership has been ongoing in the mainstream leadership literature (Van Wart 2003; 2015). It is equally relevant in the public administration context, taking into consideration the uniqueness of public administration reforms from TPA to NPM and then NPG, as well as developments in the IGR and IGM domains of public administration. The debate is

traced back to Abraham Zaleznick's 1977 publication entitled "Managers and leaders: Are they different?" Zaleznick (1977:67) argues that managers are more inclined towards creating and maintaining order to the extent that they will intervene in stabilising situations that are considered unordered, even before they understand what is going on, whereas leaders have a high level of tolerance for ambiguity and chaos. Management, according to Kotter (1990:104), involves coping with complexity and creating order through the application of procedures and practices, whereas leadership is about coping with change in a volatile and competitive environment.

According to Bolden (2004:7), Henry Mintzberg's 1973 and 1975 publications, which identified the ten roles of managers, inclusive of leadership, negotiation and entrepreneurship, supported the view that leadership is one of the dimensions of a multifaceted management role. Consequently, the view held by several authors (Burns 1978:28; Rost 1991:145; Raelin 2005:25; Schneider and Bauer 2007:309) is that managers have power by virtue of the positions they hold, whereas leaders do not necessarily have positional power. As such all leaders are actual or potential holders of power, but not all power holders (i.e. managers) are leaders. This is the reason why Heifetz and Laurie (2001:37) assert that it is a myth that all people in top positions are leaders. Equally, Adair (2011:29-33) contends that persons who are appointed as managers are not leaders until the people they work with endorse their appointments plus knowledge and skills, because without acceptance managers will simply get compliance and conformity from their subordinates.

Several authors (Gosling and Mintzberg 2003:8; DuBrin 2016:5; Northouse 2016:13) note that leadership and management complement each other because they involve influence, goal achievement and working with people. Therefore, the difference between the two should not be overdrawn because the five minds of a leader include managing oneself, organisation, context, relationships and change, and these mind-sets are intertwined into a coherent whole (Gosling and Mintzberg 2003:6-7). Yukl's (2013:6) view is that management is a necessary job title or occupation for large organisations, so it does not have to be negatively stereotyped. Managers must be able to manage effectively in order to lead because leadership is possible only when organisations are well managed. Leadership and management, as explained by DuBrin (2016:5-6,12-13) and Halpern (2018:272), are crucial in complex environments

because managers must have the capability to lead and leaders must be competent managers in response to continuously changing organisational challenges.

In the public sector, as argued by several authors (Hughes 2007:339; Orazi *et al.* 2013:490; Van Wart 2015:32; Broussine and Callahan 2016:481), leadership and management are necessary and inseparable because all good managers must occasionally be leaders, even if in a narrow sense, and all good leaders should be good managers, even if in an ordinary sense. The reason is that the public sector comprises of large organisations that constantly need competent management and leadership (Broussine and Callahan 2016:481; Northouse 2016:13). The misperception and danger about the divide and superiority between management and leadership is that since the 20th century, nobody wants to be a manager anymore, everyone aspires to be a great leader (Gosling and Mintzberg 2003:1), thus resulting in a superficial shift from “managerialism to leaderism” (Orazi *et al.* 2013:487). Yet, according to Fairholm (2006:335), public administrators start their careers as technical experts, then progress into management and leadership roles. Public administrators manage things and people, but lead people. As they assume more responsibility, they must learn the “art and science of leading people and managing resources” directly or indirectly (Fairholm 2006:344-345), thus supporting Rasa’s (2017:98) view that managerial competence complements leadership competence.

The observation made by Hughes (2007:321) is that in public administration there is a linear history of how administration progressed to management and how management advanced to leadership. To illustrate this, Hughes (2007:339) states that TPA assigned administration functions to appointed officials and leadership to politicians, while NPM recognised the managerial and leadership roles of managers, in spite of attempts by political executives to keep managers away from policy analysis, which was perceived as the rightful leadership function of political executives. Furthermore, in NPM, administration functions incorporate management functions but also include strategy, which is a leadership function (Hughes 2007:339), hence the three concepts are interrelated and overlap in scope. This explains why appointed public administrators, especially public sector managers, operate as administrators, managers and leaders. To justify his assertion, Hughes (2007:334) says Kotter’s (1990) management functions, which include planning, budgeting, staffing, organising,







controlling and problem solving are related to Gulick and Urwick's POSDCORB principles of administration that are outlined in section 2.2.1 of chapter two.

Mindful of the arguments made earlier that leadership is part of management and that leadership and management are different but complementary functions, the linear progression argument from administration to management and leadership, as advanced by Fairholm (2006:345) and Hughes (2007:339), might lead to a simplistic conclusion that leadership is a superior function over management. This would amplify Orazi *et al.*'s (2013:487) observation of the superficial shift from "managerialism to leaderism". At face value, it may be argued that there is a contradiction between the 'complementary' and 'linear progression' debates regarding leadership and management, but this is not the case. The study maintains that the leadership and management relationship and/or difference debate is influenced by the emphasis placed on the content, context and process of management and leadership along a linear or non-linear continuum. As noted earlier and emphasised by several authors (Burns 1978:28; Rost 1991:145; Schneider and Bauer 2007:309; Adair 2011:33), managerial or positional power does not automatically translate into leadership. As already stated in section 3.2 above, leadership transcends positional power and is in itself a "technical competence" of achieving results with and through people, which is underpinned by credibility and influence enhancing foundational competencies (Drath 2004:157; Van Wart 2015:34; Northouse 2016:370).

The leadership foundational competencies include cognitive intelligence (IQ), subject matter knowledge (or hard technical skills/expertise), creativity, self-leadership and interpersonal (or soft/relational) competencies such as persuasion (Pearce and Manz 2005:135; Denis *et al.* 2012:225; Van Wart 2015:26; Northouse 2016:370). Self-leadership is based on the assumption that everyone has the minimum capability for self-leadership (Pearce and Manz 2005:133) and it is an essential pre-requisite for leading others especially in teams and organisations (Pearce and Manz 2005:139; Adair 2011:71; Furtner *et al.* 2012:12-13). The importance of technical and relational competencies in IGR and IGM was also emphasised by authors such as Perry (1989:7), Stoker (2006:41) and Agranoff (2010:178) in chapter two of this study. The preceding discussion and Table 3.1 below illustrate that management and leadership

are different but complementary constructs and practices whose effectiveness is dependent on foundational competencies.

Table 3.1. Foundational competencies and management-leadership continuum

	Technical Expert	Management (self)	Management (others)	Leadership
Linear progression				
Non-linear progression				
Complementary and non-linear perspective				
	Technical expert (Content / technical skills)	Management and leadership of oneself (content and context)	Management and leadership of and by others (context and process)	

Source: Author's own illustration.

While Table 3.1 serves to illustrate that management and leadership complement each other, the preceding analysis has also indicated that both can be developed through education, career development and life experience (Halpern 2018:269), as already stated in section 3.2.1 above and expanded upon in section 3.4 below.

3.4 LEADERSHIP EVOLUTION

The section provides a concise overview of leadership evolution, with specific emphasis on leadership theory and practice, from the great man theory up to the emergence of collective and integrative leadership theories and practices. The analysis also reflects on the Public Administration contribution to the leadership field.

3.4.1 Leadership construct proliferation, redundancy and integration

According to Mango (2018:58), many people have information about leadership but not complete information about leadership in its totality, because when new theories emerge, the soundness of old theories is questioned. According to Van Wart (2015:3), the complexity and vastness of the leadership field requires focus on a specific domain to develop adequate depth. So, each leadership theory has distinctive strengths and weaknesses, and expresses a unique perspective and contributes to the advancement of leadership theory and practice (House and Aditya 1997:465; Bolden 2004:14). Therefore, theories that put emphasis on specific aspects in isolation from other

factors miss the opportunity to expand on the study and practice of leadership to new and holistic horizons (House and Aditya 1997:465; Veldsman 2016:13), and they have limited utility (Van Wart 2015:3), plus they result in theory compartmentalisation and disintegration (Mango 2018:60). While Van Wart (2015:3) asserts that overarching theoretical models can be elegant, he notes that they are also over-generalized, incomplete and not practical.

Consequently, extensive research and publications on leadership have not just resulted in the proliferation of new constructs, they have also resulted in construct redundancy due to, amongst others, lack of clarity on how authentic, ethical, servant and spiritual leadership differ from each other or from transformational leadership (Gardner *et al.* 2005:402-403; Day 2014:860; Van Wart 2015:36; Anderson and Sun 2017:76-86; Banks *et al.* 2018:236). Day (2014:861-862) also questions whether conceptualising a specific construct such as ethics as a multi-dimensional higher order construct based on self-administered questionnaires and interviews enhances leadership theory or is deceptive and problematic, because such methodologies do not account for context. This explains Anderson and Sun's (2017:90-92) call for a new "full-range leadership model" that incorporates the dimensions of theories that are closely related to transactional and transformational leadership, whereas Furtner *et al.* (2012:2-3) posit that self-leadership, which is dependent on the integration of behavioural, motivational and cognitive domains, is a potential addition to the full-range leadership model. Without a systematic process of "pruning," Banks *et al.* (2018:236-239) regard the proliferation of constructs as unhealthy and a violation of the principle of parsimony, which states that if there are two explanations and all else is equal, the simplest should be used.

The view that leadership is governed by over 66 theories, as noted by Dinh *et al.* (2014:45) and Mango (2018:57), further illustrates the challenge of construct proliferation and redundancy, which leaves scholars to search for an inclusive theory. The quest for such an inclusive theory has eluded numerous leadership experts under the leadership of James MacGregor Burns over the years, due to the interdisciplinary nature and context sensitivity of leadership (Sorenson *et al.* 2011:35-36). The 66 theories discussed by Dinh *et al.* (2012) and Mango (20118) exclude numerous leadership models that present descriptive classification systems (Bass and Bass

2008:54, 91) and integrative frameworks that seek to combine variables from numerous theories. Although attempts to develop an inclusive or general theory of leadership have been unsuccessful, several authors (Antonakis and Day 2018:15; Veldsman 2016:13; Anderson and Sun 2017:92; Banks *et al.* 2018:246) agree about the need for theory integration and “hybrid-integrative perspectives” as a basis to advance the leadership phenomenon. Recent integration efforts, including those discussed in section 3.4.2.3 below, are illustrated by the work done by Van Wart (2004), Fernandez *et al.* (2010), Mango (2018) as well as scholars such as Zaccaro (2001) and Day, Harrison and Halpin (2012), as cited by Antonakis and Day (2018:15). According to Dinh *et al.* (2014:52), integrative approaches, such as those discussed in section 3.4.2 below, could advance theories such as CLT and adaptive leadership.

3.4.2 Categorisation of leadership approaches, theories and models

Diversity, vastness, and complexity have resulted in many ways of categorising leadership literature, approaches, theories and models. The categorisations include: the levels of conceptualisation (such as intra-individual with emphasis on personality traits, skills, behaviours and dyadic or relational theories such as leader-member-exchange (LMX) and group leadership); leader-centred versus follower-centred; situation centred; intra- and inter-organisational centred; plus time and discipline-centred conceptualisations (Rost 1991; Heifetz and Laurie 2001:37; Bolden 2004:7-14; Avolio *et al.* 2009; Northouse 2016:5-7; Oswald-Herold *et al.* 2018:12). Northouse (2016:5) notes that there are approximately 65 classification systems for leadership dimensions and theories. Discussing the different classification systems is beyond the scope of this study, but the classification system proposed by Oswald-Herold *et al.* (2018) is useful for the study due to its simplicity and potential to enable rapid analysis from one category to the next.

According to Oswald-Herold *et al.* (2018:12), leadership dimensions and theories can be categorised into three general approaches. The first category deals with leader-centric theories relating to traits, skills, behaviours and styles that make individuals the central focus of leadership. Relationship and situation-focused theories, which constitute the second category, place emphasis on the existing dynamic between the leader and follower, as well as the context in which this dynamic occurs. Theories in this category include the contingency, path-goal, situational, LMX, transactional,

servant and transformational. The third category deals with leadership theories and models that extend beyond individuals to recognise dynamic leadership in collectives such as teams, groups and inter-organisational arrangements. Examples of the latter group include shared, distributed, inclusive, network and collective leadership. The following sections illustrate that the three categories are essential for the study in view of the integrative nature of CLT, the hybrid nature of public sector organisations and the underpinning governance systems that lend themselves to hybrid forms of leadership.

3.4.2.1 Leader-centric theories and models

Although there are several leader-centred theories and models, the discussion in this section focuses on the trait, skills and styles approaches due to their foundational importance (Bolden 2004:13) and cumulative effect (House and Aditya 1997:409) on modern leadership studies, especially the integrative and collective approaches which are elaborated upon in section 3.4.2.3 below. The modern study of leadership is traced back to Thomas Carlyle's 1840-1900 lectures and writings on "Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History" which cemented the concept of the heroic "Great Men" in history (Grint 2011:8). The great man theory had an influence on the trait theory of leadership and its preoccupation with the identification of the innate characteristics of successful leaders (Bolden *et al.* 2003:6; Northouse 2016:40-41). Studies that sought to identify the inherent universal characteristics of leaders resulted in subjective lists, with some characteristics featuring in only one study, while others featured in multiple studies. Some of the consistently identified traits in many studies include IQ, integrity, determination, self-confidence and sociability, as well as physical energy (House and Aditya 1997:417-418; Northouse 2016:41).

Recent work on emotional intelligence (EQ) and other multiple forms of intelligences, such as social intelligence, falls within this domain (House and Aditya 1997:418; Northouse 2016:23, 41). In spite of inconclusive results and failure to identify a definitive list of characteristics, Bolden (2004:14) and Northouse (2016:41) assert that the trait approach had and continues to have an influence on the use of personality trait assessments by organisations to determine employee-organisational fit during recruitment, whereas some of the instruments are used for individual personal development purposes.

While the trait theory places emphasis on inborn characteristics, the skills theory, which gained momentum after the 1955 publication of “Skills of an Effective Administrator” by Robert Katz, puts emphasis on three leadership skills that can be learned, namely technical, human and conceptual (Northouse 2016:69-70). The significance of the three skills varies according to the management level, with technical expertise being extremely important at the supervisory and middle management level and conceptual skills being critical at the middle and top management levels, while human skills are critical at all levels (Northouse 2016:44-46). Although the skills theory represents a slight departure from the trait approach, some of the trait characteristics are essential in the skills approach and like the trait approach, the list of skills are either narrowly defined in relation to a specific context or the lists grow exponentially in some contexts. The main strength of the skills approach is that it provides structure for the design of leadership development programmes (Northouse 2016:58).

Unlike the trait and skills approaches’ emphasis on personality characteristics and acquired capabilities, behavioural or styles approaches are more concerned with the behaviours of leaders in specific contexts (Northouse 2016:71-72; Oswald-Herold *et al.*, 2018:13). The Ohio State and University of Michigan studies as well as the Blake and Mouton Managerial Grid (which was renamed the Leadership Grid) are central to the styles approach (House and Aditya 1997:420; Northouse 2016:74-75). They are primarily concerned with whether the leader is task or relationship oriented, although research suggests that ideal leaders are simultaneously task and relationship oriented (Bolden *et al.* 2003:8; Bolden 2004:10; Northouse 2016:90-91). Even though the styles approach has been unsuccessful in identifying a universal set of behaviours that will consistently lead to effective leadership (House and Aditya 1997:421), it is a useful framework for assessing leadership behaviour (Northouse 2016:91).

The trait, skills and styles approaches are integrally linked with the ‘leaders are born or made debate’ as previously discussed. In isolation, the trait, skills and styles approaches to leadership have limited utility given their emphasis and reliance on personal dominance (Drath 2004:154-155). Nonetheless, they have the potential to contribute to the enhancement of leadership theory and practice when incorporated into an integrative framework with other approaches, such as those discussed below, (House and Aditya 1997:409; Drath 2004:156-157; Van Wart 2015:36). This supports

the view that in reality none of the earlier theories are (and should not be) completely discarded, but they are simply improved upon (House and Aditya 1997:409; Drath 2004:161-162; Ospina 2016:284). As demonstrated in the sections below, the integrative nature of CLT makes it relevant for this study.

3.4.2.2 Relational and situation-focused theories and models

The group of theories that fall into this category accentuate the relationship between the leader, follower and context. Though debatable, examples of theories and models that fall into this category include the path-goal theory, Fiedler's contingency theory, LMX, and several other theories (House and Aditya 1997:422-437; Northouse 2016:93-193). The discussion below focusses on Hersey-Blanchard's situational leadership model, LMX, transactional, transformational and adaptive leadership theories due to their strong connection with the dynamic, interactive and adaptive features of CLT.

The Hersey-Blanchard's situational leadership model provides for different levels of support and direction, depending on the competency levels of followers (Northouse 2016:93-94), thus recognising the importance of deploying appropriate traits, skills and styles depending on the context (Oswald-Herold *et al.* 2018:14). The strengths of the situational leadership model are that it is both prescriptive and practical while allowing for flexibility in relation to context, whereas some of its criticisms are that it is more suited to one-on-one settings and does not explain the transition of followers from one stage of development to the next (Northouse 2016:112-113).

The LMX, which has been refined over the years since its development in 1995 (Avolio *et al.* 2009:433-434; Bass and Riggio 2006:231), recognises the importance of quality interactions between followers and leaders in enhancing organisational performance (Avolio *et al.* 2009:433; Northouse 2017:137-140; Oswald-Herold *et al.* 2018:15). While LMX emphasises the importance of effective communication as well as the leadership process and outcomes, it has been criticised for its recognition of the unequitable relationship between in-group and out-group members with leaders, as well as lack of clarity on how to build trust, respect and commitment within the relationship (Avolio *et al.* 2009:433-434; Northouse 2016:157-158). According to Bass and Riggio (2006:231), in the refined conception of LMX, as articulated by authors

such as Graen and Uhl-Bien, leadership unfolds over several stages that proceed from the transactional to the transformational stage, as trust, respect and loyalty grow. Therefore, Oswald-Herold *et al.* (2018:15) locate transactional and transformational leadership theories into this category.

Burns (1978) argues that transactional leadership is informed by the transactional benefits that different parties acquire from transactions such as service in exchange for remuneration and hard work in exchange for promotion. Transformational leadership, which was popularised by Burns (1978), is characterised by the stimulation of followers to achieve extraordinary results, whilst also transforming the leader and followers to maximise their capacity (Riggio and Bass 2006:225; Bass and Riggio 2015:76; Northouse 2016:162). Transformational leadership has received a lot of attention from researchers and practitioners in order to minimise the limitations of human and organisational capacity to deal with change (Bolden 2004:11). Even so, it has been criticised for being elitist in its emphasis on the heroic and trait-like qualities of the leader (Northouse 2016:162), which can result in people's disempowerment and dependence on individual leaders (Bolden 2004:25).

The personalisation of transformational leadership, coupled with lack of authenticity by some leaders, has resulted in unintended consequences, also referred to as the dark side of leadership (Bass and Riggio 2006:235). Efforts to curb the unintended consequences of variant forms of transformational leadership, especially charismatic leadership, have resulted in what Mango (2018:60), Day (2014:860) and Banks *et al.* (2018:236) refer to as theory disintegration, as well as construct proliferation and redundancy through the conceptualisation of concepts such as ethics and authenticity as multi-dimensional higher order constructs. Though often projected as extremely different from transactional leadership, Hartley and Benington (2011:32) note that transformational leadership is not necessarily better than transactional leadership because both have strengths and weaknesses and can complement each other. Bass's full range leadership model (Bass and Riggio 2006:7-9) and Van Wart's (2003:225) leadership action cycle (LAC) illustrate their complementary nature. In particular, Van Wart's (2003:225) LAC, which is explained in section 3.4.3 below, integrates transactional and transformational leadership theories in the public sector. Both transactional and transformational leadership are relevant for this study because

transformational leadership is an expansion of transactional leadership (Bass and Riggio 2006:4) whereas CLT, contend Marion and Uhl-Bien (2001:408-410), is an improvement and integration of various theoretical frameworks, including transformational leadership theory.

Contrary to Oswald-Herold *et al.*'s (2018:13-14) classification of Heifetz's (1994) adaptive leadership theory as one of the leader-centred theories, the thesis argues that adaptive leadership is strongly aligned with the relational and situational approaches because it "stresses the *activities of the leader* in relation to the *work of followers* in the *contexts* in which they find themselves" (Northouse 2016:257). As an expansion to Heifetz's (1994:2-9) analysis of the need for adaptive work and capacities to respond to leadership crisis in a continuously changing environment, Heifetz *et al.* (2009:14) define adaptive leadership as an interactive "practice of mobilising people to tackle tough challenges and thrive" through focusing on required adaptations in response to changing environments. According to Heifetz and Laurie (2001), adaptive work requires different leadership responsibilities, which include framing questions in relation to challenges, exposing the organisation to limited pressure, challenging current roles, refraining from assigning roles quickly, allowing conflict to emerge, and challenging unproductive work because solutions to adaptive challenges reside in the collective intelligence of employees.

The adaptive leadership theory's strength is that it is prescriptive on the behaviours of the leader and it is process and follower centred, as it dictates that leaders must create the holding ground (or safe but challenging environment) for followers to deal with their challenges (Northouse 2016:292-293). The challenge is that the assumptions and propositions underpinning the theory have not been empirically tested (Northouse 2016:293). In spite of its weaknesses, the adaptive leadership theory contributes towards an understanding of CLT due to related features between the two (Northouse 2016:260), as explained in section 3.5 below.

3.4.2.3 Collective forms of leadership

Since Rost's (1991:10,180) call for a shift from the industrial leadership paradigm and its emphasis on scientific management techniques and heroic leadership, Avolio *et al.* (2009:442) and Ospina (2016:282-284) attest that the leadership field is gradually

evolving into an inclusive and holistic conceptual outlook that deals with the content (e.g. transformational and authentic), context (e.g. publicness, intra-organisational) and process (shared, strategic) perspectives of leadership in an integrated manner. As such, there are different names for theories, models and practices that represent a departure from the leader-centred approaches, and these range from post-heroic and collective to plural leadership.

Collective leadership is, according to Ospina (2016:281), “a lens from which to explore the empirical reality of old and new forms of leadership” through placing emphasis on the processes and practices of leadership, instead of the leader. Yet Ospina (2016:284; 2017:277) notes that the public leadership literature remains fragmented and scholars who are advancing mainstream and public sector literature on collective leadership work in silos; hence, there is a lack of an integrated collective leadership lens. The observation made by several authors (Contractor *et al.* 2012:995; Sergi *et al.* 2017:35) is that forms of pluralising leadership can be traced back to publications by Follet (1924: “Creative experience”), Hodgson, Levin and Zaleznick (1965: “*The Executive Role Constellation*”) and Gibb (1954: “Leadership”). In spite of this, Contractor *et al.* (2012) and Sergi *et al.* (2017) note that pluralising forms of leadership remained unpopular in academic circles and were practiced marginally until their resurgence later in the 1980s and early 1990s.

According to Crosby and Bryson (2018:1270), collective leadership theories and approaches are variously called network, discursive, complexity and constructionist leadership. The diversity of emerging literature on collective leadership is further categorised according to the different perspectives adopted by different writers, thus resulting in the sub-categorisation of the literature into plural leadership, multi-sector or cross-boundary leadership, multiple roles leadership and public value leadership (Crosby and Bryson 2018:1271). The literature places emphasis on (a) informal and network structures, as well as participatory and democratic processes (Moore 2014:48), and (b) distributed or shared theories and integrative theories, of which integrative theories can also be sub-classified into collaborative, relational, facilitative, adaptive, complexity, plural and collective leadership (Crosby and Bryson 2018:1271,1275). At face value, the constructs are different because they place emphasis on different aspects of leadership. However, as already stated and will be

expanded further in the following sections, their underlying foundational principles are more aligned or similar; hence some of these constructs are used interchangeably.

The competing concepts, notes Drath (2004:161), make interactive and relational leadership that recognises diverse worldviews and influences sound impossible, dangerous or misguided. In spite of these concerns and negativity, Raelin (2017:14) contends that collective leadership is unavoidable and feasible. The study concurs with various cited authors that construct proliferation in this area is contributing to an important conceptual shift (Friedrich *et al.* 2011:2; Storey *et al.* 2017:598) on how to rethink leadership in the networked governance context where no-one is entirely in charge (Bryson *et al.* 2015:21), as would be the case with the G&A Cluster. Therefore, some of the concepts used by different authors are discussed below in order strengthen an understanding of collective leadership as well as CLT.

As a precursor to deliberating on the nuances of collective leadership, it is essential to note that integrative leadership theories and models combine multiple theories or variables from multiple theories (Ospina 2016:1270; Yukl 2013:13). Integrative leadership theories and models became popular in the 1980s after Bass's (1985; 1996) publication of the full range leadership model, even though Yukl (1971) and Winter (1979) begun some work earlier (Van Wart 2015:10). As depicted in Table 3.2 below, Ospina (2016) traces the development of integrative leadership theories through four prominent or emerging relational schools of leadership, namely: transformational, LMX, shared/distributed and collective.

Table 3.2: From transformational to collective leadership - towards a relational approach

		Four Schools			
		Transformational	LMX	Shared/distributed	Collective
Three questions	What is the 'source' of leadership?	The leader	The leader-member dyad relationship	The leadership role	Many, context specific
	What is the 'object' of leadership?	The follower	The quality of the relationship	The group (individuals taking up roles)	The work to create a leaderful environment
	What is the end result of leadership?	Influence that yields engagement	Mutual reciprocation and access to partners' benefits	Shared responsibility for joint work	Capacity to collaborate and produce collective achievements

Source: Ospina (2016:278).

The categorisation in Table 3.2 not only demonstrates the reality of theory compartmentalisation, as noted by Banks *et al.* (2018) and Mango (2018:60), plus House and Aditya's (1997:409) cumulative effect of old and existing theories on new theories, but it also demonstrates that there are many ways of studying and categorising leadership theories and approaches. Therefore, the approach taken in this study, as dictated by the objectives of the study, is one of many possible approaches.

Mindful of this observation, it is noted that the first two of Ospina's (2016) schools, that is transformational and LMX, have already been discussed in section 3.4.2.2 above, whereas the last two, shared/distributed and collective are the subject of discussion in this section. Other integrative and collective leadership theories noted by Van Wart (2015:10-11), include Pearce and Conger's shared leadership model, the flexible leadership theory model by Yukl, Uhl-Bien *et al.*'s CLT and Van Wart's LAC. While a discussion of each of these integrative models is beyond the scope of this study, section 3.4.3 below presents an overview of the LAC due to its significance in public administration, whereas section 3.5 provides a detailed analysis of CLT because it forms the theoretical basis for this study.

Collective leadership, according to Brookes (2007:2), involves both distributed and shared leadership, wherein distributed leadership relates to the collegial and intra-organisational perspective and shared leadership is more concerned with the collaborative and inter-organisational perspective. In particular, shared leadership is a group level phenomenon that involves the mutual influence of assigned and unassigned or emergent leaders (Pearce and Manz 2005:134; Fernandez 2010:310; Van Wart 2015:33). For Contractor *et al.* (2012:998) and Raelin (2017:7-8), collective leadership is a plural phenomenon that is intricately linked with constructive dialogue and entails multiple agents who enact multiple roles that change over time in response to changing environments and problems. According to Sergi *et al.* (2017:35-36), plural forms of leadership or plural leadership is an umbrella term for scattered literature and concepts for the following categories of leadership: 'structured-by-choice'; theoretical; and ideological forms of pluralising leadership. These categories, some of which are discussed hereunder, are inclusive of distributed, inter-organisational collaborations, leadership constellations, shared and dual leadership.

The leadership literature on pluralising by choice, contend Sergi *et al.* (2017:44), deals with dual or co-leadership, trios and inter-organisational arrangements; ideological pluralising literature such as Raelin's (2003, 2010) publications on leaderful teams and organisations plus democratising practices; whereas theoretical pluralising literature views leadership as an emergence from interactions, as is the case with CLT. Raelin's (2005:22-24) "leaderful" practice is an integrative model that is premised on the view that everyone needs to share leadership experience, not in a sequential way, but in a concurrent, collective, collaborative and compassionate way. The study maintains that examples of 'pluralising by choice' would include formally constituted IGR structures such as those outlined in chapter two, section 2.5.3 of the study. As such, collective and plural leadership are used interchangeably as umbrella concepts in this thesis, with specific emphasis placed on shared leadership at the inter-organisational level, because collective leadership across organisational boundaries is essential in understanding leadership within the G&A Cluster.

Vangen and McGuire (2015:7) note that in collaborations, leadership is inter-organisational and differs from leadership in intra-organisational contexts. The former puts emphasis on collective responsibility and outcomes and is mostly reliant on the relational dimension of leadership, whereas intra-organisational leadership is dependent on positional power. Inter-organisational and collaborative leadership, attest Archer and Cameron (2009:125), Bao *et al.* (2012:453) and Williams (2013:25-26), require unique or enhanced versions of competencies needed to manage and lead intra-organisationally. This observation justifies the importance of this study because the G&A Cluster represents a dynamic phenomenon that is dependent on what Hodgson *et al.* (1965, cited in Denis *et al.* 2012:232) call the "leadership role constellation", which is a collective form of leadership in which members have specialised roles or areas of expertise that are clearly differentiated and complementary to deal with all critical areas of the problem and intervention.

Plural forms of leadership do not make individual leadership (capabilities) obsolete. They simply extend leadership beyond the single base and create a nuanced perspective. Therefore, single and plural forms of leadership can and should co-exist and be practiced simultaneously in a hybrid system that constantly adapts to the changing environment (Raelin 2005:22-23; Gronn 2007:18; Denis *et al.* 2012:274;

Sergi *et al.* 2017:37). Plural leadership is mutual because it is about leadership of “the self” and “each other” as well as the organisation and world (Raelin 2005:22-24; Denis *et al.* 2012:270; Johnson and Veldsman 2016:870). This explains why Gronn (2007:39) introduced the concept of hybrid leadership in recognition of the co-existence of several forms of leadership in similar contexts, while their degree of interdependence or shared-ness varies depending on the situation. This means that individual and plural forms of leadership must be used appropriately when necessary and feasible, depending on the urgency, employee commitment, need for creativity, inter-dependence and task or problem complexity (Pearce and Manz 2005:136-137).

Both individual and plural leadership can be developed through training, modelling behaviour and reward systems, but there is recognition that most leadership development programmes continue to put emphasis on individual development (Pearce and Manz 2005:137-138; Broussine and Callahan 2016:486). Several authors (Brookes 2007:18; Day 2014:64; Broussine and Callahan 2016:486) note that attempts to concretise collective leadership into a practical and implementable framework in the governance context have remained limited, but Raelin (2003; 2010; 2016) provides a practice-based illustration of the shift from the individual leader to collective and hybrid leadership.

According to Raelin (2005:18), teams and organisations where everyone is a concurrent leader are not “leaderless”; rather, they are “leaderful” or full of leadership because the model complements post-bureaucratic forms of organisations and their emphasis on lateral relationships across functions, organisations and regions (Raelin 2005:22-23). As such, leaderful practice resonates with emerging approaches to collective, shared, distributed and relational leadership’, because it highlights the transition from the leader’s traits, skills, competencies and behaviours to leadership as a collective and social process (Raelin 2016:4-5). Raelin (2003:18) states that this makes leaderful practice contrary to the Western countries’ leadership model that values and rewards individual leadership but preaches teamwork and collaboration.

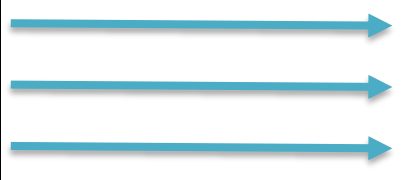

As an integrative model, leaderful practice is more appealing for the study because the G&A Cluster comprises of “a constellation of complementary co-leaders” (Raelin 2017:14) who are formally appointed DGs and DDGs, and it is assumed that they possess the necessary technical and intra-organisational foundational competencies

alluded to in section 3.3.2 above. Through the application of CLT and the CAS approach, the study investigates how the G&A Cluster leadership enacts a series of interactive processes and activities to transform individual competencies into a meta-organisational capability (Hazy 2011:186). Raelin (2016:6-7) notes that such processes and activities include environmental scanning, weaving linkages between institutions and ideas, unleashing own and equal-others' creative thoughts and reflection. These have implications for collective leadership competencies that are addressed in chapter four.

Drawing from the concept of credibility enhancing and threshold/foundational competencies (Goleman 1998:4, Pearce and Manz 2005:133; Denis *et al.* 2012:225; Van Wart 2015:26; Northouse 2016:370), the study concurs with Brookes (2007:15) and Koliba and Koppenjan (2016:470) that within a networked and collaborative context, technical expertise and self-leadership are foundational competencies. As such, they create the bridge between distributed leadership in intra-organisational contexts and shared leadership in inter-organisational contexts (Brookes 2007:15; Koliba and Koppenjan 2016:470). Individual leadership can thus be viewed as a "tipping point" between strategy and implementation, plus a bridge between distributed and shared leadership, because without individual leadership there is no distributed and shared leadership, and without distributed and collegial intra-organisational leadership, inter-organisational leadership which is shared and collaborative is not possible (Brookes 2007:15-17). The tipping point, explains Boyatzis (2008:299), refers to the point at which cumulative small actions produce dramatic results.

The insights from Brookes (2007), Denis *et al.* (2012), Sergi *et al.*, (2017) and Crosby and Bryson (2018), and the different concepts relating to collective leadership, are used in a slightly different but complementary manner in this study as depicted in Table 3.3 below. To ensure clarity, distributed/collegial leadership is used in relation to the intra-organisational context. Whereas shared/collaborative leadership is used in relation to the inter-organisational context. While Table 3.3 below highlights the how the concepts are used, the study places emphasis on the inter-organisational leadership and management category because the G&A Cluster fits into this category.

Table 3.3: Foundational competencies, intra-organisational and inter-organisational leadership

Baseline/ foundational continuum	Technical expertise	Self-leadership and management	Intra-organisational leadership and management	Inter-organisational leadership and management
Types of collective / plural leadership			Distributed/Collegial (through formal delegations and assignment of powers plus emergent structures and processes at the intra- organisational level)	
				Shared/Collaborative (<i>through IGR structures, formal assignment of duties and emergent arrangements at the inter-organisational level</i>)

Source: Author's own illustration.

3.4.3 Administrative leadership: status and contribution to the leadership field

There is acknowledgement by Crosby and Bryson (2018:1267) that subsequent to Van Wart's (2003) seminal work and observations about the scarcity of administrative leadership literature, follow up studies by Van Wart (2013), Vogel and Masal (2015) and Ospina (2016) suggest that public leadership research has increased over the years. Regardless, Crosby and Bryson (2018:1267, 1277) note that the field is still lagging behind in investigating diverse theories using various methods; as such, public leadership practitioners and scholars should be free to learn from other disciplines and fields in order to develop diverse perspectives. Rhodes (2014:103) reiterates a similar concern regarding the limited contribution of public administration scholars to mainstream leadership literature, including the inadequate contribution to the development of integrative leadership theories and frameworks – except for Van Wart's (2003; 2005; 2013) attempt at “retrofitting” private sector theories into an integrative leadership model for the public sector. Conversely, Crosby and Bryson (2018:1276) are of the view that researchers who focus mainly on public sector leadership developed integrative and distributed/shared leadership theories. The observation is supported by Leithwood *et al.* (2007:xvii,6) and Storey *et al.*'s (2017:327) assertion that distributed/shared leadership is popular in the education sector, schools in particular, because of the complexity of the education environment.

In particular, Van Wart (2003:225) identified the importance of a comprehensive model that integrates various elements of transactional and transformational leadership in the public sector – while taking into account the complexity of the public sector environment. The model was subsequently introduced in 2004 (Van Wart 2004) as the LAC. The LAC, which Van Wart (2004:174) says would be applicable to all administrative leaders irrespective of sector, comprises of fifty (50) elements that leaders should focus on, from assessment to the evaluation stage. The fifty elements are further subdivided into 204 indicators or variables in a manner that integrates insights from various leadership theories (Van Wart 2004:173). According to Rhodes (2014:103), Van Wart’s model treats leadership as “competency-based” and it is useful for training and applied environments.

According to Orazi *et al.* (2013:495), integrative approaches to administrative leadership by Van Wart (2004) and Fernandez *et al.* (2010) have the potential to advance leadership theory and practice. However, Blandin (2007:139) is of the view that they have not kept pace with the changing context but remain stark in transformational leadership and its variants. This weakness substantiates the need to learn from fields such as the adaptive and complexity leadership perspectives (Sorenson *et al.* 2011:36). Raffel *et al.* (2009a:4), Broussine and Callahan (2016:494) and the University of Cambridge (2017:19) caution that while general leadership theories can apply in public sector environments, the objective of creating public value and the significance of accountability and legitimacy in the public sector should be taken into consideration because administrative leadership takes place in a continuously changing political context. Similarly, Rhodes (2014:11-113) asserts that administrative leadership is more complex than general concerns about better management and leadership, as it is primarily concerned with public administration’s constitutional and socio-political role of in the state.

Furthermore, scholars such as Van Wart (2003:216) and Raffel *et al.* (2009a:3) note that historically, public administration leadership literature was more focused on frontline officers plus executive political figures due to their visibility and accessibility on policy debates. As such, top-level administrative leadership was generally neglected and yet, as noted by both ‘t Hart and Uhr (2008:3, 5-7) and Raffel *et al.* (2009a:4), public leadership is much more than the narrowly defined political executive

leadership. In particular, administrative leadership comprises of public organisational leadership and public value creation in a democratic context that requires appointed public administrators to service both politicians and citizens. Consequently, the leadership research integration, which started in the 1980s, did not experience rapid increase in the public sector as was the case in mainstream leadership research, and neither was there substantial effort at integration, partly due to the inaccessibility of senior managers (Van Wart 2003:215). This challenge has resulted in authors such as Morse and Buss (2007:6) as well as Raffel *et al.* (2009a:7, 11) concluding that the public sector leadership literature is behind schedule in relation to the notions of governance, networks and collaboration, as it is still dominated by hierarchical paradigms and mostly presumes the existence of a heroic leader. Furthermore, Ospina (2016:284; 2017:277) notes that developments in this area remain fragmented.

Notwithstanding the limited public administration contribution to the leadership field, Rhodes (2014:104-109) and Ospina (2016:281) recognise the contribution by public administration scholars such as Agranoff (2007), Huxham and Vangen (2005) as well as Vangen and Huxham (2010) in the area of network and collaborative leadership. In particular, Agranoff's contribution emerged from the IGR and IGM field, which is discussed in section 2.3 of chapter two. According to Vangen and McGuire (2015), collaborative leadership in the public sector (also referred to as catalytic leadership and leadership for the common good [Morse and Buss, 2007:4-5; Mandell and Keast 2009:173]) is influenced by three interrelated theories. The three theories are: the theory of collaborative advantage (TCA) (Huxham and Vangen 2005; Vangen and Huxham 2010); collaborative public management (CPM) practices which are informed by Vangen and McGuire's (2015) work; and the constructionist lens on relational leadership (CRL), as advocated by Ospina and Sorenson (2006) and other scholars. As elaborated upon below, Vangen and McGuire (2015:5-6) attest that both TCA and CPM are concerned with leadership as practice, and TCA and CRL place emphasis on process and context over agency.

According to Cristofoli *et al.* (2017:275), Agranoff (2006) and Klijn (2008) influenced CPM or "collaborative administration" as the new model of public administration within the IGR and IGM context. Although there are different views on how to successfully manage (collaborative) public networks, approaches range from network structures,

coordination mechanisms and inter-organisational trust (Cristofoli *et al.* 2017:275). There is recognition that complex public sector networks require a combination of formal and informal coordination mechanisms, strong management and leadership as well as specific skills and competencies (Hartley and Benington 2011:13,31; Cristofoli *et al.* 2017:278). Collaborative network leadership is about the process of getting all members to leverage from their strengths through facilitation, interaction and decision-making (Mandell and Keast 2009:166-167; Vangen and McGuire 2015:18). Within the context of CPM, collaborative efforts and leadership across sectors, organisations and fields enable effective solutions to complex social challenges (Raffel *et al.* 2009b:383; Hartley and Benington 2011:6-7) and multi-stakeholder demands for public value, legitimacy and accountability (Raffel *et al.* 2009a:4; Orazi *et al.* 2013:490).

Although IGR researchers, according to Connelly (2007:1245), addressed leadership informally and in an unstructured manner, the view by other scholars is that CPM and its leadership dimension has the potential to minimise the dark side of leadership in public administration, which manifests itself through corruption (Broussine and Callahan 2016:481), maladministration and incompetence (Rhodes 2014:110-112). This makes CPM suitable for the governance era and appropriate for dealing with some of the weaknesses of TPA and NPM, such as bureaucratic rigidity, functional silos, the disregard for democratic values and fragmentation, as elaborated upon in sections 2.2.2 and 2.2.3 of chapter two.

As a practice-based theory, the TCA is concerned with inter-organisational collaboration, and addresses the tension between collaborative advantage and inertia (Huxham and Vangen 2005). Similar to the observation made about the resource intensive nature of IGR and IGM in chapter two, section 2.3 of this study, Huxham and Vangen (2005:1) acknowledge that the pursuit for collaborative advantage is a resource intensive activity; and as such, it must not be pursued unless the stakes are high for the task. What makes collaboration resource intensive, as explained in chapter two section 2.3.2 and further noted by Mandell and Keast (2009:175), is that it is more intense than cooperation and coordination and existing theories are helpful in understanding the latter two, but not inter-organisational collaboration. Vangen and McGuire (2015:11-12) maintain that collaborative contexts are characterised by ambiguity, complexity and paradox in the sense that they have inherent contradictions

and tensions; hence, they are prone to collaborative inertia and failure, rather than collaborative advantage, because there is usually no consensus on who should influence whom. Tensions over who should influence whom are contrary to the fact that in a collaborative context leadership is an emergent social construct (Vangen and McGuire 2015:17) and there are no leaders and followers in collaborative networks, but there are “equals” who are focusing on delivering change (Mandell and Keast 2009:163; Vangen and McGuire 2015:23-24, Popp *et al.* 2013:39). Accordingly, Popp *et al.* (2013:39-40) argue that “network members are equals, but some may have more formal power due to their positions, professional education, training, political clout and resources, but that power cannot be wielded unilaterally”.

The CRL, which is interrelated with CPM and TCA, is concerned with the relational and collective forms of leaderships and the context within which the relations occur (Vangen and McGuire 2015:230). The model places emphasis on the social construction of meaning over time and seeks to integrate subjective interpretation and objective reality into a single perspective (Opsina and Sorenson 2006:189). There is therefore no discussion of the CRL lens because it is intricately connected with the collective theories and approaches to leadership that are discussed in section 3.4.2.3 above and it is closely aligned with CLT, which is discussed in section 3.5 below.

The above analysis has confirmed that although administrative literature has increased over the years, there is limited literature on integrative and collective public leadership (Raffel *et al.* 2009a:10; Ospina 2016:275,284). The weakness justifies why administrative leadership should take advantage of mainstream literature, and simultaneously capitalise on the uniqueness of its political decision-making processes and complex accountability arrangements and context to add value to theory development with respect to the social and relational nature of leadership in the networked environment (Ospina 2016:284). Through the application of CLT in the G&A Cluster, the study will make a contribution towards the practice of leadership as an emergence from a dynamic and interactive process in the governance context.

3.4.3.1 The rationale for collective leadership in public administration

As already discussed in section 2.2 of chapter two, public administration has evolved from traditional hierarchy (TPA) to entrepreneurial management (NPM), and further

transitioned into the network-based model (NPG) which emphasises collaboration, public value and public values, as well as democratic accountability (Van Wart 2013:521). Equally, it is acknowledged in chapter two and further noted by Schneider and Bauer (2007:15) as well as Rhodes (2017:221) that the governance of societies is no longer about the dominant power of a specific group or model, but the intersection of multiple forms of governance including markets, networks, hierarchies and other emerging mechanisms that may not be easily identifiable. According to Rhodes (2017:221), the dominance of any form of governance has the potential to erode trust, effectiveness and legitimacy, thus justifying the need for hybrid governance arrangements and integrative leadership competencies, inclusive of meta-governing, boundary spanning, collaborative leadership and other competencies that are elaborated upon in chapter four. Such hybrid forms of governance demonstrate that the key drivers of public administration reform, as outlined in sections 2.2.2 to 2.2.4 of chapter two, and their influence on IGR and IGM, have a direct and indirect influence on developments in the leadership field, administrative leadership in particular.

Sindane (2011:755) and Ospina's (2016:276) observation is that in the governance era, public leadership is relational and collective and dictates that public institutions should collaborate with each other and other stakeholders to achieve a shared vision and shared public value. As a collective process, public leadership does not really require positional power (Oswald-Herold *et al.* 2018:3), but does not preclude positional power, especially in structured pluralising forms of leadership such as inter-organisational arrangements (Sergi *et al.* 2017:38-39). In particular, collective leadership is the emergent capability (Ospina 2016:281; Crosby and Bryson 2018:1268) that makes collaborative management (Ospina 2016:277) and public value creation (Moore 1995, 2013; Denhardt and Denhardt 2015ct) a collective leadership achievement (Sindane 2011:760; Crosby and Bryson 2018:1266).

Public values and public value creation is the basis for leadership for the common good, which includes respect for the constitution and rule of law, personal integrity, ethics and professional excellence (Crosby and Bryson 2018:1268). According to Bryson and Crosby (2007:186-188), public value can be created (or destroyed) when different stakeholders (inclusive of government, non-profit organisations, business, media and communities) do not perform their duties and responsibilities optimally.

Public value creation in such a diverse context requires administrative leadership (and various sectoral leadership) to have competence in the following: understanding of the socio-economic, political, technological, and other contexts; personal leadership; team and organisational leadership; ethical leadership; political and visionary leadership; as well as policy entrepreneurship (Bryson and Crosby 2007:186-188). Cognisant of this dynamic context, Crosby and Bryson's (2018:1266) advice is that public administration scholars and practitioners should develop public leadership as a multi-level, collective and cross-sector responsibility that is concerned with public value creation and is infused with public values.

The challenge, according to several authors (Raelin 2010:xviii; Crosby and Bryson 2018:1265) is that hierarchical public administration systems and leadership practices are still entrenched in the public administration environment, in spite of the excitement about post-heroic leadership theories and models. Although hierarchy is still essential for coordination and direction setting in organisations (Leithwood *et al.* 2007:267), in the governance era, a hierarchy driven performance is not good enough because the NPG views "politics as the politically mediated expression of collectively determined preferences" instead of a simple aggregation of individual preferences (Bao *et al.* 2012:447). This is in spite of the criticisms levelled against NGG (Xu *et al.* 2015; Moynihan 2014) in section 2.2.4.3 above.

The problem is that there is limited research to inform the transition from intra-organisational hierarchies to inter-organisational systems and shared leadership (Morse and Buss 2007:16; Van Wart 2013:537). The cause of this limitation is that there is no developed theory of leadership for the common good and the new governance (Bryson and Crosby 2007; Crosby and Bryson 2018). The study will therefore contribute towards narrowing the divergence between the ideological and theoretical forms of pluralising leadership and administrative leadership practice through proposing the development of a competency framework for the G&A Cluster using a CLT lens.

3.4.4 The limitations and prospects of collective leadership

The analysis in the preceding sections has demonstrated that collective leadership capacity is essential for survival in turbulent environments that form an integral part of

the governance era. Although collaborative and networked arrangements are essential especially in contexts where strategic roles are collective, objectives are diverse and power is diffused, collective leadership and the leadership constellations that underpin them are fragile because collective effort is complex and extreme pluralism makes it difficult to form an effective leadership constellation (Denis *et al.* 2001:809, 824). Burns (1978:556) in the 1970s also remarked that on paper collective leadership is possible but difficult in practice, because in a collective setting, leaders are constrained by institutional and administrative processes that limit their capacity to appeal to the public without the support and/or consent of their peers. As such, collective leadership approaches have attracted a lot of scepticism and criticism due to their association with aimlessness, chaotic processes and unclear lines of accountability (Raelin 2017:4-6).

One of the barriers to the realisation of collective leadership is that leadership development that seeks to develop collective social capital is very difficult to design and implement because it requires time and concrete opportunities to learn from real work situations (Dalakoura 2010:433-434; Lee *et al.* 2013:2-3). Arena and Uhl-Bien (2016:22-23) define social capital as the competitive advantage created by interconnections between people and groups and further assert that the transition from “competency-based models” of human capital development to social capital development requires a new “leadership framework”. Murphy (2019:210) remarks that it is ironic that although many organisations look different from those of 20 years ago, the content of leadership development programmes has remained focused on 40-year-old concepts and techniques. The thesis argues that the fragmented nature of the collective leadership literature contributes to the lack of a new and coherent leadership framework and intensifies the difficulty to transition from human to social capital development. This results in organisations and leadership development institutions and programmes continuing to focus on individual human capital development (Dalakoura 2010:437; Day *et al.* 2014:64; Day and Liu 2019:233-234) at the expense of collective social capital. These challenges are addressed in the in-depth analysis of existing and emerging competencies in chapter four.

The analysis has identified discrepancies between the emerging discourse on collective leadership theory and leadership practice, as well as challenges created by

the proliferation and compartmentalisation of emerging theories and practice oriented literature (Raelin 2005; Denis *et al.* 2012; Storey *et al.* 2017; Banks *et al.* 2018; Mango 2018). Equally, Storey *et al.* (2017:600) contend that future research themes will emerge from literature on plural forms of leadership. For Sergi *et al.* (2017:45), questions dealing with collective forms of leadership should not just focus on who forms part of the collective and how the collective operates, but also on why it emerged. The assertions by Sergi *et al.* (2017), Storey *et al.* (2017) and several other authors confirm the relevance of this study and serve as a basis to probe some of the questions and issues highlighted by Sergi *et al.* (2017) and other authors. In addition, the assertions and available literature enable one to envisage collective leadership in a leaderful (Raelin 2003; 2005), structured-by-choice (Sergi *et al.* 2017:35) inter-organisational arrangement such as the G&A Cluster.

In addition to providing a broad overview of the cumulative effect of leadership theories, approaches and models on the state of the field, the analysis has alluded to the content and context that is essential to a discussion of the integrative nature of CLT in section 3.5 below.

3.5 THE INTEGRATIVE NATURE OF COMPLEXITY LEADERSHIP THEORY

As a “new genre” theory (Avolio *et al.* 2009:421) with “novel and instructive” insights (Rosenhead *et al.* 2019:20), CLT is variously labelled as an integrative leadership theory (Van Wart 2015:11; Crosby and Bryson 2018:1271, 1275), a theoretical element of the collective leadership literature (Ospina 2016:281; Sergi *et al.* 2017:44), and a collective leadership theory (Crosby and Bryson 2018:1270). Thus, the analysis in this section provides an overview of CLT, its unique features and connections with other theories, plus relevance in public administration within the governance context.

3.5.1 Background to complexity leadership theory

The prospect of applying complexity science principles to develop leadership principles is traced to Margaret Wheatley’s 1992 publication on “Leadership and the New Science”, followed by scholars such as Ralph Stacey (1995) and Kathleen Marie Eisenhardt (1995) (Blandin 2007:140; Uhl-Bien and Marion 2011:470; Rosenhead *et al.* 4-5). According to Uhl-Bien and Marion (2011:470), Wheatley (1992) emphasised the need for a shift from managerial leadership to relational leadership. But complexity

science was firmly introduced to leadership research by Marion and Uhl-Bien (2001) through the publication of “Leadership in complex organisations”. Consequently, there are many concepts in CLT that emanate from complexity science and other theories, but the most relevant concepts for the study are the CAS, agents, edge of chaos (also referred to as “bounded instability”), self-organisation or dissipative structures, requisite complexity and emergence (Blandin 2007:144-145). It is thus important to explain the selected concepts to ensure clarity.

As stated in chapter one, CAS are regarded as fluid, dynamic and adaptable open systems that can be found in hierarchical and network structures (Rhodes and MacKechnie 2003:64; Uhl-Bien *et al.* 2017:11; Uhl-Bien and Arena 2018:100). According to Moore (2014:28-30), CAS are a subset of complex systems that are characterised by non-linear dynamics and they comprise of heterogeneous agents that interact continuously to develop meaning collectively in a coordinated manner. Due to their dynamic nature, Blandin (2007:144) notes that CAS can operate in stable, unstable and the edge of chaos zones. Therefore, the unit of analysis in CLT is the CAS - of which the G&A Cluster is regarded as a meso level CAS, as stated in sections 1.3 of chapter one and 2.2.3.4 of chapter two. The diversity of agents within the CAS include, amongst others, individuals, ideas, networks and organisations (Uhl-Bien *et al.* 2007:304; Lichtenstein and Plowman 2009:618; Uhl-Bien and Arena 2018:99).

According to Boisot and McKelvey (2011:279), the “Law of Requisite Complexity” requires that a CAS should be able to adapt its level of complexity to match the corresponding environmental complexity. Central to the realisation of requisite complexity is emergence, which is the capacity that develops from the interactive dynamics of agents within a CAS (Blandin 2007:144; Uhl-Bien and Marion 2011:375). Goldstein *et al.* (2010:13) plus Uhl-Bien and Marion (2011:473) explain emergence as the novel “dissipative” structures, processes and practices and the learning, innovation and adaptation arising from dynamic interactions in a CAS. Emergence is essential in CLT because survival, adaptation and evolution are central to complexity, instead of stability, order and equilibrium. The role of a leader in complexity is to be a dynamic catalyst, collaborator and facilitator (Blandin 2007:146-147). Therefore, CLT has implications for the processes, systems and requisite competencies for a CAS such as the G&A Cluster.

3.5.2 Integrative and unique features of complexity leadership theory

According to Uhl-Bien and Marion (2011:474), during the earlier period of applying complexity science to leadership studies, Hazy (2006) identified four leadership forms, namely convergence, variety, unity and generative. Generative leadership, assert Goldstein *et al.* (2010:3, 15), focuses on mutual influence by anybody through the practice of generative leadership or mutual influence. Subsequent to Hazy (2006), Uhl-Bien *et al.* (2007) proposed three leadership functions, namely administrative, enabling and adaptive. Administrative leadership, according to Uhl-Bien and Marion (2011:474), is associated with formal leadership in formal organisational structures; adaptive leadership is associated with Stacey's complex response process, which is generally informal, dynamic and interactive, while enabling leadership mediates tensions between the two through fostering interactive dynamics and relaxing administrative rules and procedures. This makes enabling leadership "a new way of thinking" in "response to complexity" (Uhl-Bien and Arena 2017:16).

CLT is also informed by network theory (Arena and Uhl-Bien 2016:26) and is aligned to a shared or distributed view of leadership (Uhl-Bien and Marion 2011:473), but acknowledges the importance of individual leadership functions, processes and context. Consequently, it is also a processual and contextual theory of leadership (Uhl-Bien and Marion 2011:473-477). Additionally, CLT is also touted as a relational approach to leadership within and between organisations, which makes it relevant in participatory governance systems and multi-actor network governance systems (Craps *et al.* 2019:1-4). According to Lichtenstein *et al.* (2006:3-4), "a key contribution of a complexity leadership theory is that it provides an integrative theoretical framework for explaining interactive dynamics that have been acknowledged by a variety of emerging leadership theories, e.g. shared leadership (Pearce and Conger, 2003), collective leadership (Weick and Roberts 1993), distributed leadership (Gronn 2002), relational leadership (Drath 2001; Uhl-Bien in press), adaptive leadership (Linsky and Heifetz 2002; Uhl-Bien *et al.* 2004), and leadership as an emergent organizational meta-capability (Hazy 2004, 2006)".

In particular, Northouse (2016:275-276) equates Heifetz's (1994) holding environment to Uhl-Bien *et al.*'s (2007) adaptive space. He further asserts that the adaptive leadership component of CLT was influenced by Heifetz's (1994) original conception

of adaptive leadership and its process-oriented, follower-centred and people-driven approach to finding solutions through a prescriptive approach that requires the creation of a holding environment. The difference is that in CLT, adaptive leadership emerges from tensions and struggles over conflicting needs, ideas and preferences (Northouse 2016:260), but not a person as is the case with Heifetz's adaptive leadership theory.

As noted in section 1.2 of chapter one, few of even the most agile and ambidextrous leaders would be proficient in all three functions of leadership (Uhl-Bien and Arena 2017:14-17; 2018:90-101). The reason for this is that enabling leadership, which is central in "managing the entanglement" (Uhl-Bien and Marion 2009:632-635; Murphy *et al.* 2017) between administrative and adaptive leadership, is difficult to explain, as those who practice it do so based on tacit knowledge. The observation made by Nooteboom and Termeer (2013:29) is that in governance systems, enabling leadership supports adaptive leaders through the provision of resources such as time and space to manoeuvre, as well as advocacy support for innovative ideas. Friedrich *et al.* (2011:39) argue that it is unrealistic to expect a single person to master all areas of leadership in all contexts. Therefore, it is advisable to adopt a collective approach to leadership because ambidextrous leadership, assert Probst *et al.* (2011:329,332), is a shared capability that should be cultivated across all levels of the organisation, not just amongst selected top leaders. Notwithstanding the caution by Friedrich *et al.* (2011) and Probst *et al.* (2011), the lack of proficiency in CLT's three functions of leadership justifies the need for research on how to develop micro and meso level leadership ambidexterity across the organisation's hierarchy and networks (Probst *et al.* 2011:329; Uhl-Bien and Arena 2018:92,101) and the importance of this study.

To address the difficulty of explaining how the entanglement between adaptive and administrative leadership is managed through enabling leadership, the study draws on complexity leadership work done in organisational psychology by Hannah *et al.* (2011) and Lord *et al.* (2011). The rationale for drawing from organisational psychology derives from the interdisciplinary nature of Public Administration and leadership, as well as the connection between the complexity concepts discussed by Hannah *et al.* (2011) and Lord *et al.* (2011) with the foundational, intra-organisational, and inter-organisational competencies highlighted in section 3.4.2.3 above.

According to Lord *et al.* (2011:105), at the individual leadership level, requisite complexity comprises of static and dynamic “individual requisite complexity” (IRC). Both static and dynamic IRC rely on general cognitive, self, social and affective complexity mental domains. Static IRC relies on prior experience and existing knowledge within each of these domains, whereas dynamic IRC generates novel complexity through dynamic self-regulation and integration of all domains at different levels of intensity, depending on the task and context (Lord *et al.* 2011:120). Hannah *et al.* (2011:215) provide an expansion to Lord *et al.*'s work on the basis that static and dynamic complexity form an integral part of collective requisite complexity (CRC). In particular, Hannah *et al.* (2011:215) acknowledge that static and dynamic IRC serve as the basis for both forms of CRC. In addition, static IRC and CRC serve as the basis for dynamic IRC and CRC, provided there are appropriate group dynamics, social regulation structures and feedback mechanisms (Hannah *et al.* 2011:215). Similar to Raelin's (2005) view of concurrent, collective and collaborative leaderful practice, Hannah *et al.* (2011:228) advise that in a dynamic collective, people with different views should be given or should proactively take the opportunity to influence leadership processes. As such, chapter four will explore the leadership competency implications of IRC and CRC, as well as the conversion of static IRC and CRC into dynamic IRC and CRC.

From the preceding analysis, it is clear that complexity leadership requires the mastery of a combination of different leadership attributes and competencies from traditional to emerging leadership, as well as the acute judgement on when and how to use which abilities. Nonetheless, complexity leadership is not a replacement for other types of leadership, but it should and must coexist with them (Blandin 2007:148-149; Gronn 2007:39). As noted in chapter one, CLT is not a solution to all leadership, competency and public administration challenges, but can be viewed as a hybrid model, whose complexity is meant to match the complexity of hybrid governance systems and hybrid organisational arrangements (Stoker 2006:54; Christensen and Laegreid 2010a:13; Hartley and Benington 2011:5; Sorenson *et al.* 2011:35-36; Rhodes 2017:221).

3.5.3 Complexity leadership theory's strengths and criticisms

The inclusive nature of CLT is the reason why CLT is regarded as an integrative, relational, process and systems theory because its features are informed by several

theories and variables from other theories. According to Rosenhead *et al.* (2019:19-20), complexity theory provides a valuable metaphor for “stimulating thought about how leadership can be exercised creatively” and for studying leadership practice from multiple perspectives in complex environments. Tourish (2019:25-26) is of the view that CLT’s main contribution is that it explores “relational dynamics in a more rounded form than established approaches such as transformational and authentic leadership theories have been able to do”. In addition, though CLT is based in complexity science but not bureaucracy, it is meant for application in bureaucratic organisations that are generally not designed to be adaptive in order to assist managers to create space and conditions for adaptation (Uhl-Bien and Marion 2011:473). CLT is thus relevant for application in the G&A Cluster because the G&A Cluster is integrally linked with departments that are structured in a hierarchical manner. As such, CLT serves as a lens to make sense of leadership transitions from hierarchical institutions into horizontal inter-organisational structures and *vice versa*.

Notwithstanding, CLT is criticised for being abstract, in addition to its lack of adequate empirical and analytic frameworks that recognise leadership as a dynamic process and adaptive emergence or occurrence from the edge of chaos (Hartley and Benington 2011:4; Uhl-Bien and Marion 2011:478; Rosenhead *et al.* 2019:19; Tourish 2019:19). In particular, in Public Administration, CLT has not been applied much in management and leadership (Blandin 2007:149). The same applies in the South African context, although Walters’ (2020) exploration of the relationship between leadership, organisational theory and complexity theory in public higher education universities is encouraging.

The slow progress in transferring complexity theory to public administration and other disciplines due to lack of agreement on meanings or loss of meaning of concepts is hampering progress with the development of leadership theory and practice (Blandin 2007:150). Supporting this criticism are the observations made by Uhl-Bien and Arena (2017:14-17; 2018:90-101) in the preceding section, that enabling leadership is not easy to explain because those who practice it rely on tacit knowledge. In its defence, Clarke (2013:146) says instead of focusing on its predictive incapacity, CLT should be recognised for its relational and system explanatory powers.

The study also argues that the extent of CLT's integration with other theories could make it susceptible to criticisms that are directed at its associated theories. According to Tourish (2019:1-2), CLT remains trapped in the functionalist mind-set or individualistic leader dominated model, thus running the risk of concealing old theories with new concepts to legitimise unbalanced power relations in the workplace by over attributing organisational performance to multi-talented individual leaders. For Tourish (2019:7-8), CLT assumes that there is a leader who encourages experimentation, establishes consistent routines, creates chains of responsibility and promotes a learning culture, which is why Arena and Uhl-Bien (2016:23) question whether leaders in bureaucratic structures can enable the emergence of new solutions and innovation.

In spite of these weaknesses, Blandin (2007:150-151) asserts that CLT has implications for: leaders to rethink how they conceive and practice leadership from the individual to the collective; people who teach leadership to discard outmoded leadership competency models; large scale research; and how organisations deal with change. As such, Tourish (2019:25) says in order to go beyond the leader-centric challenge, "CLT needs to embrace a deeper process view of communication, in which communication is less in a traditional 'transmission' mode whereby powerful leaders manage meaning for others, to and in which meaning is ceaselessly co-constructed, debated, iterated and ransacked by multiple competing interests amongst individuals and groups". This view is substantiated by Friedrich *et al.*'s (2011:3) contention that having multiple leaders is not sufficient, and the most important aspects of collective leadership are collaboration, information sharing and joint decision-making, even if members of the collective represent different positions and areas of expertise. While Tourish's (2019) criticisms seem to focus on leadership in intra-organisational settings, through the study, the strengths and weaknesses of CLT are examined in the context of the G&A Cluster, which is an inter-organisational structure.

Nonetheless, the outlined strengths and limitations of CLT justify the need for empirical research using a variety of methods such as case studies, grounded theory and agent modelling (Uhl-Bien and Marion 2011:478). Therefore, the case study approach adopted in this study contributes to the application of CLT at the meso organisational level within the public administration context.

3.6 CONCLUSION

The analysis has demonstrated that leadership theory, models and approaches have evolved in response to the weaknesses of earlier theories, thus resulting in the development of collective and hybrid forms of leadership that have capacity to respond to the complexity of organisational structures and hybrid governance systems (Hartley and Benington 2011:5; Rhodes 2017:221). The shift from individual and intra-organisational leadership has contributed towards the growing interest on leadership constellations and a phenomenon that is variously referred to as collective, distributed, plural, emergent and shared leadership (Bolden 2004:13; Denis *et al.* 2012:232; Raelin 2017:3; Sergi *et al.* 2017:35-36). Building on the analysis provided in chapter two, the analysis in this chapter has also alluded to the relevance of CLT for individual and collective leadership competence in the public administration governance context.

The literature analysis has also confirmed that there is no convergence between the theoretical (and ideological) shift from the individual leader emphasis to collective leadership because the leadership field continues to be dominated by leader-centric practices and programmes. There is also no convergence between the conceptual shift from intra-organisational to inter-organisational leadership in terms of theory development and practice. The reviewed literature also alludes to limitations in the articulation of leadership competencies and the implementation of leadership development programmes required to make collective leadership effective (Morse and Buss 2007:16; Van Wart 2013:537; Broussine and Callahan 2016:486; Hartley and Benington 2011:31; Bao *et al.* 2012:453). These observations support the foundational theoretical statements that are outlined in chapter one, to the effect that the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the government cluster system in South Africa can be attributed to the inability of Public Service leaders to operationalise the system in the complex environment (Uhl-Bien and Arena 2018) for which it was designed, due to reliance on traditional leadership theoretical frameworks and their associated competency frameworks (Bolden *et al.* 2003; Van Wart 2003, Fernandez *et al.* 2010).

In spite of the noted limitations, there is agreement that some of the required competencies for public sector leaders include, amongst others, foundational competencies such as technical expertise, EQ and self-leadership (Goleman 1998:7; Pearce and Manz 2005:139; Raelin 2010:1; Adair 2011:71), as well as intra-

organisational leadership (Brookes 2007:15-18; Bao *et al.* 2012:453). Other emerging competencies include political awareness, boundary spanning capacity and an understanding of the broader context (Bryson and Crosby 2007:186-188; Hartley and Benington 2011:31; Williams 2013:25-26; Rhodes 2017:221). As such, chapter four elaborates on the historical development of leadership competency frameworks as well as an in-depth analysis of emerging competencies in relation to leadership theory and practice in Public Administration and other fields.

CHAPTER FOUR: LEADERSHIP COMPETENCE AND COMPETENCY FOR THE GOVERNANCE ERA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The analysis in chapter three elaborated on the evolving and cumulative nature of leadership theory and practice, and further highlighted the areas of divergence between theory development and practice in the governance era. In particular, the analysis alluded to a disjuncture between leadership practice and the ideological and theoretical call to shift emphasis from leader-centric approaches to collective and hybrid approaches to leadership, as well as the contributing factors and competency implications. To expand on the latter, this chapter examines the evolution of competence and the competency movement broadly and within the P(p)ublic A(a)dmistration context, with specific emphasis on leadership competence and competencies.

The competence and competency constructs are defined in order to clarify their differences and relationship. The discussion incorporates global, regional and local leadership competency perspectives from various authors, given that public administration operates within a local and global context. In order to identify gaps in existing competency frameworks and emerging competencies for inter-organisational leadership in the governance context, a brief analysis of three competency frameworks that are relevant for the public administration environment is provided. In addition, the competencies proposed by different authors based on the analysis of existing literature on leadership, competency-based management (CBM) and other fields are considered.

4.2 CONCEPTUALISING COMPETENCE AND THE COMPETENCY MOVEMENT

In this section the definition of competence and competency as well as the origins of the competency movement and approaches to the development of competency frameworks are presented.

4.2.1 The origins of competence and the competency movement

The foundations of the competency movement, according to Horton (2002:6), date back to the expansion of apprenticeship schemes and the study of jobs and their

prerequisite skills during the industrial revolution of the 18th and 19th centuries as well as the advent of functional job analysis techniques that resulted in the compilation of the “Occupational Titles” dictionary in the 1930s. Marijani (2017:172-173) traces the promotion of competence to Robert White’s 1959 publication: “Motivation reconsidered: the concept of competence”. White (1959:279) introduced the concept of competence due to the failure of motivation theories to explain the significance of exploratory and playful behaviour in advancing learning through the dynamic interactions of people with their surrounding environment. White’s (1959:297) definition of competence as the inherent and acquired capacity of humans to interact effectively with their environment resonates with the view held by several scholars who are cited in section 3.1.1 of chapter three (House and Aditya 1997; Boyatzis 2008; Avolio *et al.* 2009; Van Wart 2015) that leaders are both born and made. In fact, White (1959:325-326) held the view that humans, unlike animals with their predominantly innate capacity, increase their competence to deal with their environments through cumulative learning.

However, scholars and practitioners (Rodriguez *et al.* 2002:309; Bolden and Gosling 2006:148; Op de Beeck and Hondeghem 2010:11; Croft and Seemiller 2017:8; Chow *et al.* 2017:150) credit David McClelland (1973) for launching the competency movement through the publication of “Testing for competence rather than intelligence”. McClelland (1973:3-4) critiques the reliability of academic qualifications and knowledge in predicting competence in “clusters of life outcomes” such as work performance, as well as social outcomes related to interpersonal skills and leadership. Also, McClelland (1973:8-9) argues that training and experience can reinforce behavioural characteristics or competencies that enhance performance in the “clusters of life outcomes”. McClelland and his colleagues at the McBer Consultancy Group advanced the application of the competency approach (Bolden and Gosling 2006:148).

As observed by several authors (Op de Beeck and Hondeghem 2010:14; Croft and Seemiller 2017:7) and expanded further in the following sections, the widespread use of competencies is also referred to as CBM. Therefore, before proceeding with the analysis further, it is important to reflect on the meaning of competence, competency and other related concepts.

4.2.2 Definitions of competence and competency

Traditionally, competence refers to the formal or legal authority of an institution or office holder to perform a function; but the meaning has expanded to refer to an organisation's practical ability to perform a function as well as an individual's ability to perform a specific task (Hood and Lodge 2004:316). It is important to note that organisational competence in the form of strategic core competencies shifts attention from the individual to the organisation (Hood and Lodge 2004:313; Bolden and Gosling 2006:149), which is why Markus *et al.* (2005:118) regard organisational core competencies or capabilities as a collective endeavour. In addition, competence and competency are different but interrelated concepts.

According to Bolden and Gosling (2006:149), initially the UK and the USA used similar terms, but there was divergence in the application of the concepts in the sense that the UK adopted a technical approach as informed by functional job analysis, and the USA adopted a behavioural approach based on the initial work done by Boyatzis and the McBer consultants. As such, Horton (2002:4) contends that competence is the ability to perform and it is outcome-oriented, while competency is input- and process-oriented and deals with the required behaviours to perform. The construct of competence (and competences in the plural) is thus influenced by the UK's functional analysis approach, while competency together with competencies as its plural is aligned to the USA's behavioural approach. The competency approach has close links with the popularity of competency frameworks, thus resulting in what Op de Beeck and Hondegheem (2010:13) regard as many (and evolving) definitions of competency and competencies.

Boyatzis (1982:20) defines individual competencies as fundamental characteristics, such as motives, traits, skills, self-image, social roles or knowledge that result in effective and superior performance in the job. The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) in the USA "defines competency as a measurable pattern of knowledge, skills, abilities, behaviours and other characteristics that an individual needs to perform work roles or occupational functions successfully" (Rodriguez *et al.* 2002:310). The definition tendered by Croft and Seemiller (2017:7) is aligned to the first two, but incorporates experience as one of the competencies required to perform a job. As noted by Getha-Taylor *et al.* (2013:142) competencies extend beyond "traditional

knowledge, skills and abilities” (KSAs) to capture job-related traits, motives and a self-concept. Cognisant of the distinction between the input-orientation and outcomes-orientation to competency and competence, Virtanen (2000:333-334) contends that competence as an outcome is not a qualification, role, function, task, skill or personality trait, it is rather a human capital attribute that manifests itself through productivity. This observation is consistent with Bellingham and O’Brien’s (2005:xii-xiii) emphasis that leadership is not a person or place in the organisation, it is a verb to signal the response that every employee makes to a challenge or opportunity at hand in order to add value to themselves and others.

Although each definition outlined above incorporates one or few different characteristics, the definitions invoke related concepts to demonstrate that the distinction between competence and competency has become blurry. This explains why currently competence broadly refers to demonstrated application of knowledge, skills, traits, talents, aptitudes and many other capabilities (William 2013:20), in line with Horton’s (2002:4) emphasis of outcome orientation, whereas competency refers to what is required but not yet demonstrated. In this study competence and competency are thus used in line with Horton’s (2002) distinction, but emphasis is placed on the required (input- and process-oriented) competencies because competency frameworks are concerned with the required KSA plus other attributes and job requirements, but not what has already been demonstrated.

According to Markus *et al.* (2005:118), competency frameworks should provide the operational description for each competency and sub-competency as well as the measurable performance indicators. To this end, Mau (2009:317) argues that during the initial stages of the competency movement, competency frameworks were designed for a single job in a one size fits all approach, and the design progressed to the multiple-job approach with some level of differentiation between jobs. The former approach conceptualises competencies in a generic fashion while the latter enables job specificity (Joyce and Adams 2010:876). While job specificity can be beneficial, McClelland (1973:9) cautions that extreme levels of specificity may result in hundreds or thousands of assessments; hence, he recommends generic assessments across the “clusters of life outcomes”.

4.2.3 Rationale for the competency approach

Horton (2002:6) is of the view that current ideas about competence and competencies were influenced by economic and political changes in the 1960s. For Hondeghem (2002:173), CBM started in the private sector, similar to most human resource management (HRM) ideas, due to the need to gain competitive advantage over competitors. In public administration, competency frameworks were introduced in countries such as the USA, the UK and Germany due to political attempts to, amongst other things, transform employment practices as evidenced through the introduction of short term employment contracts as part of NPM (Hood and Lodge 2004:328). The observation made by Op de Beeck and Hondeghem (2010:12) is that CBM became popular in the 1980s in the USA and the UK, parallel to the start of NPM, whereas in the 1990s it formed part of broader reform initiatives from traditional personnel management to strategic management. In particular, administrative leadership competency work started in the USA in 1979 with the creation of the Senior Executive Service (SES) and countries such as the UK, New Zealand, Canada, Australia, Germany and the Netherlands developed theirs in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Hood and Lodge 2004:314; Joyce and Adams 2010:875). Interest in the competence of senior public servants is attributed to concerns and dissatisfaction with the skills of public sector leaders (Hood and Lodge 2004:313).

The introduction of CBM in public administration, according to Op de Beeck and Hondeghem (2010:153), was influenced by changes from mass production to consumer and service focus, changes from hierarchical to horizontal management, as well as growing competition between the public and private sectors and amongst public sector institutions. Op de Beeck and Hondeghem (2010:15) argue further that the introduction of CBM was also a means to bring about change, adaptability, flexibility and entrepreneurship, in line with the NPM principles. Hood and Lodge (2004:328) question whether CBM interventions and other related initiatives contributed to public administration reform as envisaged, or whether they diverted attention away from systemic issues such as policy development and prioritisation, and group behaviour in bureaucracies. Nonetheless, Dinh *et al.* (2014:26) note that the competency approach to leadership is fully established within the leadership field and, as illustrated in the following sections, it is adaptable to continually changing

environments. This is the reason why the study is investigating the application of CBM in an inter-organisational structure such as the G&A Cluster.

4.2.4 Approaches to develop competencies and competency frameworks

Competency frameworks are developed through trial and error (Op de Beeck and Hondeghem 2010:21) and, according to Bolden *et al.* (2003:37), the process of developing competency frameworks is more important than the final frameworks. McClelland (1973) proposed a mixture of six empirical and normative steps to develop competencies and these are summarised as follows:

- (a) criterion sampling, which places emphasis on the observation of performance in a real-life practical environment and then analysis of observed behaviour on performance application of theory;
- (b) testing for behavioural changes after training and experience, as a way to test the validity of the findings from criterion sampling;
- (c) publication of the mechanism to improve the tested characteristics as a basis to facilitate genuine development;
- (d) testing for “competencies involved in clusters of life outcomes,” in addition to selected traditional competencies and personality attributes such as reading, communicating, goal setting, patience and calculating;
- (e) testing both “operant as well as respondent behaviour” to generate alternative responses to a situation instead of imposing pre-set responses regardless of the context; and
- (f) sampling “operant thought patterns” to increase the generalisability of different outcomes, as a substitute to inferences about the underlying thought patterns.

Joyce and Adams (2010:879) condensed McClelland’s (1973) approach into a three-step process. The first step is to research typical job demands from existing and former employees; the second is a study of current employees using the Behavioural Event Interview (BEI) technique to gather data from top and average performers; and lastly, the development and validation of the competency model. Therefore, there is general agreement (Op de Beeck and Hondeghem 2010:47-48; Getha-Taylor *et al.* 2013:141) that the process of developing competency frameworks starts with the identification of competencies for a specific job and the process of developing competency frameworks should include engagements with various stakeholders.

Since approaches to develop well-articulated competency frameworks are time consuming and costly, Intagliata *et al.* (2000:6) and Joyce and Adams (2010:883) note that sometimes organisations take short cuts by simply adopting a publicly available framework, or use focus groups to generate competency lists, or rank predetermined lists. Such approaches result in poor implementation and lack of alignment between competency frameworks and organisational contexts and priorities.

4.2.5 The utilisation and strengths of competency-based management

Competencies are used in various aspects of HRM, including recruitment, selection, assessment, training and development (Spencer and Spencer 1993:347; Rodriguez *et al.* 2002:309,319; Croft and Seemiller 2017:8). They can also be used to organise occupations into groups as well as for career development and succession planning (Rodriguez *et al.* 2002:320-2; Markus *et al.* 2005:118). Competency frameworks also serve as a normative instrument to shape behaviour towards desired organisational practices (Markus *et al.* 2005:124), as well as a heuristic device to broaden key areas of knowledge and skills (Ruben 2019:25-26). The use of competencies for training and development is essential because knowing and memorising individual and collective competency lists, as noted by Tubbs and Schulz (2006:33) and Avelino *et al.* (2017:218), does not translate into any form of competence - practical application is essential. The observation by Op de Beeck and Hondeghem (2010:8, 16) is that competencies increase the employability of employees across multiple institutions and sectors, which is an important feature in the context of IGR and IGM mechanisms. Several authors (Rodriguez *et al.* 2002:322; Op de Beeck and Hondeghem 2010:21) also claim that the optimal utilisation of competency frameworks can enable HRM functions within organisations to serve as strategic partners to management.

Some of the cited strengths of CBM (Intagliata *et al.* 2000:3; Op de Beeck and Hondeghem 2010:8, 16) are that they promote a common language of management within organisations, guide direction and clarify expectations to employees through defining the required behaviours to produce results and create synergy. In addition, if properly defined, effectively communicated and used optimally, CBM can ensure consistent service delivery to customers and investor confidence. As such, competencies can be used to communicate consistent messages about HRM issues as well as organisational objectives (Intagliata *et al.* 2000:3; Horton 2002:3; Markus *et*

al. 2005:118; Joyce and Adams 2010:883). The assertion by Daweti and Evans (2017:163) that the competency approach serves as a mechanism to connect macro level vision and strategy with micro level practices expresses the utility of CBM aptly.

Linked to the leadership skills theory, as discussed in section 3.4.2.1 of chapter three, CBM can be incorporated into the higher education curriculum as part of developing students and preparing them for the world of work (Getha-Taylor *et al.* 2013:141-142; Croft and Seemiller 2017:91). This, Mau (2009:335) argues, can be done through the inclusion of modules on collaborative work for postgraduate programmes, while coaching, mentoring, secondments and job-shadowing can be used to enrich work experience in practice. In the health sector, Hodges and Lingard (2012:26) note that CBM has been widely adopted as part of ensuring appropriate candidate selection for various programmes, preparing students for work, and as a mechanism to explore solutions to complex problems. CBM can also be an essential lever to develop a distinctive management and leadership brand that will, over time, permeate the entire organisation and differentiate it from others (Intagliata *et al.* 2000:3-4). In the public administration context, Mau (2009:335) proposes that CBM should be used to promote a distinctive brand in order for the public service to become a career of choice.

Without competency frameworks, training and development would be arbitrary and inconsistent (Bolden *et al.* 2003:27-28; Boyatzis 2008:9; Joyce and Adams 2010:875). As such, various short and long term programmes for chief executive officers (Bolden *et al.* 2003:27-28) illustrate the role of CBM in this area. However, most frameworks, contend Bolden *et al.* (2003:37), promote a limited version of transformational leadership and do not emphasise the importance of listening and following by leaders. In addition, competency frameworks and training do not account for the context of leadership, but tend to emphasise the heroic notions of a multitalented person with diverse skills, personal attributes and large social conscience (Bolden *et al.* 2003:37).

Although leaders can be developed and can learn the behavioural habits for effective leadership with effort and intent, Boyatzis (2008:301) asserts that the dilemma is that some people may aspire to be leaders “without investing the necessary energy and time needed to achieve the required emotional, social, or cognitive competencies” that have been shown to produce effective leadership. As stated by Dalakoura (2010:435) and Broussine and Callahan (2016:496), and also alluded to in chapter three section

3.3.1, personal development and continuous learning are essential requirements for effective leadership. The study therefore explores the extent to which a CAS such as the G&A Cluster enhances collective competence through continuous learning. The above analysis shows that CBM has benefits for employees and organisations alike (Mau 2009:335; Op de Beeck and Hondeghem 2010:16); and it also has weaknesses, some of which were mentioned above and are further discussed in section 4.3.2 below. A detailed analysis of the various components of competency frameworks is provided in section 4.3 below.

4.3 COMPONENTS OF COMPETENCY FRAMEWORKS

Having outlined the uses as well as the strengths of CBM, this section provides an overview of the key components of selected competency frameworks to illustrate similarities, differences and compatibility or lack thereof with contextual changes, especially in public administration.

4.3.1 Initial emphasis of managerial competencies

The study supports Bolden and Gosling's (2006:150) view that Boyatzis (1982), together with the McBer consultants' managerial competency model, influenced the contents of many competency frameworks from the 1970s onwards, as well as the expansion of competencies to leadership. Boyatzis (1982:21, 40) and the McBer consultants developed the managerial competency model after studying over 2000 managers from four public and eight private sector organisations. Equally, Boyatzis (1982:9, 48) admits that the model is not conclusive but represents a preliminary effort to provoke debate and thoughts about managerial competencies.

The model identified 19 behavioural competencies of managers that are effective in determining performance, of which 12 are core and seven are threshold competencies (Boyatzis 1982:193, 230-231). Threshold competencies, according to Boyatzis (1982:23) consist of "a person's generic (or specialised) knowledge, motive, trait, self-image, social role, or skill which are essential to performing a job" but they are not causally related to superior job performance. The competencies that differentiate superior from average performance, as noted by Boyatzis (2008:7), can be described as core competencies (Steiner 2013:13). As illustrated in Table 4.1 below, the 19 competencies are grouped into five key managerial clusters (Boyatzis 1982:230),

namely, the goal and action-oriented cluster; the leadership cluster; the human resource management cluster; the directing subordinates cluster; and the focus on other cluster. Specialised knowledge is regarded, to some degree, as a sixth cluster that requires further research because its impact on other competencies is pervasive (Boyatzis 1982:194, 231). Table 4.1 below provides an overview of the grouping of core and threshold competencies into managerial clusters.

Table 4.1: Boyatzis’ managerial competency model

Competency clusters	Core competencies	Threshold competencies
Goal and action oriented cluster	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern with impact • Diagnostic use of concepts • Efficiency orientation • Productivity 	
Leadership cluster	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conceptualisation • Self-confidence • Use of oral presentations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logical thought
Human resource management cluster	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing group processes • Use of socialised power 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accurate self-assessment • Positive regard
Directing subordinates cluster		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing others • Spontaneity • Use of unilateral power
Focus on other cluster	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceptual objectivity • Self-control • Stamina and adaptability 	
Specialised knowledge		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialised knowledge

Source: Adapted from Boyatzis (1982:230).

The competency clusters and competencies, asserts Boyatzis (1982:193-195), are not mutually exclusive, but they are interrelated and get integrated during the execution of functions. Also, the leadership competency cluster supports the view that leadership is one of the multifaceted management functions, as indicated in section 3.3.2 of chapter three, even though leadership has been elevated into a distinctive first order construct, as illustrated by the 66 leadership theories referred to by Mango (2008) and Dinh *et al.* (2014) in chapter three, and the expansion of competencies to the senior management and leadership levels (Bolden and Gosling 2006:150; Joyce and Adams 2010:883). Notwithstanding, Bolden and Gosling’s (2006:1160) criticism is that “leadership competencies encourage conformity rather than diversity”.

In public administration, Van Wart (2003:220) argues that there is no synthesis of public leadership competencies in various environments. Furthermore, it is also not clear whether a synthesis framework is feasible and required when leadership and its

associated competencies are supposed to be relevant to context. To illustrate the context sensitivity of competencies and frameworks, in sections 4.3.2 to 4.3.4 below, an analysis of three selected leadership competency frameworks and models that are relevant for the public administration environment and its changing landscape is presented. Apart from their relevance in public administration broadly, the three frameworks provide an in-depths analysis of rigorous approaches that were adopted in identifying, conceptualising and/or reviewing technical, values-based and collaborative competencies. In addition to summarising the competencies and behaviours that constitute each framework or model, the analysis reflects on the processes followed in their development, review and adjustment and further identifies the strengths and gaps of each framework or model, as highlighted by different authors.

4.3.2 Office of Personnel Management's Executive Core Qualifications for Senior Executives

The process of developing a leadership competency framework for the public service in the USA goes back to the 1950s' with attempts to develop training and education programmes for executives, as well as the establishment of the "Institute of Executive Leadership" in the 1960s (Joyce and Adams 2010:876). In addition, the "General Checklist of Executive Qualifications", which consists of four key areas and 39 attributes, was developed by the USA Civil Service Commission (Joyce and Adams 2010:877-878). The overview provided by Joyce and Adams (2010:878) is that the Civil Service Reform Act established the SES in 1978 and further renamed the Civil Service Commission to the Office of Personnel Management (OPM).

Expanding on prior work done by the Civil Service Commission (Joyce and Adams 2010:879), the OPM embarked on an extensive process to develop a competency framework that comprises 23 items, which were further grouped into six (6) activity areas. The activity areas include organisational liaison and representation; internal and external integrations of programme/policy issues; direction and guidance of programmes, projects and policy development; resource acquisition and administration; utilisation of human resources and review of implementation and results. The OPM, according to Joyce and Adams (2010:875), embarked on another

extensive process to develop a comprehensive competency framework, which is considered the most extensive effort in the public sector.

The framework was developed using a MOSAIC approach that combines “traditional job analysis with competency modelling” as advocated by McClelland and the McBer consultants (Rodriguez *et al.* 2002:310-312; Joyce and Adams 2010:879), thus demonstrating that competency modelling differs from job analysis (Markus *et al.* 2005:118). The process followed by the OPM includes a detailed review of literature, analysis of job descriptions and tasks per job levels, the linking and rating of competencies with tasks by employees and their supervisors, as well as developing benchmarks with mastery levels (Rodriguez *et al.* 2002:309). The process followed resulted in, amongst other things, the 1985 OPM’s “Management Excellence Framework” that included 22 competencies for different performer levels, which were divided into two key areas, namely management functions and management effectiveness (Joyce and Adams 2010:880-881). A review of the 1985 framework began, thus resulting in the development of the “Leadership Effectiveness Framework” in 1992. The renaming of the framework, specifically the replacement of management with leadership, marked the shifting emphasis from management to leadership (Joyce and Adams 2010:881; Mau 2009:320), a phenomenon referred to as “leaderism” by Orazi *et al.* (2013:487).

Extensive consultation with executives took place in the development of the “Leadership Effectiveness Framework,” but the 1992 framework confirmed the 22 competencies and further divided them into basic, supervisory, managerial, and executive. The first two competency groups (basic and supervisory) emphasised the management of a diverse workforce, total quality management, oral and written communication, team building, leadership and technical (or functional) competence, while the latter two competency groups emphasised vision, external awareness, client orientation, technology management, creative thinking and vision (Joyce and Adams 2010:881). The 1997 review of the Framework resulted in the endorsement of the initial 22 competencies and the inclusion of five new competencies relating to entrepreneurship, partnering, continuous learning, decisiveness and resilience. In addition, the 27 competencies were reorganised into five meta-competencies that focus on leading people, leading change, building coalitions, results driven and

business acumen (Joyce and Adams 2010:881) and the framework was renamed the “Executive Core Qualifications” (ECQs), as reported in the “Guide to Senior Executive Qualifications” (OPM 2012). The 27 competencies placed emphasis on vision, strategic thinking, political shrewdness, external awareness, influence and negotiations, team building and interpersonal skills. The study argues that some of the new competencies were influenced by the NPM paradigm and others were influenced by dominant concepts from organisational and leadership literature.

The 2006 review did not change the 1997 framework, but added an additional competency relating to “developing others” and increased the number of meta-competencies to six, after including a meta-competency that transcends all other meta-competencies called “fundamental competencies” (Joyce and Adams 2010:882). As reflected in Table 4.2 below, the “building coalitions” meta-competency comprised of partnering, political savvy and influencing/negotiation whereas the newly created sixth meta-competency incorporated communication, interpersonal skills, integrity/honesty, and public service motivation - of which some of these competencies were previously spread across a number of meta-competencies.

Table 4.2: Meta-competencies and competencies of the ECQ framework

Meta-competency	Competencies
Leading Change	Creativity and Innovation, External Awareness, Flexibility, Resilience, Strategic Thinking, Vision
Leading People	Conflict Management, Leveraging Diversity, Developing Others, Team Building
Results Driven	Accountability, Customer Service, Decisiveness, Entrepreneurship, Problem Solving, Technical Credibility
Business Acumen	Financial Management, Human Capital Management, Technology Management
Building Coalitions	Partnering, Political Savvy, Influencing/Negotiating
Fundamental Competencies (i.e. foundational competencies to the success of the ECQ)	Interpersonal Skills, Oral Communication, Integrity/Honesty, Written Communication, Continual Learning, Public Service Motivation

Source: OPM (2012:3-5).

Although OPM’s ECQ framework is considered to be comprehensive and has been reviewed several times, Joyce and Adams (2010:884) note that it does not include

emotional intelligence (EQ) and global mind-set, in spite of volumes of literature advocating the importance of developing these competencies in the governance context. EQ, attest Boyatzis *et al.* (1999:2), is not similar to general cognitive intelligence (IQ), but it is a complex phenomenon that is observed when one exhibits self-awareness and self-management, as well as social awareness and social skills that are suitable to a specific situation and time. The concept of global mind-set is predominantly used in the global leadership literature (Kim and McLean 2015:2501; Reiche *et al.* 2017:557), but it is equally relevant in intra-organisational and inter-organisational settings because institutions operate in a global and interconnected environment. According to Reiche *et al.* (2017:557), at its basic, a global mind-set is an intrapersonal capability and collective leadership requires a new mind-set, not just new skills, attest Eckert *et al.* (2014:1). Notwithstanding the identified weaknesses, the competencies highlighted in the ECQ framework are related to those identified in other frameworks and will thus be taken into consideration in section 4.5 below.

4.3.3 Virtanen's value-commitments competency framework for public sector managers

The framework developed by Virtanen (2000) is based on the view that the NPM doctrine created “transitional tensions in the commitments” of public servants by promoting self-interest in the form of commitment to outputs as well as competition between employees and institutions, and pure technical competence at the expense of the value of commitment (Virtanen 2000:338-339). Virtanen (2000:338) uses the concept of “commitments” to refer to value competencies, as such and in the absence of a unique name, his framework is referred to as the “value-commitments competency framework for public sector managers” for the purpose of this study.

Virtanen (2000:334) justifies his views on the basis that the majority of competency work done from the 1970s up to the late 1990s, inclusive of frameworks developed by Boyatzis (1982), Mintzberg (1975) and Katz (1974), is concerned with managerial functions, tasks, skills and personality traits. As such, he considers much of the managerial competency literature to be about management, but not management competence. Furthermore, Virtanen (2000:333) argues that the majority of the literature accentuates the technical or instrumental nature of competencies, but not the value-based aspect. To clarify the difference between instrumental and value-

based competencies, Virtanen (2000:335) contends that instrumental competencies are concerned with *how* results should be achieved using specific abilities, whereas value competencies provide a motivation for *why* specific results should be achieved. Markus *et al.* (2005:124) made a similar observation wherein 85% of 16 competency frameworks assessed in New Zealand focused on technical and generic competencies.

In spite of this general weakness, Virtanen (2000:334-335) utilises existing literature on public sector management competencies as a basis to identify five competencies that are the same for all public servants, but the contents of such competencies, in respect of behaviours and skills levels, will differ for public servants who are in management positions. This approach is common, especially in the public sector, and is similar to the process followed in developing the South African Public Service SMS Competency Framework. The applicability of the framework to public sector managers' competencies makes it relevant for this study. The five competence/competency areas of public managers are task, professional (as in subject matter or technical expertise), professional (in relation to public administration), political and ethical, and each competency area consists of instrumental and value competencies (Virtanen 2000:333-334). Table 4.3 below provides an overview of the five competence areas and examples of key performance activities as part of each competence area, as well as examples of competencies related to the selected activities.

Table 4.3: Value-commitments competency framework for public sector managers

Competence areas	Examples activities	Competencies	
		Value	Instrumental
Task competence	Performance	Motivation	Abilities
Professional competence (subject area / technical expertise)	Policy development	Control of policy objectives	Knowhow of policy objectives
Professional competence (administration)	Policy execution	Control of policy programmes	Knowhow of cooperation
Political competence	Legitimacy	Ideological values, interests	Possession of power (i.e. official authority) to contribute to politically acceptable outcomes
Ethical competence	Justification	Morality	Argumentation - to explain and defend doing what it right in terms of

Source: Adapted from Virtanen (2000:337).

Task competence, according to Virtanen (2000:335), is about the performance of tasks across all competence areas and the rationale thereof, and without it, it is impossible to accomplish plans and strategies. With respect to professional (technical plus public administration) and political competence, Virtanen (2000:336) contends that these are essential for acceptance and legitimacy, because without professional competence, long term quality improvement may not be achieved even if tasks are completed, and without ethical competence, public managers may not use their professional, political or task competence appropriately.

Based on his assessment of previous competency frameworks, Virtanen (2000:335) argues that the task component of competencies is related to the definition of competencies as skills, abilities or behaviours. As such, most management competencies as listed in various frameworks can be located in the instrumental dimensions of task and professional (technical and public administration) competencies, while few would be located on the value side of these competence areas (Virtanen 2000:336). Only few existing management competencies, attests Virtanen (2000:336), would be located in the instrumental side of political competence, whereas the value dimension of political and ethical competence in its entirety is absent in the analysed frameworks. Furthermore, there is recognition by Virtanen (2000:330) that task and professional competencies are closely related in the public and private sector even though public managers have ethical and political considerations that distinguish them from private sector managers. In particular, De Wet and Van der Waldt (2013:47) remark that in a context associated with a developmental philosophy, governments and their employees are expected to embrace and exhibit a distinctive role, character and competencies. Therefore, public sector competency frameworks should incorporate public values (Virtanen 2000; Mau 2009:334; Op de Beeck and Hondeghem 2010:50-51).

The framework does not provide guidance on how to develop competencies in the various areas, but Virtanen (2000:338) maintains that existing training programmes are useful in developing instrumental competencies because they are easier to develop. According to Virtanen (2000:334), existing training programmes fail to develop value competencies, meaning the “permanent commitments” that are essential to the public sector because it is difficult to teach the acquisition of public

value competencies (Virtanen 2000:334). The study concurs with Steiner's (2013:7, 12) view that Virtanen's framework is more conceptual and does not address the need for systemic, creativity and collaborative competencies. Due to its emphasis on values, professional and political competence, the framework is nonetheless one of the few attempts aimed at developing a values-based public sector competency framework that seeks to promote responsiveness to the changing context. Steiner's competencies and the implications of the competencies alluded to by Virtanen (2000) for complexity leadership competence are revisited in section 4.5 below.

4.3.4 Getha-Taylor's competency model for effective collaborators

The development of the model arose from the recognition that collaboration (also known as boundary spanning) is necessary to "solve wicked problems" and there is lack of clarity and empirical evidence on the competencies needed to collaborate effectively (Getha-Taylor 2008:103-104). The focus of the study that underpins the model is further supported by Canwell *et al.*'s (2018:40-41) observation that although collective leadership is not always appropriate because sometimes directive leadership is required, "collaboration is fast becoming a premium capability" because it enhances employee and leader engagement and further strengthens informed organisational decisions and assertive responsiveness to challenges. Collaboration, according to Canwell *et al.* (2018:41) requires leaders who read the context and decide when to use authority or not.

The study adopted McClellan's (1973) and Spencer and Spencer's (1993) "criterion sampling" and Behavioural Event Interview (BEI) methods (Getha-Taylor 2008:107-109). As explained by Getha-Taylor (2008:107-109), criterion sampling seeks to distinguish superior performance from average performance, and BEI places emphasis on what people do in specific situations instead of what they say. Unlike the ECQ and Virtanen's frameworks, Getha-Taylor's (2008:115) contribution is referred to as a model because it presents a "causal relationship" between an independent variable (collaborative leadership) and several dependent variables (such as team leadership and interpersonal understanding).

Preparations for the study included conducting a literature review on collaboration in the public sector – including reviewing the OPM's ECQ framework due to its centrality

in public sector HRM practices. This was followed by the identification and interviewing of USA public sector collaborators who are considered superior based on the presidential awards, as well as identifying average collaborators who did not receive awards but are known for being involved in collaborations. Data collected through the interviews was coded and analysed thematically and statistically to determine relationships between the independent and dependent variables. Getha-Taylor (2008:105, 108) argues that the methods selected are effective to distil collaborative competences from senior public sector employees who are involved in collaborative assignments, and have considered McClellan's (1973) caution against placing reliance on experts when gathering data to develop competencies. Consequently, the model identifies three competencies that are central to collaboration, namely, interpersonal understanding, teamwork and cooperation and team leadership. Table 4.4 below provides a summary of the three competencies and their corresponding statistically significant behaviours.

Table 4.4: Competency model for effective executive collaborators

Competencies	Competency focus areas	Behaviours/Indicators
Interpersonal understanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstration of empathy • Understanding of motivation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listens to understand other perspectives and needs • Develops close relationships with people at all levels • Understands needs for power, affiliation, and achievement • Adapts own strategies to motivate others effectively
Teamwork and cooperation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive perspective on achievements • Altruistic perspective on sharing resources • Collaborative conflict resolution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive achievement perspective: "We did this" • Identifies outcomes that benefit all involved partners • Reluctant to claim individual credit for collaborative outcomes • Shares resources readily with others: supports altruistic behaviour via personal example • Balances needs of own organisation with needs of others • Does not expect return on investment • Welcomes conflict for the purpose of gaining new perspective • Seeks win-win solutions to problems • Uses boundary-spanning language to find shared meaning
Team leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bridges diversity • Creates line of sights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Values other perspectives on shared problems • Defers to others' expertise when appropriate • Treats others as equals, regardless of rank • Identifies opportunities for collaboration that connect organizational goals with public service goals • Connects collaborative effort with noble public sector outcomes • Demonstrates enthusiasm in connecting personal effort with larger outcomes

Source: Adapted from Getha-Taylor (2008:118).

Getha-Taylor's (2008:114) observation is that the competencies identified in the study differ from the ECQ (OPM 2012) competencies for building coalitions, which are partnering, political savvy and influencing/negotiation, as indicated in Table 4.2 above. The ECQ competencies for building coalitions, argues Getha-Taylor (2008:114), are more aligned with Spencer and Spencer's (1993:201) organisational awareness, team leadership and relationship building. On the basis of this assessment, the author (Getha-Taylor 2008:117) argues that the "disconnect" between the findings of her study and the ECQ competencies for effective collaboration is indicative of lack of extensive consultation with collaborators by the OPM. In addition, the disjuncture has negative implications for HRM practices in the sense that the ECQ could result in the public sector rewarding behaviours that do not promote collaboration. Steiner (2013:7) is of the view that the model is conceptual and empirically exploratory because it uses validated instruments. The model's major strength, notes Steiner (2013:16-17, 20), is that it focuses on collaboration, which is essential for articulating collaborative competence and for dealing with complexity in public administration. Therefore, the model and the manner in which it was developed are relevant for this study.

Cognisant of the strengths and weaknesses of the frameworks and models discussed above, the analysis in section 4.4 below focuses on the limitations of existing competency frameworks and models.

4.4 WEAKNESSES AND GAPS OF EXISTING COMPETENCY FRAMEWORKS

The analysis in this section focuses on the general weaknesses and utilisation challenges of CBM and further elaborates upon the competency content gaps identified by several authors. The gap analysis is more concerned with the lack of substance identified in existing frameworks. A discussion of the gaps and weaknesses in this area will not repeat the issues addressed in section 4.3 above.

4.4.1 Competency-based management weaknesses and utilisation challenges

In spite of their proven and assumed strengths, several authors (Intagliata *et al.* 2000:5-8; Markus *et al.* 2005:1220) acknowledge that most competency frameworks are too generic and many institutions use similar or publicly available generic competencies, thus undermining the requirement for differentiation. Competency frameworks also tend to define required behaviours, but do not explain why such

behaviours are required, thus resulting in many frameworks focusing on management and leadership style issues, more than substantive issues of organisational performance (Intagliata *et al.* 2000:5). Linked to this is the view that in general CBM assumes the existence of common capabilities in spite of individual differences and environmental factors (Bolden and Gosling 2006:149).

There is also an observation that many frameworks are organisationally inward looking due to lack of consultation with external stakeholders, whilst also being linked with the past and present, but not the future (Hood and Lodge 2004:328-329; Bolden and Gosling 2006:149; Op de Beeck and Hondeghem 2010:48). This weakness limits the utility of leadership competencies due to lack of focus on the future strategy of the organisation (Intagliata *et al.* 2000:7-8; Bolden *et al.* 2003:40). The challenge is that projecting future competencies makes competency frameworks more complex (Markus *et al.* 2005:124) and requires the adoption of specialised techniques such as environmental scanning and scenario planning and further creates validity problems because, according to Horton (2002:6), it is difficult if not impossible to validate future-forecast competencies. Therefore, apart from time and financial constraints, Getha-Taylor *et al.* (2013:143) attribute the design and implementation of ineffective competency frameworks to lack of internal expertise.

To complicate matters further, many frameworks are developed without adequate research and proper consultation, but they are based on the preferences of executives (Hondeghem 2002:173; Bolden *et al.* 2003:37-38), and thus contribute to the poor articulation and relevance of competencies. Several authors (Intagliata *et al.* 2000:8, 13; Bolden and Gosling 2006:149) remark that even when properly developed, there is often no concerted effort to implement CBM at the senior and middle management levels, including poor focus on follow-up capacity development and support once weaknesses are identified. The reason for this, according to Intagliata *et al.* (2000:8), is that HRM units within organisations are usually viewed as the owners of competency frameworks, from their development to review whilst line management are excluded.

In addition, although Hondeghem (2002:178) and Rhodes (2017:221) assert that the networked governance context requires new competencies such as networking and partnerships, meta-governing, boundary spanning and collaborative leadership, Williams (2013:20, 24) remarks that there is limited literature on boundary spanning in

Public Administration, especially when excluding the literature on public-private partnerships. This is in spite of the fact that boundary spanning, which is used interchangeably with collaborative management by several authors (Getha-Taylor 2008:104; Agranoff 2007:124; Williams 2013:17), is an essential feature of public governance and management. In addition, Mau's (2009:332-334) comparison of the USA, Canada and Australia's leadership competency frameworks reveals that even though governments have taken initiatives to respond to the governance context through incorporating competencies such as engagement (Canada), cultivating productive working relations (Australia) and building coalitions (USA), the frameworks at the time did not adequately incorporate public sector values and other ethical considerations.

The analysis above justifies the need for a review and expansion of many public sector competency frameworks. The concern raised by Mau (2009:332) is that the expansion of competencies suggests that formally appointed or emergent leaders must have "super-human abilities," of which, according to Friedrich *et al.* (2011:39), it is unlikely or unrealistic for one person to be competent in all areas and in all situations. Therefore, there is a need for collective leadership and collective leadership competence. The critical success factor, notes Blandin (2007:149), lies in the capacity to master diverse sets of leadership competencies/capabilities as well as the ability to adapt and decide on their appropriate use in specific contexts. This observation is consistent with views expressed by several authors (Gronn 2007:18; Denis *et al.* 2012:274; Sergi *et al.* 2017:37) in section 3.4.2.3 of chapter three, that plural and hybrid forms of leadership must coexist in networked governance contexts.

By default, the strength of competency frameworks in integrating HRM processes and systems can also result in the inappropriate use of CBM as a solution to every leadership and organisational problem (Bolden and Gosling 2006:153). In such instances, CBM is used as a one-size fits all tool for HRM activities and yet tools for employee selection are different from employee assessments and development tools (Bolden and Gosling 2006:151). According to Bolden and Gosling (2006:153), the misuse and over-emphasis of competencies such as teamwork and global vision can also result in executive derailment in the form on indecision and lack of focus on local and institution-specific issues. Regarding leadership, Bolden and Gosling (2006:151)

assert that competencies and “competency frameworks are simply a representation of leadership aspirations” but not real leadership in practice. Despite this, Daweti and Evans (2017:163) recognise the utility of the competency approach in conceptualising leadership as observable and measurable behaviours, skills and knowledge.

Another challenge relates to the use of non-validated competency frameworks in many organisations due to the costs, time and expertise required to ensure the validity of the constructs and the behavioural indicators (Hondeghem 2002:173; Markus *et al.*, 2005:119). Furthermore, some frameworks have many lists of competencies and behaviours, thus resulting in unmanageable and “box ticking” practices, which do not add value to the organisation’s performance (Hondeghem 2002:173; Bolden *et al.* 2003:37). In such instances, it is likely that impact evaluations of the frameworks are conducted (Markus *et al.* 2005:119). As such, Bolden *et al.* (2003:38) conclude that some frameworks end up having extended lifespans, which make them inappropriate to continuously changing contexts. This weakness contributes to the general view held by several authors (Hondeghem 2002:173; Markus *et al.* 2005:117; Joyce and Adams 2010:883) that there is no evidence to support the incremental impact or predictive validity of many competency frameworks, apart from the cognitive characteristics that were previously validated in other studies.

In spite of the potential misuses, weaknesses and the view that CBM is not the holy-grail for leadership in general or public sector challenges (Mau 2009:335; Williams 2013:28; Marijani 2017:180), the importance of competency frameworks cannot be trivialised (Hood and Lodge 2004:329). The reason for this, argues Mau (2009:335), is that they are useful for employees and organisations if properly designed and used optimally. The strengths and potential positive impact of CBM is the reason why the study proposes the development of a complexity leadership competency framework for the G&A Cluster. In section 4.4.2 below, the gaps identified from a review of several competency frameworks are discussed.

4.4.2 Competency gaps from existing frameworks

The analysis in this section places reliance on the findings made in Bolden *et al.*’s (2003) review of 24 leadership competency frameworks, comprising nine public sector, seven private sector and eight general or cross-sectoral frameworks, of which the

OPM's 1997 ECQ framework was included. The review revealed that most leadership frameworks do not just define required behaviours; they also address the required interpersonal, affective and cognitive qualities of leaders, as well as the need for “excellent information processing, project management, customer service and delivery skills, along with proven business and political acumen”. The weakness is that they focus more on the individual leader as the “energiser, catalyst and visionary equipped with a set of tools (communication, problem solving, people management, decision-making) that can be applied across a diverse range of situations and contexts” (Bolden *et al.* 2003:37).

As reflected in Table 4.5 below, Bolden *et al.* (2003:39) observed that most competency frameworks (+80%) are aligned to the individual and prescriptive quadrant, while fifteen percent (15%) fall within the individual-emergent grid and only five percent (5%, such as Lead2Lead and the Leadership Game) relate to collective leadership. The observation by Bolden *et al.* (2003) is in line with Virtanen's (2000) view and it is further supported by Northouse's (2016:48) assertion that many competency frameworks continue to emphasise knowledge, problem solving and social judgement skills that were central to the traditional skills approach to leadership. In spite of this, Funke *et al.* (2018:41) regard problem solving as a first order competence for dealing with complexity in the 21st century.

Table 4.5: Focus of most leadership competency frameworks

	Prescribed		
	80%	1	4
Individual			5% Collective
	15%	2	3
	Emergent		

Source: Adapted from Bolden *et al.* (2003:39).

Although the leader's qualities are and will always be important, Bolden *et al.* (2003:37) note that these are insufficient for the exercise of organisational leadership and leadership emergence, which Markus *et al.* (2005:118) regard as a collective effort. To address the limitations of individual competencies on organisational

performance, Rodriguez *et al.* (2002:310) contend that there is a need for a “full range of competencies” that are essential for organisational survival, productivity and continuous improvement. The competencies envisaged by Rodriguez *et al.* (2002:310) include quick learning, adaptation and change, effective communication and interpersonal relations. Emphasis on organisational leadership and competence complements the emphasis placed on social capital in section 3.4.4 of chapter three, which, according to Lee *et al.* (2013:2-3), is a collective outcome and a precondition for the effectiveness of cognitive capital in the medium to long term. The problem, as noted by several authors (Dalakoura 2010; Day *et al.* 2014; Day and Liu 2019) in section 3.4.4 of chapter three and further accentuated by Lee *et al.* (2013:2), is that few studies have tried to deal with the characteristics of social capital, as such, there is limited understanding of social capital formation. Therefore, the study’s focus on the relational and interactive nature of inter-organisational leadership will contribute in this area.

The review by Bolden *et al.* (2003:39) also reveals that while leaders are expected to show concern for people, the main emphasis is on leadership inputs in the form of competencies and measurable performance outputs/standards, to the exclusion of the underlying relational process, as well as the emotional and ethical dimensions of leadership. The study argues that this is contrary to the leadership field’s emphasis on relational, integrative and collective leadership, as elaborated upon in sections 3.4.2.3 and 3.4.3.1 of chapter three. As such, Bolden and Gosling (2006:147,155-158) conclude that most frameworks reflect a fragment of leadership complexity due to their simplistic recognition of multiple parties, whilst generally ignoring post-heroic conceptions such as distributed, collective and emergent leadership, as articulated by scholars such as Raelin (2003) and Drath (2001).

Boreham (2004:5) explains collective competence as an attribute of teams, groups and communities that is characterised by three key principles, namely collective sense-making; developing and using a collective knowledge base; and developing a sense of inter-dependency. The study argues that these principles are interlinked with CLT within the CPM and IGR context. Collective competence is an intermediate between micro (personal and organisational) and macro structures/systems and emerges from the interactions and synergy of individual (personal and organisational)

competencies (Avelino *et al.* 2017:209-210). Conversely, at the inter-organisational level, collective competence is an intermediate between intra-organisational competence and macro level system competence. Bonotto and Bitencourt (2008) reiterate the assertions made by Boreham (2004) and Avelino *et al.* (2017) and further argue that collective competence consists of interpersonal and practical (or task oriented) competencies. Although individual competencies and competence are not adequate in complex environments with wicked problems, Lingard (2009:626-627) is of the view that emphasis on collective competence can also deflect attention from individual accountability. This demonstrates that collective competence, similar to collective leadership, is not a golden key to everything. Therefore, there is a need to balance the dynamic relationship between individual and collective competence, especially in inter-organisational structures such as the G&A Cluster.

In their study, Hodges and Lingard (2012:8-9) argue that the competency movement together with its frameworks, checklists and taxonomies does not prepare students for team-based environments in the health sector and has failed to develop a sophisticated concept of competence beyond the individual. Similarly, Lingard (2009:626) notes that education, training and assessment in the health sector place emphasis on the individual and this contradicts the collectivist competence discourse and expectation for teamwork in the work environment. As such, several authors (Bolden and Gosling 2006:147,159; Avelino *et al.* 2017:203; Croft and Seemiller 2017:15) conclude that there is a mismatch between theoretical perspectives relating to collective competence and practice because most of the competency frameworks detach leaders from their relational environments and impede the emergence of inclusive and plural forms of leadership.

Emphasis on individual competence, according to Hodges and Lingard (2012:9), has resulted in competent people forming incompetent teams, especially in the health sector. Likewise, Lingard (2016:19) argues that an incompetent person can form part of a competent team, while a competent team can be competent in some contexts and incompetent in others. The study therefore uses CLT to investigate the mechanisms through which (actual or assumed) individual competence transforms into collective competence or simply accumulates or degenerates into collective mediocrity and incompetence in an inter-organisational structure.

In particular, Steiner (2013) provides a theoretical review of several complexity frameworks, including those of Virtanen (2000) and Getha-Taylor (2008), from a complexity perspective. The analysis reveals that of the five requisite competency dimensions for innovative problem solving in complex environments identified by Steiner (2013:19-20), only personal and professional competency dimensions are addressed in many of the frameworks reviewed by the author. Accordingly, Steiner (2013:39) says the failure of most reviewed competency frameworks and models to address the systemic, creativity and socio-cultural (or collaboration) competency dimensions suggest that the frameworks are inadequate in solving “complex real-world problems”. The systemic competency dimension, explains Steiner (2013:31), incorporates systems thinking and knowledge on the functioning of entire systems and their intra- and inter-dependencies.

Furthermore, Steiner (2013:32-35) notes that creativity competence as an outcome of competency application is not a personal trait as treated in other frameworks, but it is an acquired and essential ability to question dominant practices and ideas as well as the capability to create new ideas and solutions through synthesising convergent and divergent ideas. Due to reliance on theoretical analysis, Steiner (2013:40) admits that the five competency dimensions he proposes are broad and theoretical and should therefore be empirically measured using a comprehensive list of subcategories per competency dimension. This makes Steiner’s (2013) framework impractical to operationalise for the purpose of this study, although the methodology used in the study to review existing frameworks and models was presented in a systematic and clear manner.

According to Op de Beeck and Hondegheem (2010:51) plus Getha-Taylor *et al.* (2013:158), the weaknesses and gaps identified by many authors have contributed to the review of some of the existing competency frameworks to determine areas of convergence and divergence between theory and practice. In particular, the limitations and reviews have contributed to the development of new frameworks and proposals for different but complementary competencies by several authors. Therefore, section 4.5 below elaborates on additional competencies proposed by several authors for the interconnected and complex environment, but the suggested competencies addressed in this section and in section 4.3 above will not be repeated.

4.5 LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES FOR COMPLEX ENVIRONMENTS

To expand on the suggestions made by several authors in the preceding sections, the purpose of this section is to reflect on proposed new competencies for the networked governance era, especially for the P(ublic) A(dministration) environment. In addition to highlighting the competency constructs used by different authors to signal the shift from leader-centric to collective leadership approaches, the analysis reflects on the approaches used by the authors to identify and formulate the proposed competencies. Extrapolating lessons from sources that have thoroughly engaged with the intricacies of collaborative leadership practice and competencies will contribute towards an enhanced understanding and conceptualisation of competencies for inter-organisational leadership of the G&A Cluster.

4.5.1 Complexity leadership competency proposals by various authors

Cognisant of the weaknesses and gaps alluded to in section 4.4 above, there is recognition by several authors (Blandin 2007:147-148; Getha-Taylor *et al.* 2013:143; Williams 2013:24) that the emergence of collaborative, connected, collective and complexity leadership theories and perspectives and their competency implications apply to intra-organisational and inter-organisational settings. Although collaboration is an individual, team, group and organisational competency (Beechler *et al.* 2004:124; Ernst and Chrobot-Mason 2011:xvi), Blandin (2007:149) and Williams (2013:25-26) contend that working in an intra-organisational hierarchy and inter-organisational collaboration generates tensions and paradoxes of autonomy versus interdependence and authoritarian versus participative style. The reason for the tensions and paradoxes, asserts Williams (2013:23; 25-26), is that collaborative management forms a better fit with shared/distributed/dispersed leadership in networked governance processes and thus requires unique or enhanced versions of competencies needed in hierarchical and intra-organisational arrangements.

For Getha-Taylor and Morse (2013), inter-organisational leadership in the 21st century corresponds with the collaborative governance paradigm in public administration and its emphasis on partnerships and networks. The reorientation of focus from hierarchy “highlights the need to develop leadership competencies that extend beyond traditional, hierarchical, managerial functions” (Getha-Taylor and Morse 2013:72).

Similarly, Popp *et al.* (2013:38-42) reiterate the need for network level competencies through refining intra-organisational competencies or developing new ones.

The intra-organisational and inter-organisational leadership debate is intricately connected with questions about whether there is a need for new competencies, or whether an enhancement of general competencies will be adequate for global operations because leadership does not change, but its intensity and complexity is merely influenced by context plus task and relationship complexity (Jokinen 2005:2001; Reiche *et al.* 2017:558-559). For Connelly (2007:1246) and Kramer *et al.* (2019:398), inter-organisational leadership is different from intra-organisational leadership due to differences in terms of structural arrangements, organisational culture, formal or informal authority, as well as the motives, commitments and expectations of individual participants. As such, the competencies required for inter-organisational leadership place emphasis on the importance of establishing a common culture and vision, entrepreneurial outlook and flexibility in terms of processes and outcomes, as well as the need for open communication and trust (Connelly 2007:1246). Emphasis on process, design and situation assessment skills are also highlighted by Getha-Taylor and Morse (2013:77), based on a synthesis of available literature on collaborative leadership practice and competencies.

Agranoff's (2007:124) contrary view is that managing hierarchies and collaboration is both similar and different, and thus justifies why boundary spanners need a combination of hierarchical and collaborative competencies. Raffel *et al.* (2009:385) and Chow *et al.* (2017:152) share a similar sentiment that public sector leaders require new skills because of the evolving nature of the public administration and governance context, but the old management capabilities must be retained. The study argues that the latter can be justified by, amongst others, the continued existence of traditional organisational silos in the public sector. Amongst others, the competencies identified by Chow *et al.* (2012:152), following a synthesis of findings from available literature, include agility and strategic thinking, adaptability and change, collaboration and relationship management, as well as organisational leadership. Bolden *et al.* (2003) and Northouse (2016) remark that emphasis on the mixture of traditional managerial competencies and emerging competencies shows that emphasis on traditional KSA is no longer adequate.

According to Beechler *et al.* (2004:122-127), to be effective, boundary spanners must be able to gather, interpret and communicate relevant information; represent organisations effectively; gain influence over external and internal stakeholders; and generate social capital to enable their organisations to respond promptly to external challenges. As such, Beechler *et al.* (2004:128-129) use existing theoretical literature to propose several competencies that will assist boundary spanners to fulfil their roles. The competencies include: analytical and lateral thinking; having a holistic perspective; personal relationships with diverse groups of people; communication and listening; conflict resolution (anticipate, neutralise and resolve); brokering (making deals with different stakeholders honestly and still being loyal to one's organisation); and personal attributes (such as respect, openness, tolerance, approachability, sensitivity and reliability). Eckert *et al.* (2014:4) reiterate the need to recognise the importance of communication capabilities at the individual, team and organisation levels for effective collective leadership. This makes boundary spanning a dynamic process that is based on trial and error (Beechler *et al.* 2004:126), as is the case with the experimental nature of IGM, as noted by Krane and Leach (2007:492-493).

Building on Beechler *et al.*'s (2004) proposals, Müller-Seitz (2012:435-437) groups inter-organisational leadership competencies into: influence over structures, processes and participants; trust and interpersonal relations. Similarly, Williams (2013:24) states that the skills needed for collaborative leadership include fostering trust; building and sustaining high quality interpersonal relationships between diverse groups; managing complex, shifting and subtle power relations; promoting effective, transparent and inclusive group working relations; negotiation, mediation and conflict resolution; and deep thinking. Nevertheless, Williams (2013:26) cautions that strong personal relations can also make collaborative leadership fragile, exclusive, exhausting, and dysfunctional.

The observation by Beechler *et al.* (2004:122-124) and Williams (2013:25) is that boundary spanning relies on the threshold traits of, amongst others, integrity, honesty, trust, humility, diplomacy, inquisitiveness, extroversion, mindful communication, persistence, critical and systems thinking, resilience, global mind-set orientation as well as cognitive complexity. The listed threshold competencies are closely related with the list proposed by Connelly (2007:1246) above, as well as Archer and

Cameron's (2009:185) required attributes for dealing with globalisation, namely: tenacity; patience and flexibility; self-awareness and empathy; ability to network and build relations; as well as courage and quick thinking. In addition, they are also interrelated with the prerequisite skills for effective IGR, as outlined by several authors (Agranoff and McGuire 2003:189; Johns *et al.* 2007:34; Phillimore 2013:231; Malan 2014:56) in section 2.6 of chapter two.

Similar to Getha-Taylor (2008), it is important to note that authors such as Beechler *et al.* (2004), Williams (2013) and Chow *et al.* (2017) are more concerned with developing competencies for collaborative management, whereas other authors approached the need for new competencies from a governance and complexity perspective. According to Blandin (2007:148-149), public sector leadership in complex environments requires new perspectives and behaviours; therefore, several complexity leadership characteristics are emphasised. These include process orientation; zeal and persistence (but not in a combative aggressive way); agility, resilience and adaptability; self-awareness/maturity/authenticity; high level of communication skills (listening, dialogue, inquiry, reflection); boundary crossing/collaboration; as well as commitment to continuous learning and diversity. In particular, Blandin (2007:149) emphasises that self-awareness/maturity/authenticity is about "the sense of being not doing," because it relates to confidence, wisdom, security, intuition, willingness to learn, acceptance of mistakes, humility and the ability to see other perspectives. Blandin's (2007) proposed competencies complement Steiner's (2010) broad competency dimensions, which are highlighted in section 4.4.2 above. In the same view, in a multi-phase futures investigation on leadership, business and broad societal trends, O'Brien and Robertson (2009:373-376) identified nine future leadership competencies for all sectors, including authenticity, agility, resilience, foresight, self-mastery, creativity, presence, intuition and g-localism (i.e, thinking locally and acting globally and *vice versa*).

Additional proposals are sponsored by Op de Beeck and Hondeghem (2010), following an assessment of the evolution of competency frameworks from several OECD countries, including the USA, Australia, the UK, Canada, Denmark and France. The assessment (Op de Beeck and Hondeghem 2010:68) concludes that CBM is well established in public administration and has been integrated into HRM systems; but

the holistic implementation of many frameworks remains a challenge. In spite of the identified weaknesses, Op de Beeck and Hondeghem (2010:8, 60) rely on the contents of the reviewed competency frameworks and limited published sources to propose four meta-competencies for public administration for the 21st century, namely strategic thinking; creative thinking; cooperation; and flexibility. The meta-competencies are further sub-divided into eight competencies: vision, creativity, flexibility, innovation, change management, working across boundaries, relationship building, and future orientation. Interestingly, Op de Beeck and Hondeghem (2010) classify flexibility as a competency and a meta-competency without elaborating on the definition and differentiating features. Similarly, Sanders' (2014) analysis of organisational behaviours for the 21st century highlights the importance of adaptability, flexibility, agility, innovation, a learning culture and participative decision-making.

In an effort to guide the development of education and training programmes, Morse and Stephens (2012) synthesise emerging competencies from available literature on collaborative governance and collaborative competencies into four phases: assessment, initiation, deliberation and implementation. Some of the competencies that are incorporated into the phases include stakeholder engagement, political/community organising, building social capital, team building and group dynamics, interest-based negotiation, designing governance structures and conflict resolution. Underpinning these competencies are personal qualities or "meta-competencies" that guide one's approach to collaboration (Morse and Stephens 2012:572-573). The meta-competencies include a collaborative mind-set, passion for creating public value, systems thinking, openness and risk-taking, a sense of mutuality and connectedness as well as humility or measured ego. Several authors have identified similar or related competencies, the challenge is that most authors (Virtanen 2000; Archer and Cameron's 2009; O'Brien and Robertson 2009; Op de Beeck and Hondeghem 2010; Chow *et al.* 2012; Steiner 2013; Williams 2013) identified the competencies through theorising and critiquing or synthesising existing literature.

A comprehensive complexity leadership perspective is provided by Hannah *et al.* (2011) and Lord *et al.* (2011), based on their understanding of the relationship between static and dynamic IRC and CRC, which are explained in section 3.5.2 of chapter three. As noted in chapter three, Hannah *et al.* (2011:216-18) and Lord *et al.*

(2011:105), acknowledge that “the law of requisite complexity” requires that hierarchical leaders in particular must be flexible and cognitively complex with respect to four mental domains, namely: general cognitive complexity, self-complexity, social complexity and affective complexity. While cognitive complexity refers to intellectual and information processing capacity, Lord *et al.* (2011:117-119) describe the “self” as a highly connected system that is shaped by differentiated and complementary roles, experiences and attributes such as consciousness, perception, identity and self-concept. Additionally, Lord *et al.* (2011:106,117) describe affective complexity as an essential leadership capacity that is required to understand and respond to negative and positive events, while social complexity deals with the ability to recognise and integrate social roles.

Central to the four domains is the ability of leaders in their individual and collective capacity to integrate all four domains in order to engage with everyone intellectually and with authenticity (Hannah *et al.* 2011:106,226). The study argues that the four mental domains have implications for individual and collective leadership competencies. The four domains also emphasise several foundational and inter-organisational competencies alluded to by several authors (Goleman 1998:7; Pearce and Manz 2005:139) in section 3.6 of chapter three, as well as the competencies suggested by several authors (Beechler *et al.* 2004:122-124; Blandin 2007:148-149; Op de Beeck and Hondeghem 2010:60; Williams 2013:25) in the preceding sections of this chapter.

From the preceding analysis, it is clear that various authors articulate and categorise competencies differently. For example, authors such as Beechler *et al.* (2004), Getha-Taylor (2008), Archer and Cameron (2009), as well as Williams (2013) approach collaboration from a broader contextual basis; hence, they propose competencies that seek to facilitate collaboration. However, Blandin (2007), Op de Beeck and Hondeghem (2010), Steiner (2010) and Funke *et al.* (2018) approach competency frameworks from a complexity and 21st century perspective. That being the case, collaboration or boundary spanning is one of several competencies proposed by these authors. These variations illustrate that competencies such as collaboration can be conceptualised at a higher level as first order constructs that are referred to as meta-competencies, competency clusters or competency dimensions, or they can be

conceptualised as second level competencies depending on the problem statement and objectives of the framework. The study proposes that in the context of inter-organisational leadership competencies, a combination of both approaches would be relevant because inter-organisational leadership is a 21st century phenomenon whose success, according to the literature referred to in this chapter as well as chapters two and three, is dependent on collective and collaborative effort.

4.5.2 Mechanisms facilitating the acquisition of collaborative competencies

The view that leadership can be learned is articulated in chapter three and further reiterated in section 4.3 in this chapter. Section 3.4.4 of chapter three attests that leadership development that seeks to develop collective social capital is very difficult to design and implement because it requires time and concrete opportunities to learn from real work situations. Fortunately, there are proposals on how to develop collaborative leadership competencies at the individual and collective level, although the proposed mechanisms to develop collaborative competencies are more theoretical but not empirically grounded due to the paucity of research on collective leadership practice and competence. As noted by Popp *et al.* (2013:82), there is a dearth of literature on “network leadership and its similarities or differences from leading in other organisational forms” and existing literature on CAS is “not well integrated into research ... on inter-organisational networks”. This explains why several authors (Day 2014:863; Lee *et al.* 2013:8; Croft and Seemiller 2017:15; Oswald-Herold *et al.* 2018:11) suggest the need for research on the formation of social capital and collective leadership as a basis to guide the development of newly appointed managers/leaders as well as leadership development approaches by practitioners and academics. Whilst the study seeks to contribute towards an understanding of leadership practice in the G&A Cluster, which is a formal or semi-formal inter-organisational structure within the IGR/IGM context, the competency proposals advanced by several authors will contribute towards the conceptualisation and development of a competency framework for the G&A Cluster.

According to Hodges and Lingard (2012:9) and Lingard (2016:20), as a shared, relational and evolving phenomenon that emerges from context specific constraints and resources, collective competence and CBM have implications for training, assessment and continuous professional development mainly because collective

competence develops out of tacit knowledge, shared experience and social interactions. At the individual level, and in line with the Centre for Creative Leadership's 70:20:10 learning ratio (University of Cambridge 2017:22), there is recognition that leadership is a complex process and competence that should not be rushed. As such, there is a need for a strategic approach to leadership training and development (Getha-Taylor and Morse 2013:97) in a manner that balances knowledge acquisition and application.

According to Allen (2009:41), leadership qualities or competencies such as self-leadership, inter-personal skills, influence, reasoning and foresight cannot be learnt from reading books or attending short courses; they are acquired "in the transformational context of experience". Therefore, apart from unplanned development opportunities with predictable or unpredictable outcomes, resources such as time and money should be invested in training, mentoring, coaching, assigning challenging tasks and facilitating leadership development because single and standardised approaches to development are inadequate (Allen 2009:41-42). Bingham, Sandfort and O'Leary (2008, in Getha-Taylor and Morse 2013:80) attest to the role of "active and experiential learning" in developing competencies for collaborative management and leadership, while Morse and Stephens (2012) advocate for case-based learning.

Beechler *et al.* (2004:129) suggest that collective or collaborative competencies can be developed through deployment to other areas within the organisation or across organisational and geographic boundaries. Social interaction competencies, such as communication, negotiation and teamwork, plus cognitive competencies, such as problem solving, strategic thinking and decision-making, can also be developed through game-based competency development programmes (Covalciuc and Kerleguer, 2019:2). As a basis to develop organisational capability, Williams (2013:25) insists that organisations must reward boundary spanning behaviours such as participation in cross-sector assignments and networking with key stakeholders. Raelin's (2017:10-11) view is that social capital development skills and collective leadership can be learned at the workplace through contextualised reflection using techniques such as coaching and peer mentoring, apprenticeship and action learning. In addition, Ernst and Chrobot-Mason (2011:xxvi, 8) highlight the need to prioritise the

development of competencies that are necessary to tackle emotional and psychological boundaries that inhibit effective collaboration across organisational and geographic boundaries.

The point made by Ernst and Chrobot-Mason (2011) is closely related with Hannah *et al.*'s (2011:218-219) assertion that IRC and CRC are influenced by self and collective regulatory structures as well as aggregation structures and can also be encouraged or suppressed depending on how social regulation processes operate. Collective regularity structures include group identify, goals, emotional tone and shared leadership structures. To foster dynamic IRC and CRC, Hannah *et al.* (2011:219, 227-228) argue that hierarchical leaders must influence the creation of appropriate regulatory structures, respond positively to leadership attempts by others, including people with divergent views in order to promote appropriate group dynamics, and they must encourage shared leadership through mechanisms such as role rotation. Equally, Eckert *et al.* (2014:10) and Endres and Weibler (2019:26-27) emphasise the importance of individuals taking responsibility to proactively claim leadership for themselves and for granting it to others on a rotational basis, in order to develop and maintain collective leadership. Accordingly, for Empson and Alvehus (2019:6), in collective leadership settings it is possible for colleagues to grant their peers leadership identities without granting them leadership authority nor reducing themselves into followers. As such, Endres and Weibler (2019:30) plus Kramer *et al.* (2019:409) emphasise the importance of promoting respectful, non-judgemental and unbiased interactions and meaningful participation by all members, which, assert Hannah *et al.* (2011), would contribute towards the aggregation of IRC into CRC.

Hannah *et al.* (2011:218-219) explain that aggregation structures consist of the “compositional aggregation” of individual inputs without any alteration, and “compilational aggregation” of individual inputs in a manner that creates fundamentally different structures in the form of collective complexity and meta-competence. The “compilational aggregation” effect suggests that CRC has a transformational feedback mechanism that transforms individuals and the collective over time (Hannah *et al.* 2011:220). As indicated in section 3.5.2 of chapter three, Hannah *et al.*'s (2011:228) proposed mechanisms to develop CRC reinforce Raelin's (2005) observation that leaderful practice is concurrent, collective, collaborative and compassionate.

Therefore, the aggregation process is important in understanding the basis for collective leadership competence in a CAS such as the G&A Cluster.

The focus of the above analysis has largely been on CBM from a broader international perspective and section 4.6 below focuses on the South African Public Service competency framework for senior managers.

4.6 PUBLIC SERVICE SENIOR MANAGEMENT COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

This section presents an overview of the Senior Management Service (SMS) Competency Framework for the Public Service in South Africa as a basis to justify the need for a meso level leadership competency framework.

4.6.1 Reflections on the Senior Management Service Competency Framework's driving forces

As previously indicated in sections 2.2 and 2.5 of chapter two, P(p)ublic A(a)dmistration in South Africa has gone through a transition from TPA to a confusing and contradictory mix of TPA and selected NPM principles and practices, of which CBM is one of the initiatives adopted during the transition (Cameron, 2009; Muthien 2014; Naidoo 2015). In particular, De Wet and Van der Waldt (2013:53) as well as Naidoo (2015:29-30) trace the introduction of managerial leadership and competency management to the 1995 "White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service" (DPSA 1995) in addition to the Green and White "Paper on Public Service Training and Education" (DPSA 1997).

Section 8.1.2 of the "White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service" (DPSA 1995) emphasised the need for a skills audit to determine the competencies of employees, whereas section 10.7 suggested the need to introduce non-discriminatory criteria of performance that does not emphasise formal qualifications and traditional forms of experience only, which is consistent with McClelland's (1973) views. In the process of operationalising the 1995 White Paper (DPSA 1995), section 5.7.5.7 of the "White Paper on Public Service Training and Education" (DPSA 1997) expressed the need to ensure that all posts are articulated in terms of the essential transversal or sector-specific competencies that are required for effective job performance. The White Paper (DPSA 1997) further elaborated upon the rationale for CBM and its link

with training and development. The objectives of these white papers were later codified into law through the *Public Service Act*, 1994 (Act 103 of 1994 [South Africa 1994]) and the Public Service Regulations (DPSA 2001), both of which were reviewed and amended several times. In addition, several frameworks, including the SMS Competency Framework that is analysed in this section, were also developed to facilitate the implementation of CBM as well as other HRM practices.

In particular, the SMS was created in 2001 through chapter four of the Public Service Regulations (DPSA 2001; DPSA 2011; Naidoo 2015:32). The purpose of the SMS, as outlined in section 81 of the 2016 Public Service Regulations (DPSA 2016), includes the promotion of public service excellence in line with section 195 of the *Constitution*, 1996 (South Africa 1996) and facilitation of cooperation amongst management structures of departments. The SMS is also expected to serve as a network to transfer and disseminate policy plus strategic, managerial, professional, and organisational expertise across the Public Service (DPSA 2016:s81). The SMS Competency Framework was thus introduced in 2002 as a voluntary system; it was revised and made compulsory in 2008 and further reviewed in 2013 (DPSA 2014:4). As such, the analysis below focuses on the 2014 framework.

4.6.2 Overview of the Senior Management Service Competency Framework

The purpose of the revised competency framework (DPSA 2014:4) is to develop an understanding of developments and challenges that affect individual, team and organisational performance, and to review the required skills sets for leaders to foster coordination and cooperation in their organisations. Accordingly, the DPSA (2014:4) acknowledges that the review was prompted by “global leadership trends and the demands for visionary and innovative leadership from public servants who can drive major strategic initiatives and position the country to win in a highly-changing environment”.

The framework (DPSA 2014:17-18) outlines generic competencies for four performer levels within the SMS echelon, namely director, chief director (CD), DDG and DG, but differentiates the levels according to the behavioural indicators. The study’s focus is on the DG, DDG and CD levels because of their participation in the technical G&A

Cluster. The SMS competencies are divided into core and cross-cutting process competencies as depicted in Table 4.6 below.

Table 4.6: SMS competencies for the South African Public Service

Core competencies	Competency descriptors	Process competences
Strategic Leadership Capability	Puts emphasis on establishing and maintaining positive working relationships with stakeholders within the public sector, as well as the private sector, community interest groups and national and international communities broadly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge Management • Service Delivery Innovation • Problem Solving and Analysis • Client Orientation and Customer Focus • Communication
Strategic change management capability	Concerned with forward thinking, seeking and accepting challenges and opportunities, and developing and communicating a clear, inspiring and relevant direction for the department	
People Management and Empowerment	Primary concerned with maximising the quality and contributions of staff to achieve the department's goals and objectives, now and in the future	
Financial Management	Focuses on sound understanding and application of effective financial management practices to achieve organisational goals and objectives	
Programme and Project Management	Promotes sound understanding and application of project management practices to achieve organisational goals and objectives	
Managing in the political-cultural context	Concerned with the ability to understand the conventions, structure, functions and objectives of Government, and the wider cultural, economic and social environment in which it operates, and positioning the department accordingly	

Source: Adapted from the DPSA (2014:8, 37-48).

Mindful of the purpose and the competencies listed in Table 4.6 above, Naidoo (2015:31-32) argues that the competencies and behaviours outlined in the framework are task oriented and include criteria that resemble TPA features, and it does not provide a coordinated mechanism to empower managers to lead development in complex and rapidly changing environments. Furthermore, Naidoo (2015) questions the relevance of the framework in dealing with networked governance issues, which, the study argues, are central to inter-organisational leadership in the NPG context, and global leadership trends broadly (Connelly 2007) as well as plural forms of leadership (Ospina 2016; Sergi *et al.* 2017)cts.

Notwithstanding the criticisms, it is important to note that the indicators for highly effective performance in the area of strategic leadership capability include, amongst others, building and maintaining productive relationships with stakeholders within and outside the Public Service. But the mechanisms for building and maintaining such relations are not clarified or are left to the discretion of the individual senior managers. In addition, few sections of the framework refer to the importance of balancing individual and collective responsibility and acting in the collective interest of the Public Service, whilst also maintaining the individual department's integrity (DPSA 2014:42-44). The framework does not mention the various IGR structures, such as clusters, that DGs, DDGs and other senior managers are expected to participate in as a basis for contextualising collective action and accountability. In addition, the framework does not provide clarity on other mechanisms that are required to enhance collective action, such as budgeting and performance management, given that in chapter two these are cited by several authors (Wegrich and Štimac 2014:54; Peters 2018:5) as some of the factors that inhibit effective coordination and collaboration amongst stakeholders.

The study argues that the framework focuses more on intra-organisational leadership, but does not address the phenomenon of inter-organisational leadership and competencies. This weakness leads to the view that the underlying assumption is that the mastery of competencies in leading individual employees, teams and functional units as well as specific departments by senior managers across different performer levels will translate into collective organisational competence at the meso and macro organisational levels. This assumed relationship between individual and collective leadership is explored within the context of the G&A Cluster in chapter five.

Another key weakness with the framework is the lack of clarity on how some of the weaknesses that were raised before have been addressed. In particular, prior to the review, De Wet and Van der Waldt (2013) assessed the developmental strengths of the SMS Competency Framework through conducting a comparative study of developmental countries such as China, South Korea, India, Japan and Botswana. They (De Wet and Van der Waldt 2013) organised the findings using an expanded version of Virtanen's (2000) model, which is outlined in section 4.3.3 above. The findings revealed that the framework does not address aspects of economic competency, and minimally deals with social and political competencies. The authors

(De Wet and Van der Waldt 2013:63) also concluded that public business (i.e. service delivery) and professional (public administration) competencies are moderately addressed in the framework. The study argues that the reviewed framework has not addressed weaknesses such as economic competency, but “managing in the political-cultural context” is addressed in the tables that illustrate the behavioural indicators for various competencies (DPSA 2014:43-43), although this is not included as one of the core competencies throughout the document.

Furthermore, a closer analysis of the behavioural indicators reveals that the framework does not address job specific technical competencies for specific occupations, trades and professions, which is a common weakness noted with many other competency frameworks (Markus *et al.* 2005). This weakness is illustrated by DPSA’s (2014:4) assertion that the framework focuses on “critical generic leadership and managerial functional competencies, rather than technical/professional competencies, which are essential to a specific department or a specific job”. Nonetheless, the framework (DPSA 2014:20-21) makes provision for the development of job specific technical competencies by individual or sector departments. The analysis has also confirmed that the SMS Competency Framework is primarily designed for the intra-organisational setting, even though reference is made to the importance of building relations and balancing individual and collective accountability. Therefore, the existing competency framework is not adequate because, as stated in chapter one section 1.3 and chapter two section 2.2.3.4, the G&A Cluster is a meso level CAS that requires a meso level perspective (Uhl-Bien and Marion 2009:647) to execute leadership in the networked governance context where no one is entirely in charge (Bryson *et al.* 2015:21).

Since leadership in inter-organisational arrangements is socially constructed and is different from intra-organisational leadership (Vangen and McGuire 2015:17; Raelin 2016:4-5; Endres and Weibler 2019:5), Endres and Weibler (2019:29-32) assert that it is not a given that members of an inter-organisational structure will develop a shared leadership identity and commitment. In the absence of the preconditions outlined by Hannah *et al.* (2011:219, 227-228), Endres and Weibler (2019:30) and Kramer *et al.* (2019:409) in section 4.5.2 above, inter-organisational structure members may quietly or overtly reject attempts to impose intra-organisational and hierarchical forms of leadership. This will result in a non-leadership (or void-leadership) dynamic (Endres

and Weibler 2019:29-32), as well as collective incompetence (Hodges and Lingard 2012:9). These observations, coupled with concerns regarding the unevenness or absence of appropriate leadership competencies, behaviours and skills to make the cluster system effective (DPME 2014:61), justify the need for a meso level complexity leadership competency framework to support the cluster system, the G&A Cluster in particular, which is the focus of this study.

4.7 CONCLUSION

The analysis in this chapter has provided an overview of the CBM movement and further confirmed that the extension of competencies to the senior leadership level in organisations and emergent leadership has not resulted in a comprehensive competency list that is supported by scholars and practitioners. However, the analysis has alluded to the importance and complexity of leadership as demonstrated by the incorporation of competencies and meta-competencies relating to 'leading people, leading change and team leadership' in numerous adopted or proposed competency frameworks. The analysis has also highlighted the lack of systematic research on the development of collective leadership competencies, especially at the inter-organisational level. Despite this weakness, the analysis has identified several threshold and core competencies that are considered relevant for public sector leadership in the governance era. These include, amongst other things, cooperation and collaboration (or boundary spanning), political intelligence, ethical considerations, technical credibility, strategic and analytical thinking, creativity and innovation, interpersonal relations and other personal attributes such as integrity, humility, patience and cognitive ability. As such, the leadership competencies identified in this chapter are explored further in chapter five through the G&A Cluster.

CHAPTER FIVE: INTER-ORGANISATIONAL LEADERSHIP PERSPECTIVES AND COMPETENCY EXPERIENCES FROM THE GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION CLUSTER

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter four of this study elaborated upon the expansion of existing and emergence of new competencies, as well as the continuous enhancements of numerous competency frameworks broadly, and within the P(p)ublic A(a)dministration context, in an effort to respond to complex environmental changes in the governance era. The chapter highlighted the lack of a shared collective competency framework for inter-organisational leadership because of the disjuncture between competing perspectives on the shift from leader-centric leadership to collective leadership theory and practice. Nonetheless, chapter four expanded on emerging insights from chapters two and three about the implications of collective leadership on the development and implementation of competency frameworks and further identified several threshold and core competencies that are considered relevant for public sector leadership in the governance era. Therefore, the purpose of chapter five is to provide an empirical lens, within the context of the G&A Cluster, to the conceptual framework that is outlined in chapters two to Four in order to address the overall research question for the study: what leadership competencies should underpin a CAS such as the G&A Cluster in the South African Public Service?

In pursuit of the stated purpose, chapter five outlines the adopted data collection and analysis processes and the challenges encountered during data collection. An overview of the participants' profile is presented to contextualise an in-depth analysis and discussion of the results according to identified themes and sub-themes. Although the focus of the study is on inter-organisational leadership competency and competence for a CAS such as the G&A Cluster, key aspects of individual and intra-organisational leadership are discussed to illustrate their iterative relationship with inter-organisational leadership. To enrich the analysis and discussion, examples of areas of effective and poor performance are also highlighted, as a basis to reflect on, but not to evaluate, the manifestation of collective leadership in the G&A Cluster. In addition, the internal and external factors that influence the leadership of the G&A

Cluster are discussed in relation to the inter-organisational leadership competencies proposed by participants and cited sources.

5.2 DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

In line with the research methodology that is elaborated upon in chapter one, which locates the study in the intermediate theory phase of the “contingency framework” for “methodological fit” (Edmondson and MacManus 2007:1168), the study adopted a predominantly qualitative mixed methods research methodology, with an embedded case study (Yin 1994:39) as a design choice. The section below outlines the processes followed in ensuring the rigour and trustworthiness of the adopted research approach.

5.2.1 Development and finalisation of primary data collection instruments

The development of primary data collection instruments was guided by questions used by cited authors and the following themes identified through the literature review:

- (a) intra-organisational and inter-organisational leadership are different but complementary; therefore, new or enhanced competencies are required to operate in inter-organisational arrangements;
- (b) the effectiveness of inter-organisational and collective leadership is dependent on the existence of the individual's foundational and other intra-organisational leadership competencies; and
- (c) appropriate coordination and relational processes are necessary to transform individual leadership competence into collective leadership competence.

In particular, the questions and statements included in the interview schedule and survey were designed to probe participants to reflect on the importance of leadership in the Public Service and their conceptions and practice of leadership, whilst using the G&A Cluster as the focal point. The instruments were also designed to probe participants on the relationship between intra- and inter-organisational leadership, the structuring arrangements and responsibility for leadership in the G&A Cluster, plus the required competencies to ensure effective inter-organisational leadership. Furthermore, the instruments sought to examine the forces or factors that influenced leadership practice, as well as the guidance and support provided to participants to operate effectively in an inter-organisational structure such as the G&A Cluster.

With respect to the interview schedule, open-ended questions and statements were developed and where necessary, probing or follow-up questions were also included to ensure that all key issues are covered during interviews (refer to Appendix A). The probing questions were used when necessary to redirect interviewees to focus on the essence of the questions. To ensure a systematic and standardised manner to introduce the researcher to interviewees, explain the purpose and objectives of the study and request informed consent and permission to record interviews, an interview protocol document was developed, as advocated by Jacob and Furgerson (2012:1-2). To assess clarity, depths and the logical sequence of questions, as well as the approximate interview duration (Bryman 2012:263-264), the interview protocol and questions were piloted with one participant in a face-to-face interview in February 2020. Feedback from the pilot was used to amend the interview questions and request letter to interviewees with regard to the estimated duration of the interview.

The survey (refer to Appendix B) was developed after finalisation of the interview schedule instead of after the interviews, thus deviating from the original plan as outlined in chapter one. The change was informed by anticipated problems in the collection and analysis of interview data due to the onset of the COVID-19 national state of disaster (Government Gazette No. 43096, 15 March 2020). Part one of the survey was designed to collect biographical data and part two contained questions and statements that are similar to those included in the interview schedule, although most of the questions and statements were formulated differently to probe similar issues to those probed in the interview schedule. The difference between the interview schedule and survey is that the latter has 10 sections with closed questions or statements that require participants to agree or disagree, rate according to importance or simply select preferred statements. The closed-ended questions and statements were informed by the literature review and the interview schedule. The survey was piloted with three participants, but only two provided adequate feedback, whereas one provided insufficient feedback due to lack of exposure to the issues probed. Feedback from the pilot resulted in some questions being rephrased, additional competencies being included and sections being rearranged. In line with the University's Policy and Procedures for Responsible Research (2007) and the Code of Ethics for Research ([sa]), the instruments, which were accompanied by the necessary approval to access the target population (refer to Appendix C), were simultaneously submitted to and

approved by the Faculty of Economic and Management Science's Ethics Committee (refer to Appendix D).

5.2.2 Data collection process and challenges

Preliminary preparations for data collection were done based on the University's approval of the research proposal and approval to access G&A Cluster members, whilst the primary data collection instruments were still under consideration by the University's Faculty of Economic and Management Science's Ethics Committee. Preparatory work included engagements with key senior managers to identify former and serving DGs from core G&A Cluster departments for interview purposes. In total, five former and six serving DGs were identified. The G&A Cluster secretariat was also engaged to obtain contact details of other DGs and DDGs as well as CDs who participated in G&A Cluster meetings between the 2015 and 2019 period as per the approved proposal.

Once final approval was granted by the Faculty's Ethics Committee, the process of collecting data using both instruments was initiated simultaneously because different groups were being targeted (Easterby-Smith *et al.* 2002, cited in Gray 2014:37). Initial requests for interviews were sent to the identified DGs in June 2020. In instances where there were no responses to the initial requests, several reminders were sent via email, WhatsApp or phone calls. Several follow-ups were also done in instances where agreed interview dates were postponed until further notice. This process resulted in two interviews being conducted in June 2020 and four in July 2020. Continuous follow-ups and intervention support by senior colleagues resulted in additional interviews being conducted - two in August 2020 and one in September 2020. In spite of telephonic confirmations to participate in the interviews, the remaining two DGs were not interviewed due to their non-availability between July and September 2020. As such, nine DGs were interviewed, instead of the initial target of 10 to 12, as outlined in chapter one. This deviation did not compromise the study because quality data was collected (Braun and Clarke 2019:2), and was further supplemented with survey data.

Equally, the survey was distributed in June 2020 to 65 DGs and DDGs from both core and non-core departments. Regarding emails that were returned to sender, follow up with the relevant institutions revealed that some of the targeted participants had moved

to other departments, state owned entities (SOEs) or their emails had been changed after the finalisation of the macro reorganisation of national departments that resulted in some functions being moved to other departments, and/or the names and email addresses of some departments being changed with effect from 1 April 2020. In a few instances, it was discovered that the targeted participants went on retirement in the second half of 2019 or during the first quarter of 2020. It also transpired that some departments are permanently represented by CDs in the G&A Cluster. These developments necessitated a slight deviation from the original plan, thus resulting in the distribution of the survey to 48 CDs, three former DDGs who were already retired and one former DDG who was in the employ of a SOE. The four former DDGs were included in the study because of their extensive experience in the G&A Cluster and the fact that the focus of the study is on the historic operations of the G&A Cluster, prior to the review of the cluster's terms of reference and name change to the GSCID Cluster in 2019, as mentioned in chapter one.

To increase the pool of suitable participants, after each interview, DGs who indicated that they have alternates, since they are unable to attend all G&A Cluster meetings due to multiple factors, were requested to provide details of their alternates for purposes of administering the survey. In spite of numerous email follow-ups and at times email or telephonic commitments to participate by some of the identified senior managers, the response rate remained below twenty completed surveys by the end of July 2020. In August 2020, follow-up emails were again sent to senior managers who had not responded and some were also followed up telephonically by the researcher and colleagues who had strong professional relationships with them. Further engagements with a few DDGs and CDs who had already submitted completed surveys in July and August resulted in the identification and distribution, in August and September 2020, of the survey to additional DDGs and CDs whose names did not appear on the list provided by the G&A Cluster secretariat. All of these efforts resulted in an increase in the number of completed surveys, while several targeted senior managers formally declined to participate due to time constraints or inadequate institutional memory as a result of their occasional attendance of G&A Cluster meetings. As elaborated in section 5.2.5 below, 43 completed surveys were received but 41 were included in the analysis, thus achieving the planned target of 40 surveys as explained in chapter one.

5.2.3 Interview recordings, transcription and survey data capturing

Although the original plan was to conduct face-to-face interviews, implementation of the different levels of the COVID-19 disaster management plan from 27 March 2020 until September 2020 in South Africa (Government Gazette No. 43725) resulted in one interview being done face-to-face, whereas seven interviews were conducted via *Microsoft Teams* and one via *Zoom*. Online interviews were guided by the participants' preferred technology platforms. Cellular phones were partly used in two instances due to internet connectivity challenges at the beginning of or during the interviews, thus requiring the researcher to take detailed notes. As such, eight interviews were recorded using *Microsoft Teams* and *Zoom*, and *Otter.ai* was used for the face-to-face interview. Recordings and draft transcriptions were downloaded through *Microsoft Teams* and *Otter.ai* for the face-to-face and *Zoom* interviews. Each interview was transcribed within two days after the interview. The nine transcripts were reviewed and cleaned, and each transcript was given a unique identifier (such as DG-1, DG-6).

With respect to the survey, a coding guide was developed and each survey was given a unique code number (such as SR-1, SR-18) before data could be captured in Excel. In preparing the spreadsheet, the actual questions/statements were shortened in a manner that would retain the essence of what was being probed and the actual numbers of the questions/statements were retained for easy identification. Quantitative data was captured in sheet one and qualitative data was captured in sheet two of the spreadsheet to enable a quick comparison between the quantitative and qualitative responses for each participant. The data captured in Excel was verified against each survey manually and electronically, and identified discrepancies were corrected.

5.2.4 Qualitative data analysis

A thematic approach to qualitative data analysis was adopted using *Atlas.ti* (Archer *et al.* 2017). Thus, the nine interview transcripts and one file containing qualitative responses from the survey were converted into PDF files and uploaded into *Atlas.ti*. The six steps or phases of thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke 2006:87; Nowell *et al.* 2017:4) and a deductive and inductive approach to coding (Fereday and Muir-Cochrane 2006:83, 91) were followed. The coding process included a re-reading of the nine interview transcripts and one file containing qualitative responses from the

survey to ensure a thorough understanding of their contents and linkage with the theoretical framework that is discussed in chapters two to four. The mixed approach to coding, which is supported by several authors (Nowell *et al.* 2017:4; Fereday and Muir-Cochrane 2006:91), enabled the researcher to generate an initial set of latent codes (Braun and Clarke 2006:8) that capture the implicit and underlying meanings from the primary data. The draft codes were captured in *Atlas.ti* and the coding process commenced.

Since coding is an iterative process (Nowell *et al.* 2017:4, Braun and Clarke 2019:10), in instances where new information did not fit into the draft codes, new codes were created, whereas in instances where some codes overlapped, the codes were merged and renamed appropriately (Refer to Appendix E). The codes were grouped and organised in relation to the research questions and theoretical framework as a basis to generate themes and sub-themes. Throughout the analysis and writing process, the themes and sub-themes were defined, reviewed and refined.

5.2.5 Quantitative data analysis

In total, 43 completed surveys were received. One survey (SR-29) was disqualified because the participant was substantively appointed as a director, but engaged with the G&A Cluster for a brief period whilst serving as an acting CD. The second survey (SR-26) was disqualified because of missing data resulting in an incomplete survey that could not be included. Consequently, only 41 surveys were included in the dataset for analysis, in line with initial plan for 40 surveys.

A final review of the remaining 41 instruments resulted in the exclusion of two fields from the analysis. In particular, section 1.5 of the survey was deleted due to inconsistent responses that can be attributed to the poor formulation of the question, whereas section 1.6 was considered redundant, which is the reason why almost all responses were similar. Descriptive statistical analysis was conducted using Excel to determine averages and modes for all sections and to generate pivot tables and graphs for selected sections in order to visually illustrate and supplement thematic patterns (Costa *et al.* 2016) in section 5.3 below. Finally, when generating pivot tables and graphs, the questions and statements were shortened.

5.3 INTERVIEW AND SURVEY RESULTS

Mindful of the research methods followed, the results from the primary data are presented in the following sections and further discussed in relation to chapters two to Four as well as the research orientation, problem statement and central theoretical statements that are outlined in chapter one.

5.3.1 Participants' profile

In total, 50 SMS members (that is, 9 interviews and 41 surveys) participated in the study, of which 76% were men from national departments. While nine interviews were conducted with current and former DGs, five were from national departments and four from provincial departments, and all were men. With respect to the survey, the 41 participants comprised of 29 (70%) men and 12 (29%) women, of which 34 (82%) were from national and seven (17%) from provincial departments. In terms of occupational designations, the majority of the survey participants were DDGs (23), followed by CDs (15) and three DGs. The demographic composition of both groups is influenced by the composition of the G&A Cluster itself, given that of the 20 core members listed in section 1.6.2 of chapter one, 10 are national departments and nine provincial departments, while the other 44 non-core members are national departments. With respect to gender representation for both survey and interview data, the dominance of men is reflective of the under-representation of women at the SMS level in the South African Public Service (DPSA 2019b:29). A profile overview of the participants is provided in Table 5.1 below.

Table 5.1: Participants' profile in terms of designation, gender and location

Designation	Survey						Interviews	
	Women	Men	Total	National	Provincial	Total	National	Provincial
DG	0	3	3	3	0	3	5	4
DDG	8	15	23	18	5	23	-	-
CD	4	11	15	13	2	15	-	-
Total	12	29	41	34	7	41	9 (all men)	

In terms of work experience, four of the nine interviewed DGs had more than 10 years and three had seven-to-nine years of experience. Only two had three-to-four years of experience, excluding one-to-two years of work experience as acting DGs. Interestingly, seven of the interviewed DGs progressed to the DG level after serving in other SMS levels as directors, CDs and DDGs for different periods of time, while

two joined the Public Service at the DG level. Likewise, Table 5.2 below shows that 22 (54%) of the 41 survey participants had approximately 10 years work experience, whereas just over 70% of all participants had more than five years work experience at the specified designations. The work experience of both participant groups and their overall involvement with the G&A Cluster enables data triangulation and enhances the reliability of the information and perspectives shared (Fusch *et al.* 2018:20-22).

Table 5.2: Survey participants' work experience

Work experience at designation	CD	DDG	DG	Total %
1-3 years	0	3	1	4 (9.75%)
4-5 years	3	4	1	8 (19.51%)
6-8 years	3	4	0	7 (17.07%)
9-10 years	1	3	0	4 (9.75%)
11 years plus	8	9	1	18 (43.90%)
Total	15	23	3	41

5.3.2 Participants' involvement with the G&A Cluster

The interviewed DGs said that they participated actively in the G&A Cluster because, apart from being representatives of core departments, the G&A Cluster was “a major priority”(DG-5 2020) and they have the responsibility “to strengthen the functionality of the structure” and “its role in governance of the Public Service” (DG-1 2020). The level of participation ranged from attendance of all or most G&A Cluster meetings (DG-8 2020) to occasional participation due to workload and time constraints, thus resulting in the appointment of DDGs or CDs as alternates (DG-9 2020). This is how several DGs explained their involvement in the G&A Cluster:

“If you will have access to the attendance registers, it will definitely indicate to you that I am one of those DGs who definitely prioritises attendance at the G&A Cluster” (DG-8 2020).

“I spent a lot of time in the past in G&A [Cluster] because I was the leader of provincial DGs... So [I did not] have a substitute for the first three to four years in the G&A [Cluster], and then I moved to have a substitute, ... as the work also became overwhelming in the provinces” (DG-9 2020).

Five participants (DG-2 2020; DG-7 2020; SR-16 2020; SR-27 2020; SR-37 2020) acknowledged that the amount of time dedicated to the G&A Cluster in the past 12 to

24 months had substantially decreased due to numerous challenges. The reasons cited include the permanent delegation of junior officials such as CDs and directors to serve as alternates (DG-1 2020; DG-7 2020; SR-37 2020; SR-41 2020), administrative and political leadership instability especially amongst coordinating departments (DG-3 2020, DG-9 2020), and domination of the Cluster by one of the two coordinating departments (DG-1 2020; DG-2 2020; DG-6 2020; SR-6 2020). According to DG-7 (2020), “there was a time when the G&A Cluster kind of disappeared because DGs were not attending and it had to be revived”.

Since DG-2 (2020) and DG-5 (2020) progressed to the DG level after serving as CDs and DDGs for core G&A Cluster departments, they also had the opportunity to participate occasionally or regularly in the G&A Cluster meetings whilst representing their DGs and for purposes of making presentations on assigned tasks. The extract below illustrates the extent of exposure to the G&A Cluster processes for some DGs:

“My involvement dates back to my days as a chief director. ... I was assigned then by the DG of the department to represent him on days when he was not able to attend the meetings. So as it happens, I ended up attending quite a few of the G&A meetings. ... And then obviously a little later it was more ongoing to present on the basis of the projects that we would have done. ... That evolved to a point of becoming a DG, where, in theory I was co-chair” (DG-2 2020).

Even DGs who did not always work for core G&A departments (such as DG-3 2020; DG-6 2020; DG-7 2020; DG-9 2020) had the opportunity to interact with the G&A Cluster infrequently, whilst they were still CDs, DDGs and head of department (HOD) from non-core departments. DG-6 (2020) explains this type of involvement as follows:

“I was a chief director in the office of the DG. Because of the nature of that work, I had, from time-to-time, been asked to attend the G&A Cluster on behalf of my DG. It was only after I became a DG that I then became integrally involved with two clusters. ... I have had to ask other people in the department, including my successor in the position of that chief director, to attend the G&A Cluster on my behalf. But occasionally, when there were pressing matters within the G&A Cluster, we would always be invited and the chairs would insist

that DGs must be present. So, I would attend some of those meetings. Once I moved to [the other department] then G&A [Cluster] became core to my work”.

A reflection on the participants’ involvement with the G&A Cluster as DGs of core departments, in addition to their participation as DDGs and CDs from core and non-core departments, shows that the DGs have a thorough understanding of the G&A Cluster processes and its content issues. In addition, their involvement with the G&A Cluster prior to their appointment as DGs partly explains why it was necessary for the study to include perspectives from DDGs and CDs.

5.3.3 Support and guidance to ensure effective participation in the Governance and Administration Cluster

Both survey participants and interviewees were requested to describe the guidance and support provided by the executive or assigned structures/persons to DGs, DDGs and CDs to operate effectively in the cluster system. The responses were mixed, with some participants indicating that there was limited support and guidance, while the majority said there was no support and guidance. Only one interviewee (DG-9 2020) was of the view that guidance and support was provided through the provision and discussion of “good terms of reference” with DGs and their support teams. Survey participants also highlighted the provision of terms of reference s because they are vital documents to “ensure a common understanding of the mandate and interrelatedness of the cluster system” (SR-19 2020); guide the overall operations of the cluster; and clarify what should be achieved by the cluster (SR-13 2020).

The observation made by SR-11 (2020) is that sessions to discuss terms of reference took place during the establishment of the cluster system “but this did not happen throughout”, even though all “managers who ascend to positions of DGs are also expected to have made themselves conscious and knowledgeable about how government functions, and [the] cluster system is part of that”. The latter comment confirms DG-2’s (2020) view that many people who were around when the cluster system “was introduced are not there anymore”; consequently, “if you can approach an average member of the [G&A] Cluster and ask what are the terms of reference of the cluster, they will probably not be able to tell you”. This comment supports SR-11’s (2020) assertion that the discussion and workshopping of terms of reference and other

documents cannot be a once-off undertaking because of the mobility of employees in the Public Service. Mechanisms to address this weakness have been initiated. Therefore, participants are appreciative of the “discussion on the terms of reference of the [GSCID] Cluster” (SR-24 2020) and “extensive consultation within the Cluster to obtain a common understanding” (SR-8 2020) of the mandate, which took place for the first time during 2020 (SR-12 2020; SR-24 2020).

Additional minimum support and guidance that was identified by seven survey participants include: the provision of workshops on (personal) leadership development (SR-28 2020); the working session of the G&A Cluster which serves as the clearing house [i.e. quality control mechanism] for the DG and ministerial clusters and “strengthen[s] collaboration, institutional fusion, cooperation and integration” (SR-34 2020); the FOSAD secretariat, coordinating departments and the DGs who participate consistently (SR-6 2020); superiors and coordinating departments when drafting Cabinet Memos and preparing presentations (SR-23 2020; SR-39 2020); The Presidency in collaboration with the leadership of coordinating departments and other core departments (SR-41 2020) and regular meetings between FOSAD and Cabinet cluster committees (SR-22 2020). The study argues that the support and guidance alluded to by participants relate to generic administration and management issues plus content support for senior managers who are already involved in the cluster system, but not support and guidance that is given in advance to prepare senior managers for their eventual participation in the cluster system.

With regard to responses relating to lack of support and guidance, eight of the nine interviewees expressed concern over the lack of structured support and guidance. Nonetheless, five participants referred to learning through trial and error and informal or incidental learning through observing their superiors when they were still CDs and DDGs, while two participants learnt from their peers (i.e. other DGs) or subordinates who were familiar with the operations of the G&A Cluster. One DG succinctly captured this as follows: “many of us simply just learnt by being thrown into the deep end, trial and error, which is something that is not ideal for a system as important as government” (DG-6 2020). Similar views were expressed by DG-2 (2020) and DG-5 (2020), to the extent that DG-4 (2020) said; “you come in, you swim or you sink, or you just do not participate”, while DG-3 (2020) described his experience as follows:

“you behave like a guerrilla - you just catch up as you go”. The above analysis and below extracts illustrate Krane and Leach’s (2007:492-493) view regarding the pressure placed on officials by the experimental nature of IGM and IGR mechanisms. In addition, the study notes that learning through observation was more prevalent amongst DGs who progressed to this level from within the Public Service, whereas learning from peers and subordinates was mainly cited by DGs who joined the Public Service at the DDG and DG levels, as illustrated in the extracts below.

“I can tell you it was quite a daunting task, a scary task for me to be thrown into the deep end without being taken through a course as to what is expected, how you proceed in this? ... My peers, especially from [some provinces] were pillars of strength. But in my office, in the office of the DG, there were two DDGs who were there with a wealth of experience. I normally told them that matters being equal, one of the two of them was supposed to be the DG. I made it a point, I think for the first four, five, six months that I interchangeably went with them to the G&A Cluster every month for them to, at least, hold my hand. To take me through the issues so that at least I could start running” (DG-8 2020).

Contrary to DG-8’s daunting experience, the extract below illustrates the gradual introduction of DG-2 (2020) into the cluster system, whilst serving as a CD and DDG.

“In my case, it was a DG saying I am going to this meeting, I want you to come with me and observe. And you learn from observing and then when you get back home there are certain tasks that you do get assigned. It was in a sense not sitting down with you and saying these are the do's and don'ts. But it is actually saying come with me, see what happens in these meetings”.

The views expressed by interviewees regarding the lack of structured support and guidance were also supported by 22 survey participants, thus resulting in the view that some representatives are “simply airing their own views and not mandated policy decisions” (SR-21 2020) during G&A Cluster meetings. Lack of support and guidance, especially during meetings, was exacerbated by the fact that at some stage “meetings were no longer attended by DGs themselves; they delegated the matter to chief directors” (SR-37 2020). According to SR-25 (2020), it is unfortunate that in the “Public Service there is still lack of guidance and support that is given to new employees, be

it DGs or DDGs. You learn as you go along. Most of the things you get in meetings”. These observations illustrate that the G&A Cluster, like IGM, is characterised by “diversity, trial and error, and experimentation” (Krane and Leach 2007:492-493). This has implications for boundary spanning (or collaboration) capacity and the threshold competencies identified by Beechler *et al.* (2004:126) and Williams (2013:25).

The observation made by two survey participants is that the G&A Cluster members rely on their background knowledge and broader understanding of the Public Service and government operations (SR-9 2020) as well as their “own expertise” (SR-1 2020) to make sense of what is required and how to contribute to G&A Cluster processes. As such, SR-33 (2020) contends that “to operate effectively in the cluster system, you should be a leader in your own right... you just have to act on the frameworks provided. If you are not a leader in your own right, you will just be a bench warmer, without adding any value to the work of the cluster”. According to SR-1 (2020), since “there is no effort to also induct those who sit in the cluster on the real purpose of the cluster”, often the cluster becomes “a vehicle to process Cabinet memos”. Although there is general lack of guidance and support, SR-40 (2020) acknowledges that “it did help to have senior managers as representatives in the G&A Cluster from HR, corporate services, CFOs, etc because the nature of issues discussed were around recruitment, labour relations, procurement and supply chain issues, capacity building [and] ethics”. The informal “learning by assimilation from other DGs” (SR-5 2020) was also confirmed by SR-21 (2020) who said that in spite of the G&A Cluster challenges, one has also become “accustomed to the individual excellence of certain members”.

The observation made by interviewees is that the lack of support and guidance was influenced by wrong assumptions and decisions, as well as general systemic challenges. The latter has contributed to the view by some participants that failure to provide support and guidance cuts across all clusters and has an impact on the contribution or lack of contribution of some cluster members. In particular, SR-3 (2020) attributes the lack of systemic support and guidance to the absence of leadership development programmes that are aimed at developing skills and competencies across the different SMS levels. Equally, DG-1 (2020) maintains that the lack of guidance and support is common across all clusters and it “weakens some of the people's participation” because it will take them several meetings to understand the

operations of the cluster. These observations confirm the assertions made by several authors (Pearce and Manz 2005:137-138; Brookes 2007:18; Day 2014:64; Broussine and Callahan 2016:486) in section 3.4.2.3 of chapter three, that there are limited leadership development programmes to develop collective leadership capacity. The extract below elaborates on the underlying reasons for the lack of guidance and support and the extent of the problem.

“We made assumptions that people will kind of gain this through experience and osmosis, where knowledge and understanding will move from areas of high concentration to areas of low concentration, which in my view is a mistake. ... We think and we thought that since we have gone so many years into democracy, we do not need to train people anymore; we do not need to induct them. It was a mistake” (DG-7 2020).

As a follow up to the above responses, interviewees were requested to outline the measures they, as DGs, have put in place to ensure that DDGs and CDs who are selected to serve as their permanent or regular alternates are properly prepared to be able to operate effectively in the G&A Cluster. The responses indicate that some DGs rely on information sharing through organisational meetings (DG-5 2020), debriefing and feedback sessions before and after G&A Cluster meetings (DG-3 2020, DG-8 2020), whereas some prefer to expose their subordinates to the G&A Cluster processes through attendance of meetings (DG-2 2020; DG-6 2020), following a similar process to how they learnt. As explained by DG-2 (2020), “exposure and feedback” are important, but “I do not know if it works well for everyone, it worked for me and that is the approach I still use”.

Similarly, DG-8 (2020) discusses G&A Cluster documents with a DGG in his office prior to meetings and also provides feedback after each meeting so that by the time he leaves the Public Service, “there is somebody who is not going to go through the same pain” that he went through, but will be *au fait* with “the rules, regulations and *modus operandi* of the G&A Cluster”. The study argues that the process followed by DG-2 (2020) and others is more feasible for national departments due to their proximity to meeting venues, whereas constraints such as limited financial resources and

extended time commitments due to travel prohibit the adoption of such a process by provinces.

5.3.4 Proposals for support and guidance to ensure effective participation in the Governance and Administration Cluster

In response to the mainstream view, that, apart from learning through observation plus trial and error, there is no structured support and guidance for DGs, DDGs and CDs to operate effectively in the G&A Cluster, interviewees were requested to make suggestions on what would constitute appropriate guidance and support and how such should be provided. Even though survey participants were not specifically requested to make proposals, some did in response to the last section of the survey, which requested them to provide additional information, while others did so to justify their responses to the main question: what guidance and support was provided.

The need for structured support and guidance was highlighted by DG-6 (2020) as follows: “You cannot just rely on trial and error. You do not throw people into the deep end and say if they can swim then they will find their way. We need to have proper systems”. In the same view, DG-7 (2020) emphasised the need for “common practices across the cluster system” in order to “sustain the integrity of the system”. The effectiveness of the cluster system, attests DG-7 (2020), “should not depend on who is in charge”; hence, there is a need to “codify” how the system should work so that “future generations of DGs should operate in that way”. Consequently, broad and concrete proposals were made to ensure that structured support and guidance is provided.

The proposals include the need for a guideline or manual that should serve as the basis for executive induction (DG-1 2020; D-4 2020; DG-7 2020); participation in conferences and workshops (DG-8 2020), exposure to inter-organisational competencies (SR-14 2020), plus a formal platform that would enable former and current DGs to share ideas and learnings from around the world (DG-6 220). Continuous leadership development was also emphasised by DG-3 (2020) because “if the cluster system is refined and effective, it may even help Cabinet to resolve some of the issues better”. Central to the proposals made is the need for “greater coordination of leadership capacity development across government” (DG-5 2020)

because the proposals made are not just specific to the G&A Cluster, they are applicable to “all the clusters” (DG-3 2020) and all SMS members (DG-5 2020). The view by DG-7 (2020) is that the executive induction programme should address generic skills such as policy development and reporting to relevant structures, and contemporary governance issues.

5.3.5 Public service leadership and leadership manifestation in the Governance and Administration Cluster

Having discussed the participants’ involvements with the G&A Cluster, concerns regarding the lack of adequate support mechanisms, as well as proposals to ensure effective participation by members, the discussion in this section focuses on the participants’ views regarding the significance of leadership in the Public Service in relation to their leadership styles as individuals and as a collective within G&A Cluster, plus the leadership responsibility for the G&A Cluster.

5.3.5.1 Significance of leadership in the Public Service

There is consensus amongst participants that leadership is an important competence for senior managers in the Public Service. Although interviewees highlighted the importance of individual capability, social relations and aspects of distributed and collective leadership, they placed emphasis on different aspects and qualities of leadership that they consider essential for the Public Service. The leadership qualities emphasised by DGs include: “being able to discern what your legal duties are and how you are going to execute those legal duties with the different staff that you have” (DG-8 2020); giving “direction to the organisation” (DG-4 2020); “strategic planning” and the ability to “articulate a shared vision of an institution” and “make sure that appropriate resources are allocated to ensure that the broader vision of the institution is actually attained” (DG-3 2020). In addition, emphasis was also placed on empathy and “being able to listen and understand the viewpoints of different individuals who are contributing towards the achievement of your mandate” (DG-8 2020); as well as being “exemplary so that your colleagues can be able to emulate you” (DG-9 2020). Exemplary leadership was also highlighted by SR-40 (2020) because “if you do not take your work or other people seriously, you will quickly lose their support”.

Additional essential qualities for Public Service leadership were also identified by five survey participants. In particular, ethics, trust, respect and self-awareness were highlighted (SR-9 2020; SR-21 2020, SR-38 2020; SR-40 2020). For SR-41 (2020), effective leadership must translate into positive outcomes through resolving societal problems, failing which “it will be leadership that is not effective, that is not efficient and that is vain”. Some of these qualities were articulated by SR-21 (2020) as follows:

“Leadership is based firstly on trust and respect. It is also based on the realisation that one does not have all the answers, and that one must surround yourself with experts, study the data based evidence, consider all the inputs, apply the law and values, and then make a decision for the greater good”.

Leading people and managing resources effectively and efficiently were repeatedly cited by DG-1 (2020), DG-3 (2020) and DG-5 (2020) as essential qualities because these are the key factors that, according to DG-6 (2020) and DG-7 (2020), simultaneously differentiate and connect the people/human dimension of leadership with the systems, processes and non-human resource dimension of management. The complex relationship and continuum between leadership and management is explained in chapter three, and further elaborated on by DG-6 (2020) as follows:

“Leadership is important because, unlike management, which is essentially about putting systems and processes in place, leadership is about exercising foresight, it is about innovation, it is about creativity, it is about always seeking to adapt to the ever changing conditions in which your organisation operates. Leadership in that sense is important because it gives one the opportunity, beyond managing the team, to continue inspiring the team with new ideas. Leadership is not only about the leader being the only person that innovates, but it is about the leader cultivating the culture within the organisation for people to be allowed to think openly, to think freely, to speak freely so that you are able to harvest the wisdom that comes from the collective, but in ways that enable the one in leadership to shape where the organisation needs to be going”.

Whilst the above extract illustrates the importance of leadership as a first order construct and an important aspect of management, the extract also demonstrates the participant’s conception of leadership as a relational, distributed and collective

phenomenon without necessarily excluding aspects of formal authority and individual capability. This view is aligned with CLT’s conceptualisation of leadership as a social process that is shaped by dynamic interactions, as discussed in chapters one and three, and it is relevant for public administration leadership in the governance era and essential for inter-organisational structures such as the G&A Cluster. DG-5 (2020) asserts that leadership is not reserved for those in senior positions only because “everywhere, not only in the Public Service, anyone who is responsible for implementing programmes and accountable in one way or another, and is managing a critical mass ... does require leadership skills and competencies”. So, the view that “leadership is the glue that holds an organisation together” (DG-2 2020) is not limited to specific individuals, but applies to all levels and processes within the Public Service.

Equally, survey participants acknowledged the importance of leadership as an individual, social and collective phenomenon, as reflected in Figure 5.1 below. In this instance, participants were asked to rate the relative importance of different leadership (definitional) statements between 1 and 5, where 1 is not important and 5 is extremely important. As depicted in Figure 5.1, the statement that leadership is “an individual’s ability to motivate and influence followers to achieve results” was rated the highest (4,61 average), whereas the conception of leadership as an inborn trait was rated the lowest (3,07 average). These ratings are consistent with the argument made in sections 3.3.1 and 3.4.2 of chapter three that inborn traits cannot be ignored, but they are not the absolute determinants for leadership because there are learnable and contextual variables that have an effect on the process and outcome of leadership.

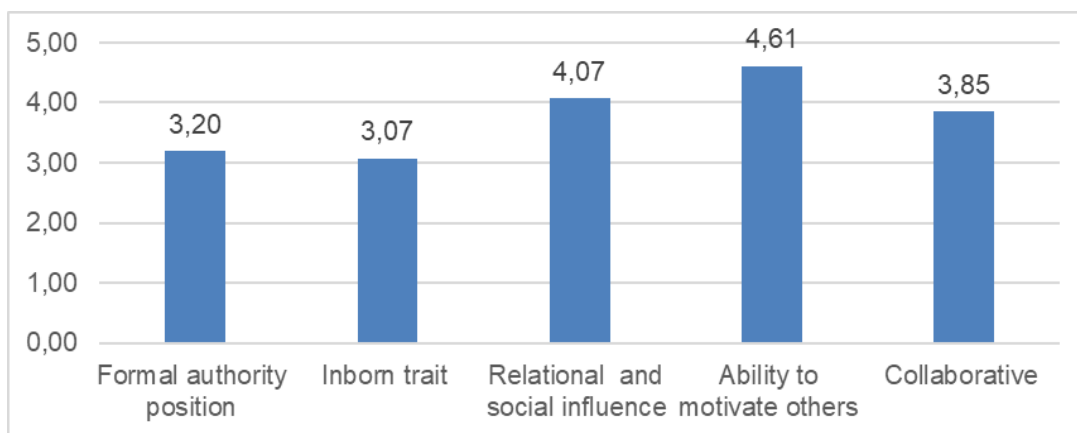


Figure 5.1: Relative importance of leadership definitional statements

Source: Author’s own illustration.

The statement that leadership is a “relational and social influence process aimed at achieving results” was rated the second highest (4,07 average) by survey participants. This confirms DG-6’s (2020) assertion, as quoted above, that leadership is not about the leader, but rather, it is about the collective wisdom that emerges from an environment that cultivates openness and an exchange of ideas – and yet recognises the role of an individual leader in harvesting the collective wisdom. The individual leader can be anybody with the ability to inspire and motivate others and/or someone who occupies a position of formal authority, of which the latter is a central feature of organisational structuring in the Public Service, whereas the former is characterised by informal arrangements such as project teams and working groups. In the context of this study, the relational nature of leadership described by DG-6 (2020) would operationalise the administrative, adaptive and enabling leadership functions of CLT, especially at the intra-organisational level. As demonstrated in section 5.3.7.2 below, the practice of this type of leadership at the intra-organisational level has what DG-2 (2020) calls the spill over effect at the inter-organisational level, which is similar to Brookes’ (2007:15-17) view of the role of collegial/dispersed leadership practices in connecting intra- and inter-organisational leadership.

Surprisingly, the statement that “leadership is a collaborative response to a challenge by everyone” was rated 3,85, meaning that it is important but not very important and yet many participants placed emphasis on the importance of distributed and collective leadership. Therefore, it is important to explore whether the complementary and contradictory views expressed in this section are informed by the participants’ practice of leadership, as discussed in section 5.3.5.2 below.

5.3.5.2 Individual leadership styles and perceived leadership styles by others

In this section, the partially contradictory perspectives shared by participants in section 5.3.5.1 above are further discussed in relation to how interview and survey participants described their leadership styles and the leadership styles that best characterise the G&A Cluster. The discussion also seeks to establish the alignment or disjuncture between the participants’ perspectives that are shared in section 5.3.5.1 and leadership practice.

To establish the relationship between perspectives and practice, interviewees were requested to describe their leadership styles and further explain how their styles evolved over the years. They were also asked to reflect on how other people, be it peers, subordinates or superiors would describe their leadership styles, based on formal and/or informal feedback they would have received over the years. The rationale for requesting interviewees to provide an indication of how others perceive their leadership styles was meant to establish if the evolution of individual leadership styles were also influenced by feedback from other people, and also sought to establish the level of consistency between perceived or actual leadership styles at the individual and collective. The latter was also assessed through the survey, as illustrated in Figure 5.2 and Figure 5.3 below.

The analysis revealed that some participants used similar and related concepts repeatedly when describing their own leadership styles, but slight variations were also noted. In particular, situational (DG-2 2020; DG-6 2020), participatory (DG-4 2020; DG-5 2020) and adaptive (DG-3 2020; DG-6 2020) leadership were frequently cited. There was also recognition amongst the participants that their leadership styles have evolved due to exposure to different environmental factors, such as work experience, sizes of institutions and characteristics of teams/subordinates, exposure to people with different management and leadership styles, formal training and continuous learning plus overall maturity and self-awareness. The evolution has also resulted in the enhancement of a consistent and preferred leadership style, whereas in some instances it has resulted in the adoption of a new style or a combination of styles.

For example, DG-6 (2020) described his style as an “adaptive kind of leadership” that is characterised by “a combination of different styles” that seek to navigate and adapt to the current environment. DG-6’s (2020) leadership style is informed by the view that in order to be accessible to everyone and to have the opportunity to influence others and be influenced, a leader should operate from the centre and not from the front in the traditional sense. DG-6’s (2020) leadership style progressed from “managing files” in the private sector to working in teams, which is something he learnt in the Public Service through attending formal training courses as well as being humbled to learn from highly experienced and qualified subordinates, peers and superiors. Thus, DG-6

believes that many people would describe his style as “transformative” because “it enables everybody to connect to the centre”.

Participatory, empowering leadership is how DG-5 (2020) described his leadership style because he allows “leaders to lead themselves” whilst “drawing on their collective wisdom”. Though his emphasis is on building a soft approach to leadership, he says at times it is necessary to be hard. Although DG-5 (2020) became adept at leading in this particular way over time, he is of the view that many people who worked with him will describe him in a similar way. The interview with DG-2 (2020) revealed that the shift from a purely supportive approach to situational leadership was largely influenced by the transition from small to big organisations as well as interactions with different people over the years. DG-2 (2020) thinks that some people will describe his style as diplomatic and supportive, whereas others will describe it as operational. Table 5.3 below provides an overview of how participants described their leadership styles and their evolution.

Table 5.3: Self-description of leadership styles and evolution

	Self-described leadership style	Description of how leadership has developed and underlying factors	Description of how others describe one’s leadership
DG-1 (2020)	Open-minded (and mixed approach based on environmental factors)	Mellowed from an abrasive style due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The adoption of an open-minded style, which is influenced by maturity and an understanding of the dynamics of leading a large organisation, and appreciation of different people’s capabilities and challenges; and • Change of worldview and perspective as a result of reading a variety of books on leadership and learning from others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resourceful by some, and • A bit abrasive by others.
DG-2 (2020)	Situational (due to the need to adapt to different situations and characteristics of groups being led).	Evolved from pure supportive to situational leadership due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interactions with different kinds of people and different personalities, and • The need to respond to different environmental requirements as a result of transitioning from a small non-governmental organisation to a big Public Service organisation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diplomatic: seeks to reach amicable solutions through engagement, • Supportive by people who require direction and space, appreciate the space given and are capable of working independently, and • Operational by those who need close monitoring because they misuse any opportunity given to them to work independently.
DG-3 (2020)	Adaptive	Evolved from a radical style that is intolerant of hierarchy due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influence of interactions with people in different levels of leadership, and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adaptive

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maturity in terms of age and orientation. 	
DG-4 (2020)	Participative, linked with situational	<p>Consistent style but got strengthened by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-knowledge: know one's strengths and weaknesses, • Being open to persuasion whilst also being assertive when necessary, and • Surrounding oneself with people who complement one's skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open to persuasion and trustworthy
DG-5 (2020)	Participatory empowering	<p>Consistent style but got strengthened due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preference to build a soft approach to leadership, and • Recognition of the importance of being hard at times – without necessarily leading by force. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participatory empowering
DG-6 (2020)	Adaptive (seeks to navigate the current environment)	<p>Changed from managing files to being a team leader by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending training on leadership after appointment in the Public Service, and • Being committed to learning from peers and subordinates in order to build a learning organisation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transformative as it represent as departure from being in the centre
DG-7 (2020)	Situational (combination of soft-touch; leading through persuasion; plus target driven and hard-line style)	<p>Consistent style – enhanced by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The uniqueness of the different institutions one has worked for, and • Lessons from other leaders that one had interacted with through different clusters. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soft-touch leadership (leading through modelling, demonstration and persuasion)
DG-8 (2020)	Combination of leadership from the front and back and being open to persuasion	<p>Consistent style – enhanced by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning from peers and subordinates, and • Work experience in different organisations within and outside the Public Service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A person who is willing to be led
DG-9 (2020)	Participatory (Use persuasion, and when necessary firm leadership to achieve results; model whatever you want people to do)	<p>Consistent style but enhanced by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading books on leadership, • Reading to enhance subject matter knowledge, • Work experience in stakeholder management in local government, • Types of (political) leaders one has worked with, and • Engagements with higher education institutions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bold and capable leader who is an “open-book” and speaks truth to power

Source: Author's own illustration.

A closer analysis of the information captured in Table 5.3 above shows that five participants are of the view that other people would describe their leadership styles in a similar or related way, whereas DG-1 (2020) and DG-2 (2020) acknowledged that their leadership styles will be described differently by different people, depending on how they work or relate with such people. The study argues that the manner in which

most participants describe their dominant leadership styles, whilst recognising the importance of other styles, is reflective of a combination of leadership approaches in practice. This gives credence to House and Aditya's (1997:409) argument that old and existing theories have a cumulative effect on new theories and practices, especially when combined in integrative theories such as Van Wart's (2004) LAC, Raelin's (2005) leaderful practice and Uhl-Bien *et al.*'s (2007) CLT, as discussed in sections 3.4.2.3 and 3.5 of chapter three. In terms of CLT and the CAS approach, the participants' different styles demonstrate the diversity of the agents (Lichtenstein and Plowman 2009; Uhl-Bien and Arena 2018) that constitute the G&A Cluster. This has implications for competency identification as well as leadership practice.

By the same token, survey participants were requested to select three out of five preselected styles that describe their leadership styles and the G&A Cluster's leadership style, and further indicate the frequency with which each style is used. The styles identified were informed by the theoretical framework discussed in chapters two and three with specific emphasis placed on concepts that are commonly used in the public administration context and the South African Public Service such as bureaucracy and democracy in contrast to leadership concepts such as autocracy and laissez-faire. In particular, interrelated leadership concepts that are relevant for this study were included, namely, shared/collective, collegial/distributed and collaborative. The results are presented in Figures 5.2 and 5.3 below.

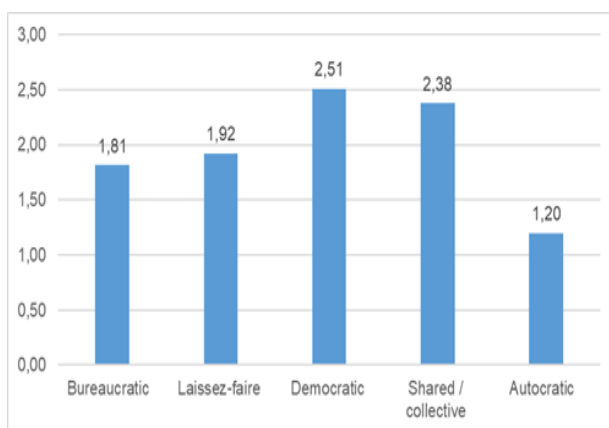


Figure 5.2: Survey participants' descriptions of their preferred leadership styles

Source: Author's own illustration.

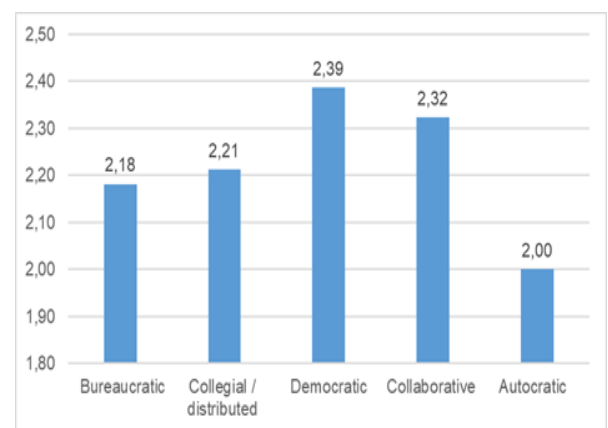


Figure 5.3: Survey participants' perceptions of the G&A Cluster leadership

Source: Author's own illustration.

The perfect score for each style was pitched at three, meaning that the particular style is used always, followed by a score of two which means that the style is used often, and one representing sometimes. Interestingly, a democratic style of leadership was rated high in both Figure 5.2 and 5.3, although participants rated themselves much higher than they rated the G&A Cluster. Likewise, shared/collective and collaborative leadership, which form part of plural forms of leadership, as explained by Sergi *et al.* (2017:35-36) in chapter three, were rated the second and third highest in both figures, albeit a bit higher for the participants (Figure 5.2) than for the G&A Cluster (Figure 5.3). Linked to these two is 'collegial/distributed', which scored the third highest in Figure 5.3. The highest scoring styles in both figures are more aligned with the conception of leadership as a relational process, which rated the second highest in Figure 5.1. The highest rating for democratic leadership in both figures is important because of the role of administrative leadership in public value creation in a democratic context (Raffel *et al.* 2009a:4) and emphasis on democratic accountability in the governance era (Van Wart 2013:521).

Although bureaucratic and autocratic leadership styles are rated the fourth and fifth lowest in both figures, the ratings are much higher (average of 2 and above) in respect of the G&A Cluster (Figure 5.3). The study argues that in the Public Service context, which is characterised by strong emphasis on predictability and regulatory compliance, the rating for bureaucratic leadership is supported by the emphasis placed on the need to understand mandates and prescripts by some participants as explained in section 5.3.5.1 above. Furthermore, as explained in chapter one and chapter three, CLT recognises the existence and role of administrative leadership in a CAS that is found in bureaucratic organisations.

The concern is with the high score for autocratic leadership, especially in the G&A Cluster, because this is supposedly a structure of "equals" and none of the interviewed DGs described their styles as autocratic, unless if the elements of being: "a bit abrasive" (DG-1 2020); "operational" (DG-2 2020); "target-driven and hard-line"(DG-7 2020); "hard at times" (DG-5 2020); and "firm to achieve results" (DG-9 2020) are more pronounced at the G&A Cluster level than the DGs would realise. The study argues that the reason for a high rating for autocratic leadership at the inter-organisational level could be attributed to the extension of intra-organisational autocratic styles to the

G&A Cluster, as well as unequal power relations between the DGs – who are supposedly the main members with equal influence – and the DDGs and CDs who attend on behalf of the DGs. The study argues that the results allude to a discrepancy between CLT’s conception of leadership as a dynamic phenomenon that transcends formal authority and the actual practice of leadership as a phenomenon that is dependent on formal/positional authority.

The analysis leads to the conclusion that in theory, there is recognition for collective forms of leadership by most participants, but heroic leadership that is dependent on individuals’ character traits and positional power is still prevalent. Hence, section 5.3.5.3 below investigates the leadership responsibility for the G&A Cluster.

5.3.5.3 Leadership responsibility for the Governance and Administration Cluster

On a scale of one (1) to five (5), where one represents strongly disagree and five represents strongly agree, survey participants were requested to indicate their level of agreement with several statements regarding the location of (or responsibility for) the G&A Cluster leadership. The results are presented in Figure 5.4 below.

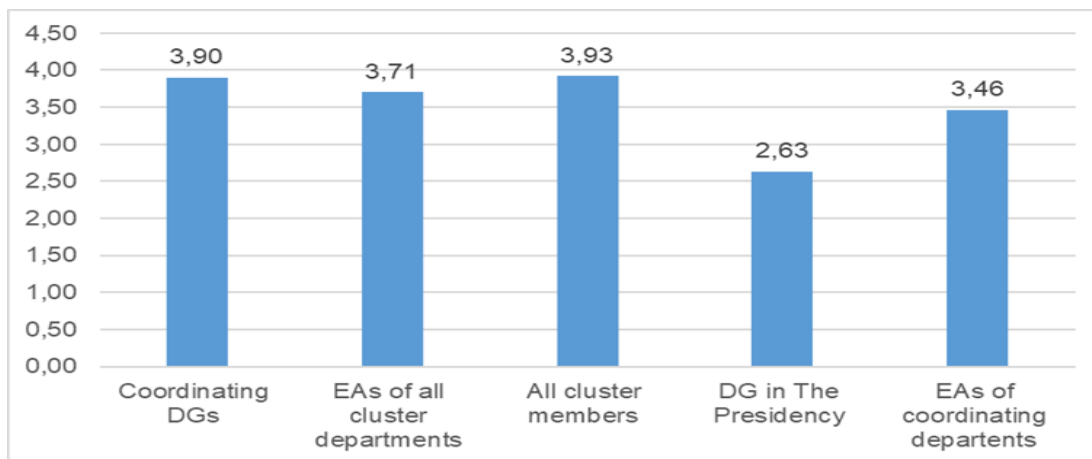


Figure 5.4: Leadership responsibility for the G&A Cluster

Source: Author’s own illustration.

As illustrated in Figure 5.4 above, the statement relating to “all cluster members” was rated the highest (3.93 average), followed by “coordinating DGs” (3.90 average). While other statements were rated equally high, the overall rating for “DG in The Presidency” was rated the lowest, at 2.63 average, because more than 60% of the participants disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. The ratings confirm that the

leadership responsibility of the G&A Cluster, which is an IGR structure with a vertical and horizontal mandate as explained in chapter two, section 2.5.3, is collectively shared by different groups and structures, as opposed to being the responsibility of an individual in the capacity of “DG in The Presidency”. Still, the average ratings do not provide clarity on the complexity of the G&A Cluster leadership, as highlighted in the discussions below.

The analyses of the interview and survey data have alluded to a distinction between administration/coordination leadership/management and substantive leadership. The latter relates to leadership in terms of the agenda and substance of the issues addressed, whereas the former relates to the coordination and chairpersonship responsibility - which can be associated with Popp *et al.*'s (2013:36-37) conception of inter-organisational governance through the “lead organisation” or “network administration”. There is agreement amongst seven of the nine interviewees that the coordinating departments are responsible for administration leadership. According to DG-1 (2020), the co-chairs of the G&A Cluster have the responsibility for “leadership in terms of arranging meetings, processing the agenda, processing minutes and chairing” meetings. In the same view, DG-6 (2020) and DG-8 (2020) attest that the co-chairing departments are mainly responsible for coordination and chairpersonship. These views justify why the leadership responsibility for the G&A Cluster was rated high in favour of the DGs of coordinating departments, while a similar role was moderately rated in favour of the executive authorities (EAs) of coordinating departments.

Contrary to administration leadership, the views held by the majority of interviewees ascribe the substantive leadership responsibility for the G&A Cluster to all cluster members (that is DGs), as well as all members of the ministerial cluster. This view is in line with Popp *et al.*'s (2013:8) notion of shared governance in inter-organisation networks. The leadership of the G&A Cluster was thus described by some participants as participatory (SR-32 2020; SR-34 2020), collective (DG-1 2020; DG-2 2020; DG-7 2020; SR-3 2020, SR-43 2020), and democratic (SR-9 2020; SR-16 2020; SR-32 2020; SR-34 2020). For DG-1 (2020), the G&A Cluster “leadership is a collective of the core members of the departments”. This means that “all DGs have good equal status and they must provide an equal level of leadership” (DG-1 2020). So, “even if

DGs do not have responsibility for coordinating a particular cluster, their input is critical because of the leadership role they play within their own departments and the fact that they are coordinating the leadership of the Public Service as a whole, individually through their particular departments” (DG-5 2020). DG-2 (2020) concurs as follows:

“I look at it in terms of collective leadership, the leadership lies in what I referred to as core departments, or core members, so the DGs of those departments. That for me is where the leadership lies. You will see it in action when you have, even if it is just a few provincial DGs in the meeting, and you have a couple of DGs from national in the meeting, the texture of the discussion is different. I look at it in that space, not just leadership in terms of who is chairing, ... but in terms of the leadership that makes the cluster to have momentum”.

Accordingly, DG-7 (2020) stated that it is illogical for cluster members to complain that “there is no sufficient leadership coming from the co-chairpersons” when all what they are responsible for is coordination and all cluster members are collectively responsible and technically represented by DGs who are the highest officials in each department. Therefore, everybody “must take responsibility in the leadership of the cluster” (DG-7 2020) and DGs cannot blame someone else because “the full responsibility for the outcomes is the responsibility of the DGs and the ministers who are active in those respective clusters” (DG-6 2020). The perspectives of the interviewees regarding the substantive leadership responsibility for the G&A Cluster are consistent with the survey results, especially in respect of the leadership responsibility of all cluster members, which is the highest rated. Nevertheless, there is a disjuncture between perspective and practice with regard to this issue.

According to DG-8 (2020), collective leadership for the substance of the G&A Cluster has not been fully realised because for many years, the G&A Cluster’s agenda has largely been set by national departments, “with provinces mostly taking a reporting role”. In his elaboration, DG-8 (2020) asserts that “nearly 90% of the agenda items are determined by our counterparts at our national office” and this has been accepted as a tradition. Therefore, for years the practice was not questioned. This “top-down approach” to agenda setting, argues DG-8 (2020), is one of the weaknesses of the G&A Cluster. Survey participants also alluded to the G&A Cluster’s limited “strategic focus on matters of interest for the provinces” (SR-34 2020) and the need for a “more

collective approach to agenda setting” (SR-10 2020). Notwithstanding this challenge and others that are discussed in sections 5.3.6 and 5.3.8 below, there is recognition that the ongoing process of developing and refining the terms of reference for the GSCID Cluster creates an opportunity to address some of these weaknesses (DG-8 2020; SR-8 2020; SR-24 2020).

Apart from the above mainstream perspectives regarding the administration and substantive leadership responsibility for the G&A Cluster, there were isolated views that alluded to a bit of confusion about the current administration leadership arrangements and the espoused substantive leadership perspectives. These views echo Mathebula’s (2004:210, 223) submission in section 2.5.3 of chapter two that clusters should be politically led from within The Presidency. According to DG-4 (2020), the “leadership of the G&A Cluster is located within The Presidency or DPSA ... and the role of the other DGs is to participate in the discussions”. For SR-3 (2020), the “DG in The Presidency should ideally have been the chair” because “the governance function is vested within The Presidency and not with other centre of government departments”. Similarly, the ideal scenario for DG-3 (2020), which is aligned to Mathebula’s (2004:210,223) view in chapter two, is for the leadership of the G&A Cluster to reside in The Presidency itself because “it is the backbone, the nerve centre of the cluster system, and even the issues that it is focusing on are transversal in nature and they affect the three spheres of government”. Therefore, concludes DG-3 (2020), “a responsibility of this magnitude reside[s] with The Presidency in the collective sense” but not the DG in The Presidency. The observation by DG-3 (2020) is that contrary to the ideal scenario, “the practice over time has been that the chairpersonship of the G&A Cluster was delegated” to the DGs of coordinating departments and their ministers, even though this arrangement is questionable.

These minority perspectives result from the fact that “there was a time when The Presidency played a very important role” in guiding clusters on what is expected from each cluster (DG-7 2020). In addition, the continued role played by the DG in The Presidency to help the G&A Cluster clarify its mandate and to address problems of poor meeting attendance by some DGs as noted by SR-8(2020) and SR-16 (2020), contributes to this view. The study argues that these isolated perspectives are consistent with the survey results in respect of the low rating for the location of the

G&A Cluster leadership being with the “DG in The Presidency”. They also allude to the lack of a common understanding amongst G&A Cluster members on the leadership responsibility arrangements and the rationale thereof, and the “fragile” nature of collective leadership (Denis *et al.* 2001:809, 824), as discussed in chapter three of this thesis.

Having discussed perspectives on the importance of leadership in the Public Service, the different leadership styles of senior managers who interact at the G&A Cluster level, and the leadership responsibility for the G&A Cluster, section 5.3.5 below deals with the G&A Cluster’s perceived contribution or non-contribution towards the performance of the Public Service and the factors that enable or inhibit its contribution.

5.3.6 The cluster system and the Governance and Administration Cluster’s contribution to improved performance

This section provides an overview of the significance of the cluster system and perceptions regarding the G&A Cluster’s multiple forms of contribution towards the performance of the Public Service as well as the determining factors for contribution to performance.

5.3.6.1 The role of the cluster system

The role of the cluster system as a platform for peers to, amongst others, share information, discuss and debate issues of mutual interest and collaborate in addressing complex challenges is acknowledged by participants and confirms the constitutional underpinnings for IGR in South Africa and the role of the cluster system in improving coordination, fostering integration and ensuring policy coherence, as well as the alignment of strategic priorities and intervention programmes between departments and across the three spheres of government, as elaborated upon in chapter two, section 2.5.3. According to DG-5 (2020), the cluster system is an essential mechanism for coordination in government in South Africa; hence, “a lot of expenditure, of time and investment of funding” has been made to improve “horizontal as well as vertical coordination”. This makes coordination and leadership across government very important (DG-3 2020). While inter-organisational leadership is dynamic, it is also challenging (SR-9 2020; SR-20 2020; SR-40 2020) because its

success is dependent on “good relationships with colleagues from other organisations” (SR-40 2020).

To reflect on the contribution of the G&A Cluster in particular, survey participants were requested to rate the contribution of the G&A Cluster towards their departments’ or provinces’ ability to deliver on their mandates, and interviewees were asked to broadly comment on such contribution. In addition, both groups were requested to identify the areas of success and poor performance. An analysis of the responses provided by both groups has resulted in the categorisation of the G&A Cluster’s contribution to performance, and the cluster system broadly, into individual development, programme and departmental/provincial performance and system-wide performance. Although the three categories are interrelated, from a CAS perspective, it is necessary to reflect on the different ways through which the G&A Cluster, and the broader cluster system, is perceived to have contributed to the growth and development of individual members and their departments, as well as the entire Public Service as a macro organisation that comprises multiple institutions. As such, these multiple forms of contribution and their impact on inter-organisational performance are discussed in sections 5.3.6.2 to 5.3.6.4 below.

5.3.6.2 Governance and Administration Cluster’s contribution to individual growth and performance

The contribution of the cluster system towards the development and growth of individual members emerged organically from some of the interviewees. Although this aspect was not emphasised in how the interview questions were phrased, in section 2.6 of chapter two, Williams (2013:25-26) argues that boundary spanning competencies have an individual and organisational dimension and several authors (Reddy 2001:23; Phillimore 2013:237) place emphasis on, amongst others, the human capacity development dimension of IGR in order to achieve improved outcomes for each level of government and the entire system. This justifies why individual development and growth, even within the context of an inter-organisational environment, should not be neglected. The contribution discussed in this section is interconnected with some participants’ assertions that they learnt how to operate effectively in the cluster system through observation (DG-2 2020) and assimilation (SR-5 2020), as reported in section 5.3.3 above. Therefore, emphasis in this section

is on the opportunity created by the cluster system and the G&A Cluster in particular, for participants to enhance their knowledge and skills in the area of public service and administration, and with respect to technical areas related to transformation, monitoring and evaluation as well as infrastructure related matters.

The introduction of the cluster system, according to DG-7 (2020), exposed DGs to what was happening in government and the interdependencies amongst departments, whereas prior to that, DGs had a narrow focus on the mandates of their departments and “did not see a need to cooperate with everyone”. Furthermore, the exposure to critical feedback from peers made DGs conscientious of the quality of work they were submitting to the clusters. As things progressed, the G&A Cluster created a platform for DGs to develop a thorough understanding of cross-cutting issues and challenges related to energy, water, medium term strategic planning as well as government-wide monitoring and evaluation, notes DG-9 (2020). For DG-8 (2020), participation in the G& Cluster was an “educational trip at the highest level” because the cluster exposed him to the system of government and issues that he “would not have been privy to”.

In the same view, DG-6 (2020) remarks that during his initial exposure to the G&A Cluster as a chief director, he was “kind of a backroom participant” because he “did not understand the Public Service well enough”. His (DG-6 2020) participation was “a moment of absorption and reflection rather than one where [he] sought to influence things at that stage” and over the years his participation in different clusters got him “to appreciate the wisdom behind the establishment of the cluster system”. Accordingly, DG-3 (2020), DG-7 (2020) and DG-8 (2020) attest that participation in the G&A Cluster enabled them to provide guidance in their areas of responsibility and to institutionalise some of the practices and systems through “policy directions, both at provincial level [and] maybe even at local government level” (DG-9 2020).

The contribution of the G&A Cluster to individual growth is vital because intergovernmental networks and collaborations, according to some of authors who are cited in chapter two (Agranoff and McGuire 2003:175); Mandell and Keast 2008:729), require different capacities than those required to operate in a single organisation. In addition, the multiple contributions have implications for individual and collective leadership development plus collective leadership competencies, as noted by Bao *et*

al. (2012:453), Williams (2013:25-26) and Raelin (2016:6-7) in chapter three, section 3.4.2.3.

5.3.6.3 Governance and Administration Cluster’s contribution to programme and institutional performance

Since the question posed to survey participants was more biased towards programmes and specific institutional arrangements such as departments and provinces, the survey results are presented in this section in order to illuminate the responses provided by interviewees plus the qualitative responses that were proactively provided by survey participants. Though presented and discussed in this section, the survey results are also relevant for the system-wide discussion in section 5.3.5.4 below. As indicated in Table 5.4 below, on a rating scale of one to ten, 29 (71%) participants rated the contribution of the G&A Cluster towards the performance of their departments or provinces between six (6) and nine (9), while ratings by the remaining 12 (29%) participants were scattered between one (1) and four (4), and 10, thus resulting in a total score of 280 and an average rating of 6,83.

Table 5.4: G&A Cluster input to programme and institutional performance

Ratings for contribution to performance by SMS levels	DG	DDG	CD	Total
1	0	1	0	1
2	0	1	0	1
3	0	3	0	3
4	0	1	0	1
5	0	3	0	3
6	1	1	3	5
7	0	5	3	8
8	0	6	5	11
9	0	2	3	5
10	2	0	1	3
Total	3	23	15	41
Total score and average rating	26 (8,67)	138 (6,0)	116 (7,73)	280 (6,83)

Source: Author’s own illustration.

The above average ratings from the survey are aligned to the views expressed by participants and are further supported by examples of successful and partially successful programmes because of the role played by the G&A Cluster, as well as examples of areas of poor performance. Although few survey participants said they cannot remember successful G&A Cluster led programmes because the Cluster

operated more like a “clearing house” or quality control mechanism to Cabinet for transversal policies whilst actual work was done by individual departments (SR-3 2020; SR-17 2020), many survey participants and interviewees provided examples of programmes whose success or partial success can be attributed to the G&A Cluster.

The examples provided varied, although several programmes were repeatedly cited. For example, the following were cited by two or more participants: formalisation of the performance management and development system for all employees (DG-7 2020; SR-30 2020; SR-32 2020; SR-37 2020); the payment of suppliers within 30 days (DG-2 2020; DG-3 2020; SR-40 2020); the government-wide monitoring and evaluation system (DG:5 2020; DG-9 2020; SR-15 2020; SR-27 2020); the phasing in of the smart card identity document (SR-7 2020; SR-35 2020); the outcomes approach to planning, monitoring and reporting and the Management Performance and Assessment Tool (MPAT), which is used to assess departments in the areas of human resource management, financial management, service delivery improvement and governance systems (DG-2 2020; SR-35 2020; SR-41 2020).

The responses provided also revealed that the contribution of the G&A Cluster towards the performance of institutions within the Public Service differs according to their mandates (DG-1 2020; DG-2 2020; DG-5 2020). Departments that are responsible for transversal functions that affect the internal operations of all departments, such as the development of the medium term strategic framework (DG-3 2020), supply chain and financial management (DG-2 2020; DG-9 2020) have always elevated issues to and benefitted more from the G&A Cluster because their ability to deliver on their mandates is dependent on them “holding hands with other national departments and provincial departments in particular” (DG-2 2020).

For DG-4 (2020), “the G&A Cluster served as a platform for reporting issues to the PCC because each province was allowed to raise issues, which would then be discussed by the G&A Cluster before being submitted to the PCC, thus making it possible for the PCC to make decisions. This mode of engaging on broader issues at the higher level ensured that the provinces’ views were put on record in an efficient manner, instead of writing to a specific minister on specific matters”. DG-2 (2020) is of the view that some departments would have achieved what was expected of them “with or without the G&A” Cluster. The observations suggest that regular participation

in the G&A Cluster was not necessary for some departments, but as noted by some participants (DG-1 2020; D-2 2020; DG-6 2020), non-participation would weaken the collective wisdom of the G&A Cluster; hence, the need to balance flexibility and rigid organisational structures, as stated in section 2.6 of chapter two.

The average rating of 6,83 in Table 5.4 above for the contribution of the G&A Cluster to performance is also supported by the recognition that, in spite of the positive contributions, there are areas of improvement that should be addressed in order to elevate the G&A Cluster's overall performance and impact. The areas of improvement, which are discussed in detail in section 5.3.8.2 below, include diversifying the agenda (DG-2 2020; DG-8 2020); ensuring improved and consistent attendance by DGs and their alternates (DG-6 2020; SR-35 2020); and creating suitable sub-structures (DG-4 2020; DG-7 2020).

5.3.6.4 Governance and Administration Cluster's contribution to system-wide performance

The cluster system, of which the G&A Cluster is a part, is "the cornerstone of strategic leadership within the Public Service" (SR-8 2020) and an important coordinating mechanism to improve governance and service delivery through policy and programme coordination, as well as the effective management of IGR (DG-5 2020; DG-8 2020; SR-27 2020; SR-34 2020). Accordingly, SR-27 (2020) acknowledges that "the broad coordination framework from FOSAD and the intergovernmental structures have formed the foundation for improved governance and effective running of the cluster". Policy coordination, notes DG-8 (2020), is one of the major successes of the G&A Cluster because it has ensured the alignment of policy at the national, provincial and local government spheres, even though the actual interface with local government has remained poor (DG-2 2020; DG-8 2020; SR-6 2020; SR-33 2020).

There are several areas in which the G&A Cluster performed partially well or poorly in the sense that set objectives were not fully realised or progress has been unsatisfactory for a considerable period, even if such areas have previously received or are beginning to receive attention. The areas of partial or poor performance, whose elaboration is beyond the scope of this study, include the following: ensuring capacity through the effective macro organisation of the state (DG-2 2020; DG-5 2020; DG-7

2020; SR-20 2020); professionalisation of the Public Service through consistent delegation of HRM powers to DGs and establishment of the Administrative Head of the Public Service in line with the NDP recommendations (DG-1 2020; DG-2 2020; DG-3 2020; DG-5 2020, SR-32 2020); developing capacity for policy implementation (DG-5 2020; DG-6 2020; SR-33 2020); defining and implementing consequence management (SR-4 2020; SR-6 2020; SR-18 2020; SR-38 2020; SR-40 2020); and governance oversight and combating corruption across the three spheres of government, including SOEs (DG-3 2020; SR-6 2020; SR-33 2020; SR-38 2020).

For example, DG-5 (2020) attributes the establishment of systems that are continuously being improved upon “in the area of ethical leadership and systems that include the financial disclosure system and anti-corruption hotline” as partial successes for the G&A Cluster. On the contrary, DG-3 (2020) argues that the FOSAD and ministerial G&A Cluster, as the backbone of the public service and administration, “should have taken the lead in providing “strategic focus on issues of combating corruption” in government and society because the interventions put in place over the years “leave a lot to be desired because now we have what you call a state capture commission”. This partly explains why DG-5 (2020) concedes that even though systems have been put in place, the issue of integrity is hotly debated because “there are massive gaps and there are practices which are corrupt across the Public Service”. Similarly, DG-7 (2020) confirms that the G&A Cluster has contributed towards the adoption of “improved governance frameworks” by the state, even though some of the frameworks need to be enhanced.

With respect to macro organisation and state capacity, the view is that the G&A Cluster did not provide the necessary leadership to enable government to deal with this issue. According to DG-3 (2020), initial efforts fell short due to the discontinuation of a large scale programme whose implementation was at an advanced stage, after the change of executive leadership in key departments. There is also acknowledgment by DG-6 (2020) and DG-7 (2020) that the G&A Cluster has failed to assist government to develop capacity to implement most of the well-crafted policies. The G&A Cluster’s poor performance in these areas has resulted in the elevation of government’s strategic priority on ethical and capable state from priority five to one (DG-2 2020; DG-7 2020) and the inclusion of state capacity in the newly adopted name for the cluster,

that is GSCID, because a lot of work should be done in these areas (DG-7). The study argues that the G&A Cluster's unsatisfactory performance in these areas is indicative of challenges to operationalise inter-organisational leadership due to reliance on administrative/bureaucratic leadership and failure to enable and manage the entanglement between administrative and adaptive leadership.

There are other complex system-wide initiatives, which, though cited by only one participant each, demonstrate the capability of the G&A Cluster to address complex challenges, in collaboration with other clusters, through the development and institutionalisation of numerous systems, processes and institutional arrangements. These include the establishment of the South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) (DG-6 2020); the establishment of inter-ministerial committees to address infrastructure capacity and funding challenges in local government (DG-9 2020); and institutionalisation of the Municipal Infrastructure Grant (MIG) Programme (DG- 9 2020) in spite of the initial resistance by provinces for such grants to be transferred directly to municipalities. The extract below illustrates the G&A Cluster's role in the establishment of SASSA:

“There was a court challenge regarding the administration of social grants ... and an argument that there was no equal access to the same right by citizens because you have different provincial administrations with different capacities. If you centralise this function, you would give all South Africans across the board equal access to this benefit. We then had to projectise the establishment of SASSA. That is how SASSA was born. We whisked away that function from the provinces and we put it back into a national institution, because national departments in concurrent functions are not designed to reach out to citizens across the country. ... It was through the G&A platform that we were able to successfully drive that. We were able to persuade Cabinet that this is the way to go, we are ready and able to proceed. In fact, SASSA did become a success story until perhaps two to three years ago. The G&A Cluster actually made it possible, Social Development on its own would not have gotten it off the ground without the active participation of other cluster departments” (DG-6 2020).

From the above analysis, it is clear that the G&A Cluster and other clusters, created a “unique learning opportunity for many departments” (DG-6 2020) and individual

members to share best practices, identify areas of collaboration between departments, and identify weaknesses throughout government and then propose solutions. The study argues that even though some of the contributions are difficult to quantify or narrow down to a specific programme or policy, they are important because collaborative processes and the sustenance of the network are as important as the outputs and outcomes (Mandell and Keast 2008:729; Popp *et al.* 2013:69). As such, section 5.3.6.5 below discusses the processes and factors that enhance or inhibit the performance of an inter-organisational structure such as the G&A Cluster.

5.3.6.5 Factors that enhance or inhibit the Governance and Administration Cluster's performance

The factors leading to the success, partial success and poor performance of the G&A Cluster are complex and intertwined. Some can be attributed to the G&A Cluster itself, while others are beyond the scope and power of the G&A Cluster. In addition, the contributing factors have a dual influence relationship with leadership practice because they influence, and are influenced by, leadership practices and processes. Consequently, the discussion in this section focuses on the internal and external factors that enhance and/or inhibit the G&A Cluster's performance and its contribution to improved Public Service performance, with specific emphasis on leadership.

(a) Internal factors that underpin the Governance and Administration Cluster's performance

The internal factors that have a positive or negative influence on the leadership of the G&A Cluster that are elaborated upon below include shared vision and commitment, agenda setting, attendance, top-down approach to policy implementation and persistent silo practices.

- *Shared vision, commitment and collaborative environment*

There is recognition that the existence and operation of the G&A Cluster is in itself a critical success factor because participation in the structure facilitates the sharing of experiences and critical engagements on issues and products that should be escalated to Cabinet (DG-1 2020). The G&A Cluster also promotes a common and broader understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the Public Service (DG-2

2020; DG-7 2020), facilitates the development of a common vision that cuts across national and provincial departments (DG-1 2020; DG-2 2020; DG-6 2020), and gradually breaks down silos. This is the reason that in chapter two (section 2.5.3), Mandell and Keast (2008:729) note that success in building strong relations within organisational networks is equally a legitimate achievement just like the outputs and outcomes of the network itself. Accordingly, collaboration, trust, respect and frankness amongst cluster members as well as with the G&A ministerial cluster and other clusters are regarded as some of the critical success factors that underpin some of the identified programmes (DG-2 2020; SR-9 2020; SR-21 2020). For example, DG-7 (2020) explains the critical success factors in the establishment of SASSA as follows:

“There was a shared commitment and vision about the need for the country to respond effectively to poverty, and social grants were such an important service. ... The shared vision, but also just allowing space for robust debate is what enriched the outcome of the process. Nobody felt muscled down. Everybody felt that they had the opportunity to contribute, to shape, to debate, and that a particular view won the day and everybody rallied behind it”.

There is also a view that sometimes the G&A Cluster environment is characterised by:

“the arrogance” and “overt self-esteem of some of the national and provincial departments/leaders who sometimes want to exert their authority in the G&A [Cluster] and control debates. As a result, other people just go to the meeting to record their presence and keep quiet the whole meeting, from beginning to end. Some of their comments are so intimidating to the extent that only certain people speak, and many people, especially chief directors, would keep quiet. The bureaucracies sometimes take over and people would only listen to those who are at DG or DDG levels” (SR-41 2020).

The above quotation indicates the occasional lack of what Hannah *et al.* (2011:215-219) refer to as appropriate group dynamics, social regulation structures and feedback mechanisms that are needed to develop dynamic IRC and CRC. As noted by Hannah *et al.* (2011: 227-228) in chapter four (section 4.5.2), hierarchical leaders (such as DGs) have the responsibility to establish appropriate group dynamics by regulating the emotional tone of the structure and encouraging group identify and role rotation. This

observation, and the above two quotations, illustrate the need for complexity leadership competence in a CAS such as the G&A Cluster.

- *Attendance of and alternate representation in meetings*

Meeting attendance and alternate representation have simultaneously enhanced and inhibited the G&A Cluster's performance. In terms of its conceptualisation, the "G&A Cluster is supposed to be a cluster of DGs, but in practice, if you get about 5 DGs in a meeting, you are lucky because DGs tend to delegate" (DG-2 2020). A similar observation is made by SR-39 (2020) who states that approximately 50 DGs, including 9 provincial DGs from core and non-core departments were and are expected to participate in G&A Cluster meetings, however, on average 4 DGs, including the chairperson, would be present in meetings.

The paucity in the attendance of G&A Cluster meetings by DGs is variously described as irregular (DG-9 2020); poor (SR-1 2020) and *ad hoc* (SR-35 2020) because "having a DG Cluster where in a meeting, only two or three people will be DGs and the room will be full, ... is not right" (DG-2 2020) and has a negative impact on the quality of discussions and the effectiveness of leadership within the Cluster. Regular attendance by most DGs after the establishment of the cluster system, and the regular attendance of G&A Cluster meetings by some DGs from national and provincial departments (DG-4 2020; DG-5 2020; DG-6 2020), has ensured continuity and consideration of provincial dynamics when dealing with policy and programme implementation. In particular, participation by provincial DGs has ensured provincial support in institutionalising programmes such as the government-wide monitoring and evaluation and MIG (DG-9 2020), plus the establishment of SASSA (DG-6 2020).

There are numerous reasons why DGs would occasionally or frequently delegate DDGs or CDs to attend meetings on their behalf. The most cited reason is workload and time constraints because DGs are "bombarded with new things almost every day" (DG-6 2020) and they are constantly chasing deadlines and dealing with crises (DG-6 2020; DG-8 2020), whereas provincial DGs are even more stretched because they are responsible for the entire provincial administration (DG-3 2020), which comprises of approximately 12 to 14 departments and many municipalities (DG-8 2020). The

study argues that flexibility in allowing DDGs and CDs to represent DGs has benefits and disadvantages.

The benefits of such flexibility is that at the basic level, it ensures active or potential participation by core and non-core departments, whereas representation by specialists in, *inter alia*, corporate services, monitoring and evaluation, policy development and financial management enhances discussions and debates on such matters (DG-4 2020; DG-5 2020; SR-40 2020). The disadvantage, especially of permanent representation of DGs by senior managers who are highly specialised is that it weakens the structure because, according to three participants (DG-2 2020; DG-5 2020; SR-6 2020), specialists are often not in a position to engage on broad and complex policy issues, sector specific and cross-cutting service delivery matters as well as governance challenges that cut across the three spheres of government.

Scrutiny of the responses received suggests that perceptions and concerns about the contribution of non-attendance by DGs to the G&A Cluster's poor performance in some areas is not entirely about alternative representation *per se*. They are mainly about the failure of DGs to attend meetings without even sending representatives (SR-16 2020); the inconsistent attendance of meetings by assigned representatives (SR-35 2020); and representation by junior officials such as directors and CDs (DG-4 2020; SR-41 2020) who are mostly there to take notes or record their presence (DG-2 2020; SR-41 2020) or, as stated by SR-41 (2020) earlier, they cannot engage because they are intimidated. The study argues that the non-attendance of G&A Cluster meetings by DGs and representation by suitably experienced alternates should be addressed in a manner that considers the feasibility, benefits and disadvantages of direct attendance and alternate representation, plus the group dynamics mentioned earlier.

- *Agenda setting*

Several participants (DG-2 2020; DG-4 2020; SR-1 2020; SR-2 2020, SR-34 2020) highlighted the negative impact of the agenda setting process on the G&A Cluster's performance. SR-3's (2020) observation is that the G&A Cluster focused on a "limited spectrum of issues" and did not focus on strategic issues that are of "interest for the provinces". Moreover, the rigid agenda-driven approach adopted by the G&A Cluster did not provide for follow-through interactions outside meetings (SR-2 2020), did not

deal with general discussions on how to improve the Public Service and did not enable spontaneous deliberations on emerging issues (DG-4 2020). Although two participants (DG-8 2020, SR-33 2020) acknowledge that the G&A Cluster's weak interface with local government is largely influenced by the independence of local government as articulated in the *Constitution*, 1996 (South Africa 1996) and how such independence is interpreted and practiced within the context of IGR, there is also recognition that the "agenda setting process" and "the texture of the issues" (DG-2 2020) addressed through the G&A Cluster has also weakened the participation of SALGA. Furthermore, DG-8 (2020) notes that though "issues that are germane to provinces, at least, would be ventilated" during G&A Cluster meetings, the outcome was often unsatisfactory to provinces due to unresolved weaknesses. The study argues that the "agenda setting" process does not just influence the G&A Cluster's performance, it is also influenced by the general lack of structured guidance and support provided to DGs, DDGs and CDs, which is addressed in section 5.3.3 above, as well as the external factors that are discussed in section 5.3.6.2 below and the leadership capability constraints discussed in section 5.3.6.6 below.

- *Top-down approach to and capacity constraints for policy implementation*

The G&A Cluster's poor performance in some areas is attributed to limited policy implementation capacity, notwithstanding the fact that the Public Service, or government broadly, has been successful in developing laws, regulations, policies and frameworks (DG-5 2020; DG-6 2020; DG-8 2020; SR-8 2020; SR-12 2020; SR-32 2020; SR-33 2020), hence policy implementation is cited as one of the failures of the GA& Cluster in sections 5.3.6.5 and 5.3.6.4 above. While success in policy development and coherence across the three spheres of government is recognised (SR-19 2020), the challenge cited by DG-5 (2020) is that government has often adopted a top-down approach to policy implementation, whereas participatory policy formulation in the context of a developmental public administration is not just about the formulation of a policy and its underpinning legislation, it is also about policy implementation in collaboration with, amongst others, civil society organisations and citizens. Therefore, there is a need for culture change. DG-5's (2020) comment recognises the complexity and collective nature of leadership in the governance era, and the competencies needed to maximise such leadership.

- *Persistence and reinforcement of silos*

Contrary to the objective of and satisfactory performance in ensuring policy coherence, integrated programme implementation as well as vertical and horizontal collaboration, an analysis of the responses alludes to the endurance of silo practices (DG-1 2020; DG-7 2020; DG-8 2020; SR-18 2020; SR-31 2020; SR-35 2020) amongst G&A Cluster members. The silo approach often results in some members bringing “personal departmental challenges to the forum, which unless the co-chairs of the G&A correct it and call them to order, it might degenerate” the cluster to the micro level of a specific departmental meeting (DG-1 2020) and further divert attention away from inter-organisational issues that require collective effort (SR-1 2020; SR-6 2020). The view by SR-1 (2020) is that “leaders within departments still see themselves as responsible for their own sphere of work” due to the lack of appreciation of the complexity brought about by public administration and the need for departments to collaborate.

There is a tendency, according to SR-35 (35), for each department to make a presentation of its work during meetings to merely seek inputs and support from other departments, but there is no appreciation of and emphasis on intergovernmental planning and implementation. Furthermore, SR-35 (2020) has observed that sometimes during meetings, departments “focus on their own presentations and then leave or are ... largely disengaged from other items on the agenda”. Such practices, remarks SR-1 (2020), have compromised the ability of the G&A Cluster “to resolve complex issues, which are left to individual departments”. In the same view, DG-8 (2020) notes that “even though we say we are one government, but when it comes to us having to execute our mandates, we still look at our own identified silos and execute our duties within those silos”. The enabler for silos is that DGs “owe their allegiance firstly to their bosses and the politicians. They regard the leadership of and participation in the cluster system as an added KRA [key result areas] which may not help to advance their careers with the politicians” (SR-30 2020).

According to DG-7 (2020), attempts to move away from the silo approach have not succeeded partly because “the PMDS system that we use in government assesses you as an individual. It does not assess you as a group of people”. In addition, DGs are guided by ministers who themselves are supposed to work collaboratively within and across clusters, “but when it comes to the delivery of what they have committed

to the President or to the nation, they tend to concentrate on what is written in their performance agreements” (DG-7 2020). This is not unique to the G&A Cluster. The influence of performance management and financial accountability systems in entrenching silo practices was also alluded to by different authors (Wegrich and Štimac 2014:54; Peters 2018:5) in chapter two, section 2.4.2.

The persistence of silo practices can also be attributed to the fact that cluster members as peers do not always hold each other accountable (SR-16 2020; SR-39 2020; SR-35 2020) because “there are no proper mandating processes” (SR-30 2020). In spite of several authors’ (Stoker 2006:52; Denhardt and Denhardt 2011:43-44; Getha-Taylor 2012:117) view that multifaceted forms of accountability are an integral part of public administration in the governance era, as argued in chapter two, the observations made by participants suggest that this is not always the case due to the (non)proximity to and power (or lack thereof) that different stakeholders exert on cluster members, primarily as individuals and then as a collective. These observations demonstrate that in formal or semi-formal networks that comprise of hierarchical leaders, leadership is not automatically collective and relational but it is also constrained by administrative leadership practices, positional power and organisational boundaries or mandates. Therefore, CLT is not only relevant for bureaucratic organisations, it is also relevant for formal and informal network structures as noted by Noteboom and Termeer (2013).

- *Other factors*

Other internal factors that contributed positively to the performance of the G&A Cluster in some areas include effective project management (DG-6 2020; SR-7 2020), dedicated funding for specific programmes (DG-6 2020; DG-9 2020) and regular reporting to Cabinet. In particular, the latter gave programmes such as the 30-day payment of invoices prominence in terms of deliberations and constant monitoring (DG-2 2020; SR-1 2020).

Having dealt with internal factors, the discussion below focuses on the external factors that have an influence on the performance of the G&A Cluster.

(b) External factors that underpin the G&A Cluster's performance

Since leadership practice and theory have evolved in response to numerous environmental factors that are discussed in chapters two and three, participants were requested to identify external forces or factors that have an influence on the leadership of the G&A Cluster. Although two participants (SR-13 2020; SR-43 2020) could not identify external factors because they view the G&A Cluster as internally focused within the Public Service, all interviewed and many survey participants identified similar factors, most of which are related to policy considerations and political developments. Although the identified forces are integrated, they are grouped into different sub-themes for ease of reference.

- *Politics and macro level government decisions*

The first factor identified by nine participants relates to political developments broadly and policy direction/changes by the ruling party, because such changes are at times not predictable, but they have to find expression in the policies and programmes of government. According to DG-1 (2020), DG-9 (2020) and SR-40 (2020), policy direction and changes by the ruling party often result in macro level government decisions such as the adoption of the NDP new policy decisions that have a transversal effect by other clusters and unpredictable pronouncements made through the state of the nation address. Whilst policy positions by the ruling party can be contested during the formulation stages, DG-9 (2020) notes that once adopted as government policy, "you have to start executing" because "you cannot operate government without the policy direction of the ruling party" (DG-4 2020). As such, the G&A Cluster should be able to accommodate such changes, without deviating from prescripts, approved plans and budgets, unless decisions are made at the macro level to review approved plans and budgets.

Another external force, which is an extension of the political environment, as identified by four interviewees (DG-1 2020; DG-2 2020; DG-3 2020; DG-5 2020) and more than ten survey participants, is Cabinet and its sub-committees. These structures exert their influence on the G&A Cluster through giving priority to specific issues over others or accelerating the finalisation of some products and sometimes at the expense of quality (DG-1 2020; SR-25 2020) because, according to SR-16 (2020), they have "veto powers on some of the proposals" from the G&A Cluster and other stakeholders. The

study argues that the failure to amend the PSA to assign original powers in respect of human resource management to DGs, as recommended in the NDP (NPC 2012) and also noted by DG-3 (2020) in section 5.3.6.3 above, is an example of lack of prioritisation of the issue by Cabinet and its sub-committees. In addition, the PCC and provinces have an influence on provincial issues and the G&A Cluster (DG-9 2020; SR-27 2020), especially because some of the decisions taken at these levels are difficult to implement due to lack of enabling legislation (DG-8 2020). This explains the G&A Cluster's uneven performance in dealing with provincial and local government issues.

The participants' observations and experience allude to the influence of external power on the operations of the G&A Cluster. They also demonstrate the disjuncture between collective leadership perspectives and practice and contradict CLT's conception of leadership as an interactive process of influence that transcends organisational boundaries and formal authority in order to achieve shared goals (Lichtenstein *et al.* 2006; Hartley and Benington 2011; Northouse 2016; Uhl-Bien and Arena 2018:95).

- *Instability at the political-administrative interface*

Ten participants noted that political developments such as Cabinet reshuffles, as noted above, do not just impact on executive leadership from a human perspective; they sometimes also result in sudden changes to departmental priorities and human resource management delegations to DGs, plus institutional instability as a result of the high turnover rate of DGs. Sometimes the turnover rate of DGs, as observed by DG-7 (2020) and SR-36 (2020), has a negative influence on the well-being of G&A Cluster members due to fear of losing their jobs, especially if DGs cannot carry out the mandates of their political principals, which at times are inconsistent with the law or are not supported by approved budgets.

The instability also impacts on the quality of work produced, makes it difficult for G&A Cluster members to create meaningful networks with other DGs (DG-9 2020) and further inhibits continuity in deliberating on some issues (DG-4 2020) because "if there are new faces in the room every time you walk in there, how on earth can you continue having a discussion about something which was discussed before?" (DG-4). According to DG-3 (2020), DG-4 (2020) and DG-9 (200), instability within the Public

Service is one of the major contributing factors to the G&A Cluster's poor performance in some areas, because for years, the centre of government departments within the G&A Cluster itself were unstable. Therefore, the G&A Cluster could not be expected to ensure stability in the Public Service (DG-9 2020).

- *Socio-economic climate*

The complexity of South Africa's system of governance, as identified by SR-14 (2020) and SR-19 (2020) has the potential to negatively or positively impact on the leadership of the G&A Cluster because it provides for complex interrelationships between the public sector and the private sector, trade unions, the media, the broader public and other civil society structures such as community-based organisations and faith-based organisations. The G&A Cluster leadership is expected to understand and operationalise this and further provide leadership to the Public Service on broad developmental issues in this area (SR-14 2020; SR-17 2020).

For example, DG-6 (2020) stated that since government's ability to deliver depends on the commitment of unionised workers, "there should be space created for the G&A Cluster to interact with organised labour", not just about collective bargaining and wage increments, but about government's plans and the impact that each stakeholder group - including unions, has on service delivery to citizens. Likewise, DG-3 (2020) reiterates the need for structured engagements between organised labour and government. In addition to stakeholder engagement, the economic climate and financial constraints were also identified by six participants (DG-5 2020; DG-6 2020; SR-2 2020; SR-11 2020; SR-38 2020; SR-42 2020) as factors that hinder the G&A Cluster from addressing issues of state capacity and implementing programmes related to training and development.

The study argues that the identified internal and external factors, given their influence on the performance and leadership of the G&A Cluster, will have an influence on the competencies that are considered essential for inter-organisational leadership. So, in addition to the internal and external factors discussed above, section 5.3.6.6 below discusses the role and impact of leadership on the G&A Cluster's performance.

5.3.6.6 Leadership influence on the Governance and Administration Cluster's performance

There is recognition that some of the programmes and issues that the G&A Cluster is expected to deal with are complex and progress is dependent on the cooperation and contribution of multiple internal and external stakeholders (DG-2 2020; DG-3 2020). There is also acknowledgement that inter-organisational leadership is complex (SR-30 2020) and "very hard" (SR-40 2020) because "in order to be successful, you also need to rely on building good relationships with colleagues from other organisations" (SR-40 2020). As such, the discussion in this section reflects on the manifestation of leadership in the G&A Cluster's areas of success and poor performance.

(a) Leadership in areas of complete and partial success

Leadership in the G&A Cluster's areas of success or partial success is described as democratic (SR-9 2020; SR-16 2020; SR-32 2020; SR-34 2020); participatory (SR-32 2020); consultative, empathetic and supportive (SR-16 2020); persuasive (SR-32 2020), decisive (SR-16 2020; SR-30 2020); hegemonic (SR-33 2020), practical (DG-9 2020) and strong (SR-7 2020; SR-14 2020; SR-30 2020). According to SR-32 (2020), "inter organisational leadership is most effective when you have very strong leaders of organisations. Inter-organisational leadership fails dismally if leaders of both organisations (where two organisations are concerned) are weak and lack the support of their respective organisations", especially when "democratic and participative leadership" as well as persuasive leadership are essential to secure maximum input and buy-in. In some instances, the leadership was also described as open and inclusive, collaborative, shared and collective (SR-15 2020; SR-17 2020; SR-27 2020; SR-34 2020; SR-42 2020). For DG-9 (2020) "the leadership of the G&A was more practical in terms of agenda items, gave space for contributions" from provincial G&A Clusters and facilitated collaboration with other clusters to address infrastructure challenges. These perspectives are consistent with the average ratings for the G&A Cluster's leadership in Figure 5.3 and are partly aligned with how interviewees described their leadership styles in section 5.3.5.2 above.

Although the G&A Cluster has experienced operational challenges due to internal and external factors as noted by DG-2 (2020) and DG-7 (2020), previously the G&A Cluster

had a dynamic relationship with the political leadership. This resulted in a lot of “space” being “given to the administrative leadership to develop a very comprehensive agenda” (DG-9 2020). In addition, the G&A Cluster leadership provided guidance and technical knowledge in developing relevant documents (SR-39 2020); demonstrated ability to analyse and scrutinise presentations from various departments (SR-36 2020); and further used practical experiences from the Public Service as the basis to provide guidance on government processes and ways of doing things (DG-1 2020). One participant (SR-40 2020) has also noted that “autocratic and bureaucratic approaches were used to institutionalise” successful programmes, such as the payment of suppliers within 30 days and the compulsory induction programmes, thus indicating that when necessary, autocratic and bureaucratic leadership can be used to achieve results. This partly explains the average rating of two (out of three) in Figure 5.3 above.

(b) Leadership in areas of poor performance

In addition to some of the internal and external factors discussed in sections 5.3.6.5(a) and 5.3.6.5(b) above, the G&A Cluster’s poor performance in some areas was influenced by minimal, weak and indecisive leadership (SR-1 2020; SR-4 2020; SR-30 2020; SR-31 2020; SR-32 2020; SR-39 2020), as well as lack of ownership and accountability for the work of the cluster by the majority of DGs and DDGs (SR-31 2020; SR-32 2020; SR-33 2020; SR-39 2020). The most cited leadership responses to poor performance relate to the co-chairs of coordinating departments writing to departments to request them to comply with agreed decisions and/or escalating challenges to the FOSAD and ministerial G&A Cluster (DG-2 2020; SR-1 2020; SR-19 2020; SR-40 2020); returning poorly conceptualised documents to departments for further consultation and revision (DG-2 2020; DG-9 2020; SR-25 2020; SR-35 2020; SR-36 2020); and convening a technical working group to address the identified challenges (SR-9 2020; SR-22 2020; SR-27 2020).

To illustrate the minimal leadership response, DG-3 (2020) argues that the G&A Cluster’s response to poor performance in the area of anticorruption has been “very, very ordinary” because the “rhetoric” about anti-corruption and anti-fraud continues, “but it does not necessarily translate into concrete reality”. Success in this area requires strong political and administrative leadership because it is difficult to talk about a capable state when “even senior leaders, politically and administratively, are

accused of very serious allegations of corruption and nothing happens against them” (DG-3 2020). The views expressed here are echoed by DG-5 (2020) as follows:

“Leadership is critical, and administrative leadership is critical. But administrative leadership is constrained in the South African system, not necessarily by the *Constitution* [South Africa 1996], not necessarily by the ideals of the NDP, as articulated in chapter 13 on building a capable [and] developmental state, but the inability to empower public service leaders to play a much more decisive role in implementation. And it is obviously uneven, there are political leaders who are highly skilled. But political leadership is not necessarily about hands-on implementation. It is about strategic leadership. It is about oversight. And it is about societal leadership as well”.

The view that the G&A Cluster leadership did not really respond to the challenges was reiterated by many survey participants. In particular, the lack of (peer-to-peer) accountability (SR-33 2020; SR-35 2020; SR-39 2020), lack of awareness of the problem (SR-42 2020) and failure to take ownership of programmes (SR-39 2020) contributed to lack of interventions to manage the extent of the poor performance in many instances, as noted by 11 additional participants. Examples of lack of leadership include: failure to provide guidance to departments on strategic governance and administration to ensure effective delivery of programmes (SR-7 2020); lack of robust engagement on governance and developmental state issues in relation to the three spheres of government and SOEs (SR-1 2020; SR-6 2020; SR-38 2020); and focus on administrative matters (SR-6 2020) partly because the Cluster operated as a quality control or “clearing house” for transversal issues that needed to be submitted to Cabinet (SR-3 2020; SR-35 2020).

Furthermore, SR-1 (2020) attests that the G&A Cluster failed to groom leadership within the Cluster. As such, when some members did not attend meetings, the Cluster nearly crumbled, thus giving credence to Allen’s (2009:42) view that leadership fails when it relies on one or a few individuals and ideas. The study argues that the cited leadership weaknesses are also partly linked with the reported lack of structured support and guidance to assist DGs, DDGs and CDs to operate effectively in the cluster system, as discussed in section 5.3.3 above. Nonetheless, the leadership’s minimal or lack of response to poor performance, as noted by eight participants, is

receiving attention through the newly created GSCID Cluster and government's 2019 to 2024 MTSF.

The concepts used in sections 5.3.6.6(a) and 5.3.6.6(b) above to describe leadership practice by and within the G&A Cluster cut across the "leader-centric", "relational/situation focused" and "collective" leadership theories and approaches (Oswald-Herold *et al.* 2018) that are discussed in section 3.4.2 of chapter three. Although the integration of concepts and practices supports the relevance of CLT and the CAS approach for the study, the concern is that the practices are biased towards leader-centric practices and formal authority in an inter-organisational structure, which is constituted by agents (i.e. institutions and senior managers) with equal influence (Popp *et al.* 2013; Bryson *et al.* 2015; Vangen and McGuire 2015). Reliance on leader-centric practices and formal authority is contrary to the participants' views in section 5.3.5.3 above that the substantive leadership responsibility for the G&A Cluster rests with all members. The highlighted contradictions illustrate the need for a meso level complexity leadership competency framework, and provide context for a discussion in section 5.3.7 below, on the essential competencies for inter-organisational leadership in a CAS such as the G&A Cluster.

5.3.7 Inter-organisational leadership practice and competencies

The focus of the analysis and discussion in this section is on the competencies identified by participants for inter-organisational leadership. The discussion explores the alignment or non-alignment with the results discussed in sections 5.3.5 and 5.3.6 above, and interrogates the results in relation to existing and emerging inter-organisational competencies as discussed in chapters two to four. Perspectives on the relationship between intra- and inter-organisational leadership and competencies are also discussed as a basis to identify and enhance existing competencies or to develop new competencies for an inter-organisational CAS such as the G&A Cluster.

5.3.7.1 Competencies identified by participants

Since the study is more concerned with inter-organisational leadership competence, interviewees were requested to identify leadership competencies that are essential for leadership at the G&A Cluster level, and survey participants were requested to rate the relative importance of a preselected list of competencies on a scale of one (not

important) to five (extremely important). The survey results are presented in Figure 5.5 below to facilitate comparisons with the interview results.

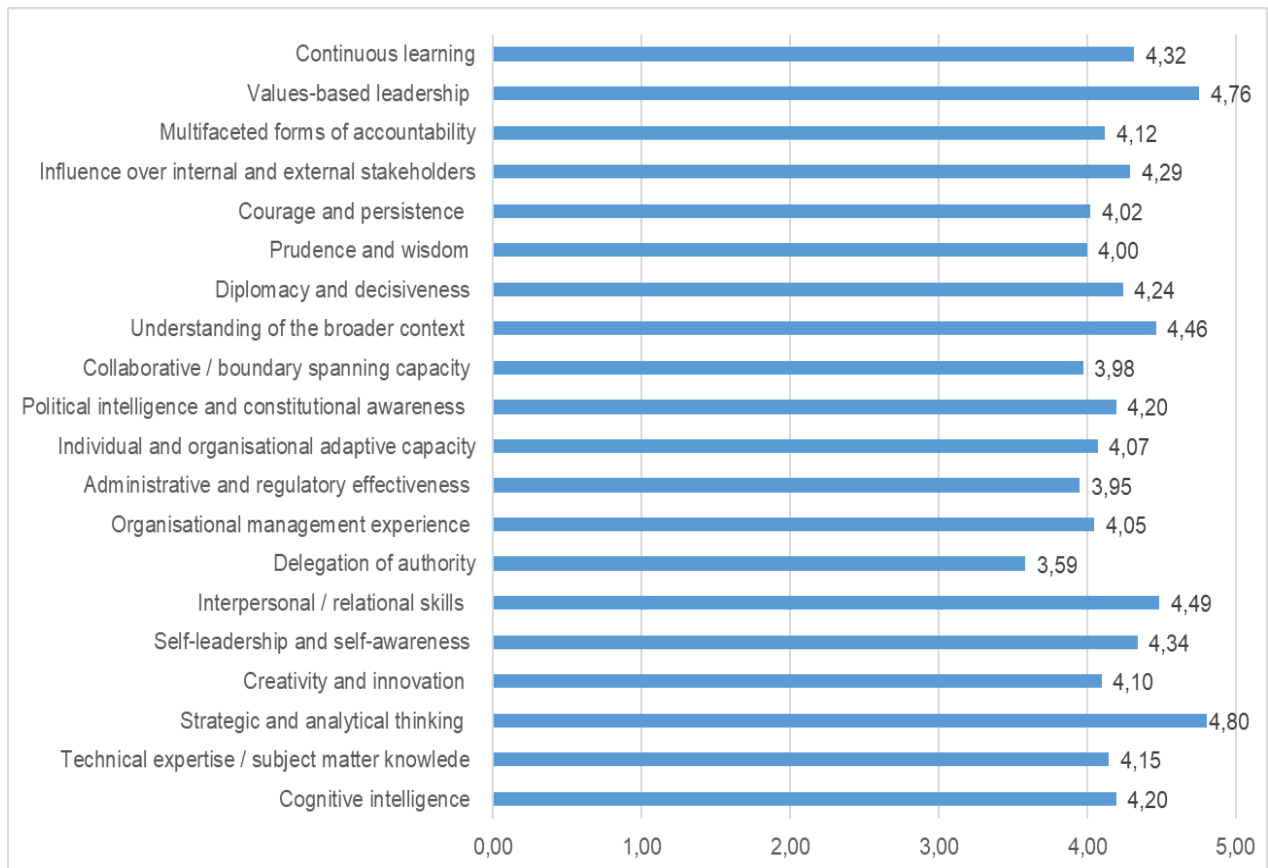


Figure 5.5: Survey ratings for inter-organisational competencies

Source: Author's own illustration.

As reflected in Figure 5.5 above, most competencies were rated above four, thus indicating that they are very important for inter-organisational leadership. In particular, 'strategic and analytic thinking' has an average rating of 4,80 and 'values-based leadership' has an average rating of 4,78 because most participants rated them as extremely important. Competencies relating to 'interpersonal/relational skills' and 'understanding the broader context' have an average rating of 4,49 and 4.46 respectively, because they were rated as extremely important by slightly more participants than those who rated them very important and important. Of the remaining 16 competencies, 13 have an average rating of between 4,0 and 4,34 and the other three, namely: 'delegation of authority' (3,95); administrative and regulatory effectiveness (3,95); and collaborative/boundary spanning capacity (3,98) were rated below 4. The survey ratings are thus discussed in relation to the interview responses and competencies identified in chapters two to four of this study.

The discussion below demonstrates that most of the survey competencies and their importance were also identified and emphasised by several interviewees, whereas some competencies were only identified by one or two participants. Competencies that were emphasised by interviewees include: intra-organisational team leadership and collaborative leadership; effective political-administrative leadership; technical expertise or content knowledge; creativity and innovation; values-driven leadership; stakeholder management, mediation and conflict resolution; as well as continuous learning. Competencies such as flexibility and adaptability; communication and EQ were also identified, whereas competencies such as foresight, diligence and commitment were each identified by one participant. As demonstrated below, many of the competencies are interrelated. The identified competencies are briefly discussed and where applicable, their linkage and/or disjuncture with the survey ratings are highlighted.

(a) Intra-organisational team leadership and collaborative leadership

Effective team leadership is considered essential in achieving intra-organisational and collective goals (DG-2 2020; DG-4 2020, DG-8 2020, DG-9 2020). Although intra-organisational leadership in general creates a “base” (DG-2 2020) for collaborative leadership in an inter-organisational setting, experience in leading multi-disciplinary teams is more essential (DG-3 2020) in breaking down silos and optimising interdependencies between the three spheres of government (DG-8 2020). To clarify this, DG-7 (2020) says one must “have the predisposition to collaborate” in order to achieve one’s goals and the collective goals of the cluster because, “if you are able to provide effective team leadership, starting where you come from”, then this will have a “spill over effect in the role that you play in the G&A Cluster” (DG-2 2020). DG-7’s (2020) assertion is consistent with what Morse and Stephens (2012:572) refer to as the collaborative mind-set meta-competency. In line with Brookes (2007:15-17) and Bao *et al.*’s (2012:453) assertions in chapters three and four of this study, this makes intra-organisational team leadership a foundational competency for inter-organisational leadership, thus leading to the conclusion that collaborative leadership, which has an average rating of 3,98 in Figure 5.5 above, is an essential competency for inter-organisational leadership.

(b) Effective political-administrative leadership

As discussed in section 5.3.6.5, the political-administrative interface, and the broader politics that underpin it, has also been identified as one of the external factors that influences the leadership of the G&A Cluster (DG-3 2020, DG-5 2020, DG-7 2020, DG-8 2020). Yet, only two participants specifically addressed the need to develop capacity to operate effectively at the political-administrative interface. Central to this competency is engagement with the political leadership at departmental and cluster levels, in order to develop an understanding and appreciation of the political thinking and “strategic direction that the political principals are providing so that even in their absence, ... you are able to use that appreciation as a sounding board” (DG-2 2020).

Competence in this area, according to DG-9 (2020), is interrelated with competence in IGR and forms part of ‘political intelligence and constitutional awareness’, which has an average rating of 4,20 as reflected in Figure 5.5 above. The centrality of political competence in public administration in the governance era has also been emphasised by Crosby and Bryson (2007:186-188) and Virtanen (2000:336) in chapters three and Four respectively, whereas Newbold (2014:14-16), in chapter two section 2.5.2, argues that within the context of democratic constitutionalism, “constitutional competence” enables one to understand the connection between public administration theory and practice as well as the underpinning constitutional imperatives. These perspectives demonstrate the relevance of political-administrative and constitutional competencies within the context of the South African *Constitution*, 1996 (South Africa 1996) as well as the *IGR Framework Act*, 2005 (Act 13 of 2005 [South Africa]).

(c) Stakeholder management

Progress and success in the inter-organisational context is, amongst others, dependent on the effective management of internal and external stakeholders (DG-2 2020, DG-3 2020; DG-7 2020; DG-9 2020). At the inter-organisational level, internal stakeholders include the FOSAD G&A Cluster members, whereas members of the ministerial G&A Cluster can either be regarded as internal or external stakeholders. Interview responses suggest that the ministerial cluster is an external stakeholder; therefore, it is identified as an external force in section 5.3.6.5 above. According to DG-3 (2020), “you need to understand what are the critical stakeholders that would be necessary to achieve your intended objectives” because if you cannot manage

stakeholders, especially at the provincial level, “you will not achieve [your goals]”. This partly explains why the competency relating to ‘influence over internal and external stakeholders’ has an average rating of 4,29 in Figure 5.5 above.

In chapter four, section 4.5, influence over and networking with external and internal stakeholders are, according to Beechler *et al.* (2004:122-127) and Williams (2013:25), essential skills for boundary spanners or collaborators. Williams (2013:25) also notes that boundary spanning relies on the threshold traits of integrity, honesty, trust, humility and diplomacy. For Morse and Stephens (2012:572) humility, or measured ego, is a personal quality or meta-competency that cuts across the required competencies for collaborative governance. In particular, diplomacy and decisiveness is rated 4,24 in Figure 5.5. This demonstrates that while stakeholder management is an essential competency for effective collaboration, its realisation is dependent on the existence of certain foundational/threshold competencies, and this has implications for differentiating the intensity of intra- and inter-organisational competencies.

(d) Values-driven leadership

The importance of being values-driven was emphasised by many interviewees and further highlighted with an average rating of 4,74 in Figure 5.5. Participants emphasised the following: the need to be guided by high ethical and moral standards, integrity and trustworthiness (DG-2 2020; DG-4 2020); a thorough understanding of applied ethics especially in a context where the G&A Cluster has to help public servants to deal with corruption (DG-7 2020); and the importance of being empathetic when dealing with colleagues and stakeholders (DG-8 2020). In addition, DG-9 (2020) states that leadership at the inter-organisational level requires one to create genuine relationships and to be consistent when dealing with issues in order to be accepted and trusted by colleagues. For DG-2 (2020), being values and integrity driven starts from the department and then proceeds to the Cluster level “because people should be comfortable and confident that when they listen to you and when they talk to you, you are listening and you respect what they are saying to you. And what they are saying to you is not going to be a subject of conversations after hours”.

The South African *Constitution*, (1996), sets the foundation for values-based leadership, as elaborated upon in section 2.5.2 of chapter two. In addition, many cited

authors in chapter two (Wright 1974; Moore 1995; Lovan *et al.* 2004; Stoker 2006; Denhardt and Denhardt 2011; Bryson *et al.* 2014; Amsler 2016), place emphasis on the centrality of democratic values, ethics, public values and governance values alongside soft skills and other competencies in the IGR, public management and governance contexts. This, according to Newbold (2014:20-21), makes the conservation of democratic constitutional values and principles a prerequisite for public administration leadership in the governance context. The importance of values is also addressed in Virtanen's (2000) conceptual "Value-commitments competency framework for public managers", which is discussed in chapter four.

(e) Flexibility and adaptability

According to DG-5 (2020), flexibility and adaptability, amongst other competencies, are necessary to understand complexity. For DG-2 (2020) and DG-6 (2020), leadership is about adapting to the continuously changing environment in which your organisation operates. It is for these reasons that DG-9 (2020) contends that "when you run a complex institution, you must also be an easy-going individual who is not very rigid. Whilst you have your own thinking and your own processes, analyse ideas from others and if they are helpful, try to adapt your own thinking because ... if you are unable to do so, you are creating a very big problem". These assertions are consistent with how some interviewees described their leadership styles as adaptive, situational and open to persuasion in section 5.3.5.2 above.

Flexibility and adaptability have also been highlighted by several authors (Rodriguez *et al.* 2002; Blandin 2007; Op de Beeck and Hondeghe 2010; Hannah *et al.* 2011; Lord *et al.* 2011; Chow *et al.* 2012) in sections 4.4 and 4.5 of chapter four and are related to individual and organisational adaptability that has an average survey rating of 4,07 in Figure 5.5. Furthermore, flexibility and adaptability are central to CLT because adaptation emerges from dynamic interactions within a CAS (Uhl-Bien and Marion 2011:473) and the "Law of Requisite Complexity" (Boisot and McKelvey 2011:279), as explained in chapters one and three, dictates that a CAS should adapt its level of complexity to match environmental complexity.

From this analysis, it is clear that adaptation and flexibility can be conceptualised as a competency input, competency outcome or both. Nonetheless, the available literature

and participants' responses support their centrality and utility in dealing with environmental complexity.

(f) Creativity and innovation

Leadership “is about innovation; it is about creativity” (DG-6 2020) and “as a DG, you should be able to bring new ideas to the table” (DG-9 2020). Creativity is a “mental and social process - fuelled by conscious or unconscious insight - of generating ideas, concepts, and associations”, whereas “innovation is the successful exploitation of new ideas” (Serrat 2009:2). While Serrat’s (2009:2) definition emphasises the individual and organisational or social dimensions of creativity and innovation, Op de Beeck and Hondeghe (2010:8, 60) regard creative thinking as a meta-competence, whereas innovation, creativity and future orientation are competencies. Creativity and innovation are dependent or partly dependent on skills and traits such as intrinsic motivation (Amabile 1998:134-36) and intra- or inter-organisational support (Serrat 2009:2). Creativity and innovation are not similar, but they are interconnected, hence without creativity, innovation is not possible (Amabile 1998:126; Serrat 2009:2).

Within a CAS, innovation emerges from dynamic interactions (Uhl-Bien and Marion 2011:473). As such, according to Steiner (2013:32-35), creativity competence is not a personality trait but an outcome of competency applications and can be acquired. Both authors conceptualise innovation and creativity as outcomes, in line with Horton’s (2002:4) conception of competence, in contrast to the input orientation of competency. From the NPG perspective, Mandell and Keast (2008:729) describe innovation and creativity as the inherent benefits and outcomes of network participation. Therefore, SR-43 (2020) contends that the G&A Cluster has the “urgent responsibility to expedite” innovation within government.

Podmetina *et al.* (2018:1310) note that research has progressed from intra-organisational innovation to open-innovation in inter-organisational contexts, but the realisation of open-innovation is dependent on supporting competencies such as self-management, in addition to interpersonal, project and content management. Since innovation is characterised by experimentation (Serrat 2009:8), as is the case with IGM and IGR (Krane and Leach 2007:492-493), DG-4 (2020) attests that the

precondition for innovation is organisational stability and trust. Supporting this competency is the 4,10 average rating in Figure 5.5 above.

(g) Foresight

Given its interdependence with innovation and creativity (Wiener *et al.*, 2018:684), foresight is considered an essential competency for inter-organisational collaboration because “leadership is about exercising foresight” (DG-6 2020). The assertion by DG-5 (2020) is that “foresight is about understanding complexity”; that being the case, “countries which are more successful have been able to exercise foresight and innovation” because they understand “the complexity which underpins causality and the multiple strands which must be woven together in order to succeed in the implementation of particular programmes”. These observations are consistent with the Collins Dictionary definition of foresight as “the ability to anticipate and provide for future needs” (<https://www.collinsdictionary.com/us/dictionary/english-thesaurus/foresight>).

According to Hines *et al.* (2017:1, 8), foresight is a “core competence to manage the future” and comprises of several competencies that cut across different professions and sectors, namely “framing, scanning, futuring, designing, visioning and adapting”. Foresight has a collective and individual dimension, and at the individual level it is concerned with learnable cognitive abilities and “mental processes - both rational and intuitive - used to develop images of the future as a form of cognitive intelligence” (Hines *et al.* 2017:4). Individual foresight competence, assert Hines *et al.* (2017:4), “complements the institutionalised technique, process, or capability of foresight in its aggregated” or collective form. Wiener *et al.* (2018:685) posit that in inter-organisational collaborations, an open organisational culture would support open foresight whereas a closed culture would inhibit open foresight. This is consistent with Hannah *et al.*’s (2011:218-219) view that regulatory and aggregation structures can enhance or inhibit the conversion of static IRC and CRC into dynamic IRC and CRC.

Interestingly, intra-organisational foresight, especially open/collaborative foresight, is rarely mentioned in existing competency frameworks and proposed competencies discussed in chapter four, except for O’Brien and Robertson (2009) plus Op de Beeck and Hondeghe’s (2010:48) list of competencies for the 21st century that include

future orientation as part of strategic thinking and creative thinking meta-competencies. The reason for this, assert Wiener *et al.* (2018:686), is that foresight competence is still new. The study argues that the general neglect of foresight competency could be associated with the observation made in section 4.4 of chapter four, that competency frameworks focus on the past and present (Hood and Lodge 2004:328-329; Bolden and Gosling 2006:149; Op de Beeck and Hondeghem 2010:48), but not the future strategy of organisations (Intagliata *et al.* 2000:7-8; Bolden *et al.* 2003:40) due to capacity constraints (Getha-Taylor *et al.* 2013:143) to implement specialised techniques such as environmental scanning and scenario planning that are necessary to project into the future. These observations demonstrate the importance of foresight, as a meta-competence or competency, and further demonstrate the need for foresight development at the individual and collective level.

Although the survey did not specifically focus on foresight, the Collins Dictionary (<https://www.collinsdictionary.com/us/dictionary/english-thesaurus/foresight>) lists, amongst others, prudence, prescience, anticipation and circumspection as synonyms for foresight. As such, this competency is associated with prudence and wisdom, which has an average rating of 4,00 as per Figure 5.5 above.

(h) Communication

Communication, whether verbal, non-verbal or written, is recognised by several authors who are cited in chapters two to four as an essential tool and a foundational competency to ensure effective IGR (Du Plessis 2008) as well as intra- and inter-organisational leadership (Rodriguez *et al.* 2002; Beechler *et al.* 2004; Connelly 2007; Williams 2013; Eckert *et al.* 2014; Tourish 2019:25). Equally, communication was identified as a generic tool and skill for effective stakeholder management, and an essential leadership competency in an inter-organisational structure such as the G&A Cluster (DG-1 2020; DG-2 2020; DG-4 2020; SR-19 2020; SR-22 2020; SR-42 2020). As noted by 13 participants, communication is necessary to share information and experiences; engage with members or stakeholders on what needs to be achieved; provide guidance and feedback and address challenges. The relative importance of communication as a competency was not assessed through the survey because communication is regarded as a basic tool and foundational competency that enables agents within an inter-organisational structure to, amongst others, share information.

(i) Interpersonal skills

Linked to communication and other competencies such as team leadership, stakeholder management and EQ, is interpersonal skills or inter-personal communication. According to cited authors in chapter four (Rodriguez *et al.* 2002; Raelin 2005; Getha-Taylor 2008; Williams 2013), inter-personal skills include inter-personal listening, inter-personal understanding and basic values such as empathy, compassion and trust. Inter-personal communication is inherently relational, as explained in chapter three, and has a normative component (Geber and Hefner 2019). As such, it is characterised by the ability to engage with internal and external stakeholders with respect and an open mind (DG-1 2020, DG-3 2020; SR-18 2020; SR-40 2020), thereby allowing oneself to have tolerance for diverse views and to be open to persuasion (DG-1 2020; SR-39 2020).

Inter-personal competency is, according to DG-3 (2020), necessary for people management and leadership because if you lead a cluster that comprises of “seasoned public servants who are leaders on their own, you should have the capacity to lead leaders”. In addition to authors who are cited in this chapter and chapters three and four, the importance of this competency is illustrated by its inclusion in the selected competency frameworks (OPM 2012; Getha-Taylor 2008) that are discussed in chapter four, and the 4,49 average rating in Figure 5.5 above.

(j) Mediation and conflict resolution

An inter-organisational structure such as the G&A Cluster, as noted in section 1.3 of chapter one, can be classified as a CAS because it comprises diverse agents (individuals/organisations), with diverse views, experiences and leadership styles. In chapter three, Vangen and McGuire (2015) note that the diversity and richness of inter-organisational structures has the potential to create contradictions, tension, conflict and instability. In terms of CLT, as argued in chapter three (section 3.5.1), instability and disequilibrium are necessary to enable a CAS such as the G&A Cluster to create novel ideas (Blandin 2007:146-147). As such, leadership in its individual and collective sense should not stifle the instability and dynamic interactions of a CAS by enforcing uniformity or discouraging diversity. Instead, the leadership should be able to “harvest the wisdom that comes from the collective” (DG-6 2020) through mediation and conflict/dispute resolution.

According to DG-7 (2020), mediation is a vital component of stakeholder management; hence, the ability to “mediate between various competing interests” is essentially developed in the context and process of stakeholder management. Although mediation and conflict resolution were not included in the survey, the study argues that these are essential competencies for CLT’s “enabling leadership” (Uhl-Bien and Marion 2011:474) function, which is concerned with creating, engaging and protecting adaptive space, in addition to mediating tensions between administrative and adaptive leadership (Uhl-Bien and Arena 2018:98).

(k) Problem solving

According to DG-9 (2020), a leader “should be capable of resolving problems”. While this view emphasises the individual or heroic leader, DG-4 (2020) recognises problem solving as a collective endeavour by stating that “as a group you need to have the ability” to solve problems. As noted in chapter two, problem solving is a basic management function (Hughes 2007) and a fundamental feature of IGR (Wright 1978:317). Furthermore, several cited authors (Agranoff and McGuire 2003; Stoker 2006; Morse 2012) in chapter two, attest that within the NPG context, collective problem solving is an essential objective of collaborative management and collective leadership. Although not assessed through the survey, problem solving in the areas of policy analysis, service delivery and citizenship engagement, network management across government institutions and third party contracting was rated the seventh most essential competency for public sector managers in an OECD (2017:8) study.

Whether at the individual or collective level, problem solving is concerned with the ability to critically review information or a situation, and then propose solutions based on logical thinking and reasoning (Scherer and Beckmann 2014:1). As a 21st century complexity competence, Funke *et al.* (2018:42) argue that problem solving is knowledge rich because it is generic and content domain specific, and involves systemic thinking, connectedness, awareness of complexity dynamics and the fragility of systems. As elaborated in chapter two, the benefits of collective problem solving through the G&A Cluster would include enhanced capacity to respond to diverse and conflicting public needs and interests (Perry 1989:8), public value creation (Morse 2012:160) plus the realisation of collective outcomes (Agranoff and McGuire 2003:4;

McGuire 2006:3; Naff 2012:127), which in turn would improve public trust and confidence in government (Stoker 2006:41).

(I) Technical expertise

Although several authors (Drath 2004:157; Van Wart 2015:34; Northouse 2016:370) who are cited in chapter three regard leadership as a technical competence of achieving results, the concept of technical competence in this context is used in relation to job specific/subject-matter knowledge or professional/functional expertise (Virtanen 2000:333-334; Markus *et al.* 2005:118; Joyce and Adams 2010:881; Steiner 2013:19-20). As emphasised by Agranoff (2017:203) and other sources (PRC 1998; Lasker *et al.* 2001; Stoker 2006) in chapter two, sharing technical expertise is vital in inter-organisational structures such as the G&A Cluster. There is also recognition that subject matter expertise, which is also incorporated in competency frameworks that are referred to in chapter three (Virtanen 2000; Markus *et al.* 2005; OPM 2012) is a foundational competence for management and leadership.

Accordingly, several participants (DG-1 2020; DG-2 2020; DG-6 2020; DG-7 2020; SR-3 2020; SR-20 2020; SR-40 2020) advocated for the importance of technical expertise in inter-organisational leadership, whereas SR-39 (2020) is of the view that at the intra-organisational level, subject-matter/technical expertise “is extremely important” because it enables decision-making, communication, guidance, adaptation when necessary and builds confidence between leaders and team members, but at the inter-organisational level it is not important. According to DG-2 (2020), as a member of the G&A Cluster, “you cannot just be a carrier and spokesperson”, but you must be able to relate with the content that you are presenting “because you have to provide leadership at the level of content beyond what happens in your own department and the content keeps expanding”.

Technical expertise is, according to SR-40 (2020), important at the intra- and inter-organisational leadership levels, because as a leader one should be a “package with all kind[s] of skills and competencies to do your job successfully”. Failure to expand knowledge beyond the boundaries of the individual national and provincial departments by incorporating local government, regional and international perspectives, as observed by DG-2 (2020), perpetuates undesirable silo practices that

contributed towards the G&A Cluster's poor performance in some areas, as discussed in sections 5.3.6.3 and 5.3.6.4 above. A similar view is shared by DG-1 (2020) who states that "communication is substance" of one's understanding and practical experience of the entire Public Service. Therefore, technical knowledge and skills are essential leadership competencies in a CAS such as the G&A Cluster (DG-6 2020, DG-7 2020; SR-40 2020). In particular, a G&A Cluster member who assumes responsibility as the chairperson, contends SR-3 (2020), must understand P(p)ublic A(a)ministration discourse and public policy development to avoid having a leadership "credibility gap". The latter statement explains why leadership should be enhanced with credibility enhancing and foundational competencies such as technical knowledge and self-leadership (Boyatzis 1982:23; Pearce and Manz 2005:133; Van Wart 2015:26). The importance of technical expertise at the inter-organisational level is also supported by an average rating of 4,15 in Figure 5.5 above.

(m) Emotional intelligence

One of the foundational competencies for leadership that is alluded to in chapters three and four is EQ, which is characterised by self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and situation and/or time appropriate social skills (Boyatzis *et al.* 1999:2; Goleman 1998:7; Pearce and Manz 2005:139). Equally, four participants (DG-1 2020; DG-4 2020; DG-7 2020; DG-8 2020) highlighted its importance in the context of inter-organisational leadership through placing emphasis on self-knowledge, awareness of one's strengths and weaknesses, as well as not taking things personally especially when other people do not agree with one's views.

The significance of EQ was also highlighted through interviewees' descriptions of how their leadership styles evolved (DG-1 2020; DG-6 2020; DG-8 2020), as discussed in section 5.3.5.2, as well as the average rating of 4.34 for self-leadership and self-awareness in Figure 5.5 above. According to DG-8 (2020), leaders should have the "intellectual capability" to understand that there are people who are more knowledgeable and experienced than them, should not personalise things when people have a different view and "should be adult enough to accept" that their perspectives are not sacrosanct because their elevated positions do not give them "the right to always be right".

(n) Continuous learning

White's (1959) recognition of the role of learning in increasing the capacity of humans to deal with the environment, as elaborated upon in section 4.2.1 of chapter four, contributed significantly to the expansion of the competency movement. As such, continuous learning at the micro (individual), meso (network) and macro (system) level (Hannah and Lester 2009:34) is an interdependent process of enhancing subject matter knowledge in addition to other technical competencies, and it is a competency (input) and a (outcome) competence (Rodriguez *et al.* 2002; Blandin 2007; Dalakoura 2010; Joyce and Adams 2010; OPM 2012; Broussine and Callahan 2016). Continuous learning as a key driver of individual leadership evolution was also emphasised by several participants (DG-1 2020, DG-2 2020, DG-7 2020, DG-8 2020; DG-9 2020) in section 5.3.5.2 above, and is also acknowledged as a determinant of the G&A Cluster's contribution to performance enhancement in sections 5.3.6.2 to 5.3.6.4 above. This justifies the average rating of 4,20 in Figure 5.5.

Within organisational alliances and collaborations, learning is one of several organisational routines that contribute to the development of operational and dynamic capabilities, wherein operational capabilities refer to the organisation's unique resources and competencies (Schweitzer and Gudergan 2010:183) and dynamic capability is the organisation's collective "ability to integrate, build and reconfigure internal and external competencies" in order to respond to rapidly changing environments (Teece *et al.* 1997, cited in Schweitzer and Gudergan 2010:179). From a leadership development perspective, Schweitzer and Gudergan (2010:190) report that in collaborations and alliances, transformational and servant leadership support the development of dynamic capabilities and further maintain and build operational capabilities, whereas transactional leadership supports, builds and maintains operational capabilities but fails to build dynamic capabilities. These observations allude to the limitations of transactional leadership, which can be associated with CLT's conception of administrative/bureaucratic leadership and illustrate the role of transformational leadership in the conversion of static IRC and CRC into dynamic IRC and CRC (Hannah *et al.* 2011).

According to DG-2 (2020), an important aspect of continuous or lifelong learning is self-development, especially when one is expected to provide content leadership that

transcends individual departments and geographic boundaries such as provinces, whereas DG-6 (2020) and SR-36 (2020) highlight the importance of continuous learning in building a learning organisation. As noted by Sanders (2014:139), “learning is a critical element of adaptation and agility. Without learning, individuals and organizations will keep doing what they did before; and fail”. For SR-36 (2020), investment in continuous learning will make the Public Service a learning organisation and an employer of choice. However, failure to learn through experience accumulation, knowledge articulation and knowledge codification and failure to update learning approaches, caution Zollo and Winter (2002:339-341), turns dynamic and distinctive competencies into core rigidities.

(o) Vision and visionary leadership

At the organisational level, vision represents an organisation’s higher purpose and future outlook, whereas at the individual level, being visionary is one of the hallmarks of heroic, transformational, charismatic and servant leadership (Bolden *et al.* 2003:37; Avolio *et al.* 2009:428; Northouse 2016:20, 162). As such, having a vision or being visionary is an important leadership competency (Tubbs and Schulz 2006:33; Joyce and Adams 2010:881; Op de Beeck and Hondeghem 2010:8, 60; OPM 2012:3-5; Rasa 2017:10-105) at the individual, intra- and inter-organisational levels. Although this competency was not explored through the survey, SR-40 (2020) suggested that “visionary and transformational leadership” should be added because “a visionary leader will be able to envision what the ideal state should be”, and then put in place the “systems, processes, decisions and projects that will transform the *status quo* to a better and ideal status which will benefit the targeted beneficiaries”. Furthermore, DG-3 (2020) asserts that it is important for a leader to have a clear vision of where the organisation or cluster is heading. Being a visionary in an inter-organisational context, notes DG-8 (2020), requires one to “be able to connect all the dots not just in your office but throughout the province and especially throughout the country”. In addition, a visionary leader must be able “to impart that vision to all and sundry in leadership positions, in the different spheres of this administration” (DG-8 2020).

(p) Commitment and responsibility

As noted in chapters two and three, collective responsibility and accountability are fundamental to the success of CPM (Denhardt and Denhardt 2011:43-44; Stoker

2006:52; Getha-Taylor 2012:117; Crosby and Bryson 2018:1266). However, only one participant cited accountability as an essential inter-governmental competency, although many participants identified lack of accountability as one of the factors that inhibits the effectiveness of the G&A Cluster. According to DG-9 (2020), commitment and acceptance of “responsibility for what may not even be your issue” is important. DG-9’s (2020) view is consistent with the SMS Competency Framework’s referral to the importance of balancing individual and collective responsibility (DPSA 2014:42-44). The effective implementation of collective action, as noted by DG-7 (2020) and other participants in section 5.3.6.5 above, is undermined by, amongst others, the existence of an individually-focused performance management system as well as unclear accountability mechanisms amongst peers. Cognisant of the identified inhibiting factors, in Figure 5.5 above, the competency relating to multifaceted forms of accountability was rated 4.12 by survey participants, thus supporting its relevance for inter-organisational leadership.

(q) Respect for and compliance with prescripts

“The imperative of understanding public policy and development is also an important attribute” for inter-organisational leadership (DG-3 2020), as well as “respect for the prescripts that govern us over time” (DG-9 2020). These assertions are consistent with the observation made by Crosby and Bryson (2018:1268) in chapter three, that in the governance era, respect for the constitution and rule of law are the basis for public value creation and leadership for the common good. Besides, it is not ideal to ignore the law when law and political science, as elaborated upon in chapter two (section 2.2.1) and chapter three (section 3.2), are some of the disciplines that have influenced the public administration and leadership fields. In addition, Agranoff (2017:30) notes that IGM should take into consideration the legal system within which IGM operates. Though cited by two participants, administrative and regulatory effectiveness has an average rating of 3.95 as per Figure 5.5 above.

(r) Systems and strategic thinking

Two participants mentioned systems thinking (DG-4 2020) and strategic thinking [DG-9 2020) as important competencies for both intra- and inter-organisational leadership. Although systems thinking was not included in the survey, strategic and analytic thinking was included and subsequently rated 4.80 by participants in Figure 5.5 above,

which is the highest rating for the preselected competencies. In chapter four, section 4.5.1, several scholars (Joyce and Adams 2010; Op de Beeck and Hondeghem 2010; Chow *et al.* 2012) incorporated strategic thinking in their proposed lists of essential competencies for the 21st century, whereas systems thinking is cited by Beechler *et al.* (2004), Morse and Stephens (2012), Steiner (2013) and Williams (2013), and it is incorporated into the OPM (2012) competency framework. The study notes that strategic and systems thinking are interlinked with competencies such as creativity, innovation, foresight and visioning.

(s) Inspiration and motivation

Idealised inspiration is one of the elements of transformational leadership (Bass and Bass 2008:92-95; Northouse 2016:165-170). As noted by DG-6 (2020), leadership is important because it inspires. For SR-30 (2020), “leadership is about obtaining buy-in for decisions ... through consultation, and once decisions are made”, the people should be “motivated and led to implement the decisions”. This conception is more aligned with heroic and intra-organisational leadership. For the purpose of this study, it is assumed that in inter-organisational environments, inspiration and motivation are threshold competencies, and are therefore self- and collectively manifested.

(t) Diligence

According to DG-5 (2020), some of the developmental states that are perceived to be effective understood that foresight, innovation, “diligence and ethical leadership” would produce success in the long term” in response to continuous environmental changes and complexity. Though diligence is not cited in the chapter four sources, scholars such as Beechler *et al.* (2004), Williams (2013) and Blandin (2007) cite persistence as a threshold trait for collaborative or boundary spanning management. As guided by the conceptual framework in chapter four, the survey probed courage and persistence, which have an average rating of 4,02 in Figure 5.5 above.

(u) Other cited and uncited competencies

Cognitive intelligence (IQ) was rated 4,20 by survey participants, but it was not mentioned by interviewees. As noted earlier, Hines *et al.* (2017:4) argue that foresight is concerned with learnable cognitive abilities that seek to enhance future focussed

IQ. In chapter four of this thesis, IQ is regarded as one of several threshold competencies (Williams 2013) and it is central to Hannah *et al.*'s (2011) four mental domains of requisite complexity, as such, it was not elevated to the inter-organisational level as a unique competency. The competency relating to 'delegation of authority' was not mentioned by interviewees, but it was probed through the survey and received an average rating of 3,59. Since the study argues that institutions with equal influence constitute the G&A Cluster, and none has formal authority to delegate to other members, the competency relating to 'delegation of authority' was not elevated to the inter-organisational level. Equally, interviewees did not specifically mention the competency relating to 'understanding the broader context', but its relevance is illustrated in the discussion in sections 5.3.6.2 to 5.3.6.4 as well as the average survey rating of 4.46.

Although DG-7 (2020) noted the importance of information and communication technology (ICT) and economic knowledge for both intra- and inter-organisational leadership and the OPM (2012) framework includes technology management, these competencies were not addressed through the survey. The study notes that some of the identified competencies are similar to those found to be lacking during the 2014 review of the cluster system (DPME 2014), thus confirming the relevance of the study in addressing the issues raised in the problem statement in chapter one. The perceived relationship between intra- and inter-organisational leadership competencies is addressed in section 5.3.7.2 below.

5.3.7.2 Intra- and inter-organisational leadership and competencies

Whilst the focus of the study and the primary data collection is on identifying competencies that are considered essential for inter-organisational leadership, participants were probed to determine whether the inter-organisational competencies they rated as important and extremely important are similar or different from those required for intra-organisational leadership. The results support the relationship between intra- and inter-organisational leadership as illustrated in Table 5.5.

Table 5.5: Comparison between intra- and inter-organisational competencies

	DG	DDG	CD	Total	%
Similar	1	13	13	27	65,85%
Partially similar	1	9	2	12	29,27%
Different	1	1	0	2	4,88%
Total	3	23	15	41	100%
Average out of 3	2,00	2,52	2,73	2,61	

Source: Author's own illustration.

The majority of the survey participants (65,85%) stated that intra- and inter-organisational leadership competencies are similar, and 29,27% rated them as partially similar, whereas two (4,88%) participants said that they are different. The reasons for the ratings are discussed below.

(a) Justification for similarity, partial similarity and difference between intra- and inter-organisational leadership competencies

The reasons provided to justify the similarity between inter- and intra-organisational leadership competencies include that individual departments and the G&A Cluster are subjected to similar norms, standards and regulatory frameworks (SR-40 2020), they operate in the same complex socio-economic and political environment (SR-22 2020), and they are both concerned with increasing the state's capacity to deliver at the departmental and cluster levels (SR-5 2020). In addition, strategic and multi-disciplinary knowledge are required to deal with dynamics at both intra- and inter-organisational levels (SR-25 2020; SR-27 2020). SR-17 (2020) contends that a "DG must have demonstrated and applied the same competencies in the department to produce [a] quality product that meets the standard for processing at G&A level". As such, when departments assign other officials below the DG level to serve in the G&A Cluster, they must ensure that such officials possess the requisite competencies, because whilst the G&A Cluster presents "an opportunity to mould participants, this is not always the case" (SR-1 2020). The assumption or expectation is that people who participate in the Cluster are already operating at a higher level because "the same competencies that apply in an inter-departmental relationship also apply in individual departments where the work done by "one branch impacts on other branches within the department" (SR-8 2020). These views demonstrate that "leadership is not a one-

dimensional/specific scenario phenomena” (SR-23 2020), but it is a continuum, as explained in the extract below:

“Leadership is a continuum – there are no boundaries in how you act and what competencies are required, irrespective of whether we are inter- or intra-organisational. And the values that underpin one’s leadership must be a constant of one’s character and evident in whatever forum, engagement or with who or on what. Personal values aligned to the Values and Principles as set out in the *Constitution* of RSA provide road markers for leaders” (SR-21 2020).

The justification for partial similarity between intra- and inter-organisational leadership competencies is based on the view that some competencies are more important at either level but not both, and within the cluster one carries the interests of all departments instead of just one department (SR-43 2020). For SR-6 (2020), innovation is more important at the intra-organisational level, whereas the G&A Cluster is a decision-making body that relies on the skills, experience and organisational knowledge that members bring along. Equally, SR-39 (2020) argues that subject-matter knowledge/technical expertise is extremely important for intra-organisational leadership because it enables “decision-making, communication, guidance” as well as adaptation and confidence building amongst team members, but it is not important at the inter-organisational level. These views are contrary to the views expressed by some of the interviewees and the sources cited in section 5.3.7.1 above. Lastly, in spite of the 3,59 average rating in Figure 5.5, ‘delegation of authority’ is regarded by SR-39 (2020) as a “key competency at the intra-organisational level to ensure optimum performance and accountability by all managers within an organisation”, but it does not apply at the inter-organisational level because, the study argues, members of the G&A Cluster are peers (DG-1 2020; DG-7 2020, SR-30 2020; SR-33 2020), or they are supposed to be peers, even though some G&A Cluster participants are delegated by DGs to represent their departments.

The partial similarity view is also informed by the realisation that there are other competencies that should be strengthened because they are more essential at the inter-organisational level. These include political intelligence (SR-10 2020), influence over internal and external stakeholders (SR-10 2020; SR-32 2020), communication (SR-32 2020) plus a broader understanding of context (SR-32 2020). There was also

recognition that the competencies required at the inter-organisational level are basically developed at the intra-organisational level (SR-12 2020; SR-39 2020), but, the inter-organisational environment is more dynamic because the issues discussed at that level are transversal and require a broader and “equal understanding of the bigger picture” (SR-19 2020) by cluster members. Nonetheless, leadership competency differences will arise because cluster members and the outcomes that they are held accountable for have an influence on the knowledge and competencies that are prioritised by each department (SR-6 2020; SR-9 2020; SR-19 2020). The factors that partially differentiate inter-organisational leadership from intra-organisational leadership can thus be reduced to the view that none of the cluster members have authoritative power over other members, thus resulting in the need for different or enhanced competencies because, remarks SR-18 2020, leading a “multi-faceted team of experts requires a different set of skills than leading a uniformed [i.e. unified], single entity. In an interdepartmental forum, a mixture of interpersonal and multiple intelligence skills is needed”. SR-33 (2020) reiterates the same view as follows:

“leading a group of departments with their own directors-general requires a lot of leadership savvy and tact, which is different from leading one department. The challenge is that you are a leader amongst peers and have to show a higher level of strategic, analytical and coordinating leadership capacity”.

Although two participants (SR-13 2020; SR-15 2020) were of the view that intra- and inter-organisational leadership competencies are different, the reasons they provided did not address the question of competencies, but merely reiterated that the cluster approach seeks to optimise effectiveness at the wider scale.

(b) Iterative influence between intra- and inter-organisational leadership

Participants noted that the “bi-directional influence” (Hannah and Lester, 2009:36) between intra- and inter-organisational leadership is not linear but iterative and it takes many forms. The first mode of influence, according to DG-2 (2020), is through the elevation of strategic and transversal issues by departments and provinces to inform the G&A Cluster agenda. The elevation of issues should also be supported through the elevation of collective departmental wisdom to the G&A Cluster because “when

you go into a cluster system, you do not just go there to talk about knowledge on specific things that are on the agenda, that are limited to your own knowledge”, but it is important “to bring to bear the totality of your understanding of the ecosystem of your own department on how the cluster system can work” (DG-6 2020). Elevating issues and knowledge, notes DG-6 (2020), enables G&A Cluster members to identify opportunities for collaboration and mutual reinforcement and thus contributes towards the breaking down of silo practices and interventions within government.

Exemplary leadership at departmental and provincial level, especially by G&A Cluster members who lead specific agenda items or programmes, influences the extent to which issues are taken seriously at the G&A Cluster and departmental levels. According to DG-2 (2020) and DG-3 (2020), exemplary leadership in terms of being values and integrity driven starts from one’s own department. DG-3 (2020) argues that the influence of intra-organisational leadership extends beyond the G&A Cluster to the entire Public Service and public administration broadly. Similarly, DG-1 (2020) states that exemplary leadership should be provided in terms of the quality of products that are deliberated at the G&A Cluster level, and the level of preparation for and engagement during meetings. Leadership capability within departments should therefore “flow horizontally into the cluster system” (SR-31 2020) and *vice versa*, because a “department is a microcosm” (SR-3 2020) of the cluster system. These assertions validate the importance of collective responsibility and accountability for the work done or not done by all G&A Cluster members. The assertions further support the Figure 5.4 results that the substantive leadership is the responsibility of all G&A Cluster members.

(c) Reflections on the Senior Management Service competency framework’s influence on inter-organisational leadership

Perspectives on the influence and relationship between intra- and inter-organisational leadership competencies were explored using the SMS Competency Framework. Seven interviewees said that the SMS Competency Framework has, to some extent, contributed towards effective intra-organisational leadership because it is well thought out and serves as a common framework of reference for recruitment and leadership development, especially for people who want to develop themselves. Without it, the Public Service would be worse off (DG-6 2020). The competencies listed in the SMS

Competency Framework are “all important for intra- and inter-organisational leadership” (SR-34 2020) and for everyone “entrusted with the leadership role” (SR-21 2020).

The challenge is that it is not properly implemented at the departmental level because, remarks DG-1 (2020), competency development is generally left to individual employees due to the general lack of a coordinated process to develop employees’ competencies. In addition, DG-3’s (2020) view is that the influence of the SMS Competency Framework at the intra-organisational level is also diluted by the fact that some of the SMS appointment processes are led by people who do not even meet the minimum SMS competency requirements. Furthermore, some selection committees recommend candidates who do not meet the minimum SMS competency requirements because of their own incompetence or undue political pressure (DG-3). According to DG-6 (2020), the SMS Competency Framework is inadequate at the intra-organisational level and even worse off at the inter-organisational level because it is “by and large, focused on management competencies which may or may not even be relevant to the key result areas that DGs must deliver on”.

These perspectives about the moderate influence of the SMS Competency Framework at the intra-organisational level are supported by the 3,17 average survey rating in Table 5.6 below. Equally, the poor influence at the inter-organisational level is also illustrated by an average rating of 2,90, as shown in Table 5.6 below.

Table 5.6: SMS Competency Framework influence at departmental and G&A Cluster levels

	SMS Competency Framework ensured effective departmental leadership	SMS Competency Framework ensured effective G&A Cluster leadership
Strongly agree	5	0
Agree	16	17
Not sure	4	6
Disagree	13	15
Strongly disagrees	3	3
Total	41	41
Average	3,17	2,90

Source: Author’s own illustration.

The above results support the assertion made in chapter one (section 1.3) that the leadership and performance challenges experienced by the G&A Cluster can be attributed to the lack of a meso level leadership competency framework. They also confirm the conclusions made in chapters three and four that there is a disjuncture between the advancement of leadership theory and practice, as well as a lack of systematic research on the development of collective leadership competencies, especially at the inter-organisational level. Section 5.3.8 below explores the relationship between the structuring and performance of the G&A Cluster.

5.3.8 Governance and Administration Cluster structuring and optimisation

Interviewees were requested to share their perspectives on the ideal structuring of the G&A Cluster to ensure effective collective leadership, whereas survey participants were asked to indicate whether the G&A Cluster was properly structured and coordinated to enhance its leadership capacity. Although survey participants were given a closed question, with the option to make proposals if they responded in the negative, few participants who said that the G&A Cluster was properly structured also made proposals on how the leadership capacity of the structure could be strengthened. As demonstrated in the discussion below, the responses provided by both groups of participants were complementary.

5.3.8.1 Perceptions on the Governance and Administration Cluster’s overall structuring and coordination

The majority of interviewees maintained that the G&A Cluster was, fully or partially, properly structured and coordinated, but, there is a need to improve on a range of issues that are discussed in section 5.3.8.2 below. Equally, most (73,2%) survey participants, as depicted in Table 5.7 below, were in agreement.

Table 5.7: G&A Cluster structuring and coordination- survey perceptions

	Yes	No	Note sure
Was G&A Cluster properly structured and coordinated to enhance its leadership capacity?	30	7	4

Source: Author’s own illustration.

The reasons given by survey participants who said that the G&A Cluster was not properly structured and coordinated were more complementary to the concerns

identified by participants who were generally satisfied with the structuring and coordination of the cluster. SR-4's (2020) view is that the G&A Cluster was not properly structured and coordinated, but "the problem is lack of leadership and less about structure and coordination". For SR-2 (2020), "the cluster should have been used as a platform for strategic and thought leadership, integrated policy and programme planning", yet in reality, "the cluster has been limited to agenda based meetings with no activities outside of such meetings". In the same view, SR-19 (2020) cautions against the trade-off between stakeholder representation and strategic orientation in complex systems because the "persuasiveness of the leadership core will determine success to a large extent", as opposed to representativeness.

The reasons and issues alluded to above are related to some of the factors that contributed to the G&A Cluster's poor performance in some areas, as discussed in section 5.3.6.5 above. They are also linked with the proposals made in section 5.3.8.2 below to enhance the G&A Cluster's leadership capacity.

5.3.8.2 Proposals to enhance the Governance and Administration Cluster's leadership capacity

Although the interviewees confirmed that the G&A Cluster, in terms of core and non-core members as well as the monthly meetings, is adequate, they identified different areas of weakness that should be addressed in order to improve the collective leadership capacity of the structure. As such, the proposals ranged from clarifying the desired impact and the role of different members, diversifying the agenda to incorporate provincial and local government issues, as well as broader issues of governance across the entire public administration; and improving the active attendance of DGs from national and provincial departments. The proposals, whose elaboration in terms of substance and feasibility is beyond the scope of this study, are not mutually exclusive. They are thus presented in summary form below.

- (a) Develop and disseminate clear terms of reference to DGs and their support teams through working sessions. The working sessions should not be a once-off event due to the mobility of SMS members and other employees in the Public Service.
- (b) Explore the possibility of expanding and diversifying the G&A Cluster membership by including provincial SALGA CEOs and/or the leadership of metropolitan

municipalities, plus adequate representation of state owned entities (SOEs). [The study notes that the Department of Public Enterprises (DPE), which provides oversight over SOEs, is now a core member of the GSCID Cluster.]

- (c) Ensure thorough preparation for meetings and consistent attendance by core members (DGs) and alternate representatives, whilst making provision for occasional participation by specialists when necessary.
- (d) Reengineer the G&A Cluster operations by creating sub-structures to deal with specific areas of the mandate in between Cluster meetings. The structures should include DGs plus DDGs, CDs and directors with technical expertise in various areas to ensure collective accountability for the quality of work produced, whilst also capacitating large groups of SMS members on the operations of the Cluster.
- (e) Create a sub-cluster, which allows provinces to share expertise and practices; mitigate the loss of institutional memory due to the high turnover rate of DGs in provinces; and raise issues collectively prior to or between key Cluster meetings.
- (f) Encourage all municipalities, not just metropolitan and district municipalities, to participate in provincial equivalents of the G&A Cluster.

In addition to the listed proposals, emphasis was also placed on the need for all G&A Cluster members to take responsibility to provide feedback on the issues processed through the G&A Cluster to colleagues in their respective departments and provinces, as well as structured feedback to the Cluster on the impact of the issues processed. These proposals, and the issues elaborated upon in the preceding sections, have implications for collective leadership competency development, as discussed in section 5.4 below.

5.4 IMPLICATIONS FOR LEADERSHIP COMPETENCY DEVELOPMENT

The analysis has confirmed the assertion made in chapter four that there is no commonly agreed list of competencies for inter-organisational leadership, though, some competencies are repeatedly cited by different authors and participants. Despite this weakness, DG-7 (2020) asserts that without competencies such as EQ, a high standard of applied ethics, understanding of the economy and ICT in the fourth industrial revolution era, and commitment to collaborative leadership, one will simply react to issues instead of leading. In addition, DG-9 (2020) believes that it is important to ensure that each manager in the Public Service has the required competencies, if

not at the recruitment level then the competencies should be strengthened through capacity development initiatives.

The analysis has also shown that intra- and inter-organisational competencies can be developed and enhanced through active participation in relevant intra- and inter-organisational structures, provided the regulatory structures, inclusive of mental and social processes, are conducive. The structures and processes should be characterised by, amongst others, commitment, openness, trust, respect, maturity, flexibility and tolerance for diversity and experimentation. These underlying characteristics can be described as innate and learnable foundational competencies for intra- and inter-organisational leadership, and some are also foundational to the acquisition and enhancement of other learnable competencies such as technical knowledge, creativity and innovation, mediation and systems thinking.

The study argues that it is fairly easy to identify competencies for intra- and inter-organisational leadership using different methods that are discussed in chapter four, such as BEI and “criterion sampling” (Spencer and Spencer 1993; Getha-Taylor 2008); benchmarking and consultation with executives or experts (Rodriguez *et al.* 2002; Joyce and Adams 2010, OPM 2012), as well as theorising and critiquing or synthesising existing literature (Virtanen 2000; Op de Beeck and Hondeghem 2010; Chow *et al.* 2012; Steiner 2013; Williams 2013). As shown in chapter six, the challenge lies in conceptualising each competency in relation to context, as well as articulating interconnections between competencies in a manner that will guide the design and/or selection of suitable programmes plus formal and informal platforms through which different competencies can be developed.

5.5 CONCLUSION

The analysis in this chapter has outlined the data collection and analysis processes followed, as well as the challenges encountered, in conducting an empirical investigation into the dynamics of inter-organisational leadership and competence amongst G&A Cluster members. The analysis has also confirmed the conclusions made in chapters three and four regarding the lack of alignment between leadership theory developments and practice, as well as competing perspectives about essential competencies for inter-organisational leadership and their relationship with intra-

organisational leadership competencies. Nevertheless, the analysis has identified and elaborated upon different, but complementary, competencies for inter-organisational leadership and further discussed their relationship with intra-organisational leadership competencies and the implications for complexity leadership competency development. Therefore, chapter six primarily uses the competencies identified in chapter five, as well as those highlighted in chapters two to four, as a basis to propose a competency framework for inter-organisational leadership in a structure such as the G&A Cluster.

CHAPTER SIX: PROPOSED COMPLEXITY LEADERSHIP COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK FOR THE GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION CLUSTER

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The methodology and results of the empirical investigation into the dynamics of inter-organisational leadership and competence within the G&A Cluster and perspectives on the requisite competencies for inter-organisational leadership were presented and discussed in chapter five. In order to understand inter-organisational dynamics, the perceived multi-level contribution of the G&A Cluster towards performance was discussed, in addition to the internal and external factors that enhance or inhibit the effectiveness of the G&A Cluster's leadership and its performance. Further to presenting a list of proposed competencies for inter-organisational leadership, the relationship between intra- and inter-organisational leadership competencies was also addressed. The results were interrogated in relation to the theoretical framework that is elaborated upon in chapters two to four of the study, thus leading to the conclusion that intra- and inter-organisational leadership and competence are interrelated and complementary. As such, some competencies are more important at the inter-organisational level than the intra-organisational level and vice versa. Furthermore, the results allude to a mismatch between the participants' theoretical perspectives of the complexity and dynamics of inter-organisational leadership and actual leadership practice. The study attributes the mismatch to the lack of a meso level complexity leadership competency framework for a CAS such as the G&A Cluster.

Therefore, the results presented in chapter five, as well as the debates, conclusions and proposals that are highlighted in chapters one to four, serve as the basis to propose and develop a high-level complexity leadership competency framework for the G&A Cluster in this chapter – thus addressing the fifth objective of the study. As part of developing the framework, the purpose of the proposed inter-organisational leadership competency framework is outlined and key principles to operationalise the framework are developed on the basis of the theoretical framework and empirical results. The competencies identified in chapter five are analysed, grouped and then presented in a continuum that illustrates the relationship between (meso level) inter-organisational leadership competencies and (micro level) intra-organisational

leadership competencies. The implications of the proposed leadership competency framework for leadership competency development are briefly discussed.

6.2 DEFINITION, RATIONALE FOR AND PURPOSE OF THE GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION CLUSTER LEADERSHIP COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

A competency framework is a structured instrument that outlines, defines and communicates the required competencies in the form of KSA plus other attributes and job requirements broadly or for a specific task and context (Markus *et al.* 2005; Joyce and Adams 2010). To mitigate against the weaknesses associated with most competency frameworks, which are discussed in section 4.4 of chapter four, a competency framework should be contextually relevant (Blandin 2007; Op de Beeck and Hondeghem 2010; Steiner 2010) and future oriented (Bolden *et al.* 2003, Markus *et al.* 2005; O'Brien and Robertson 2009). In addition, a competency framework should also clarify the rationale for the required competencies (Intagliata *et al.* 2000:5), the underlying principles and critical success factors for the framework. Therefore, the proposed competency framework outlines the required competencies and rationale for inter-organisational leadership *of* and *within* a CAS such as the G&A Cluster.

Whilst competency frameworks are generally designed for individual and intra-organisational use, the proposed framework focuses on the inter-organisational context, but illustrates connections with intra-organisational leadership due to interdependencies amongst the G&A Cluster members/institutions, connections between intra-organisational and inter-organisational competencies and the centrality of the individual and collective human factor in both contexts. The study has specifically shown that the G&A Cluster comprises of institutions that are of equal standing, whereas institutional representation is achieved through SMS members who wield positional powers at the intra-organisational level, albeit hierarchically different authority levels. In spite of differences in positional powers amongst G&A Cluster participants, in chapter five, the study argues that positional power is not a key determinant for leadership competence at the inter-organisational level because assigned or delegated SMS members represent or are expected to represent the collective wisdom, perspectives and challenges of their institutions and their role within the Public Service and broader public administration system. Therefore, the proposed framework has utility for senior managers as individuals and collectives at the intra-

and inter-organisational levels, thus combining the human capital (Virtanen 2000) and social capital (Arena and Uhl-Bien 2016) domains of competence.

The relevance of the proposed framework for human and social capital is indicative of its utility across the broad spectrum of HRM functions. In particular, the framework serves as an important frame of reference for the design and implementation of individually and organisationally led training and development (Spencer and Spencer 1993; Rodriguez *et al.* 2002; Markus *et al.* 2005) that is not haphazard and inconsistent (Bolden *et al.* 2003; Boyatzis 2008; Joyce and Adams 2010). While many competency frameworks are organisationally inward looking (Hood and Lodge 2004; Bolden and Gosling 2006), a meso level competency framework is necessary for developing inter-organisational leadership competencies amongst G&A Cluster members outside and within the cluster system. A structured approach to developing collective leadership competencies within and outside the G&A Cluster is essential in the formation and enhancement of social capital, which is a resource for collective leadership competence and adaptability in complex and rapidly changing environments (Dalakoura 2010; Lee *et al.* 2013; Arena and Uhl-Bien 2016).

The framework can also be used for career management and progression. In particular, implementation of the framework will ensure that senior managers who exhibit similar, related or complementary competencies at the intra-organisational level are objectively identified and further supported to serve as effective representatives and participants at the inter-organisational level. Implementation of the framework as a tool for training and development as well as career management and progression will address challenges related to the general lack of guidance and support to enable SMS members to operate effectively within the cluster system. In addition, it will ensure that progression into the SMS levels incorporates a thorough understanding of the G&A Cluster's collective mandate and objectives, plus the underpinning constitutional, legislative and governance frameworks. Since the performance management system that is currently used in the South African Public Service as well as the budget allocation and financial accountability instruments do not adequately address the issue of collective competence and collective performance assessment, the proposed framework can also serve as a tool to reconceptualise individual and collective performance assessment and evaluation instruments.

With respect to recruitment, the framework may not be entirely suitable for the recruitment of external candidates who aspire to join the Public Service at the senior management level, especially when taking into consideration the importance of intra-organisational competence. However, it would be suitable for the recruitment of candidates who progress to senior management levels from within the Public Service, as part of career management, succession planning, retention and promotion. This limitation partly explains why the study recognises and places emphasis on the influence of intra-organisational competence as a building block for inter-organisational competence. Therefore, the study submits that the proposed inter-organisational leadership framework is not a replacement of, but should be used in conjunction with, existing generic and context specific frameworks and can also serve as a basis for their review to ensure alignment and seamless progression between intra- and inter-organisational leadership. Table 6.1 below provides an overview of the utility of the proposed framework in various HRM functions and its relative strength in comparison to job specific and intra-organisational competency frameworks as discussed in chapter four.

Table 6.1: Utility of the proposed meso level framework across human resource management functions

Areas of utilisation	Generic (intra-organisational) competency frameworks	G&A Cluster (inter-organisational) competency framework
Organisation of occupations into groups	Medium/strong	Weak
Clarify expectations in terms of required competencies	Medium/strong	Medium/strong
Recruitment and selection (external)	Medium	Weak
Recruitment and selection (internal)	Medium/strong	Strong
Career development, succession planning, retention, promotion and deployment	Medium	Strong
Individual performance assessment and reward	Medium/strong	Medium
Collective performance assessment and reward	Weak	Medium/strong
Intra-organisational leadership development	Medium/strong	Medium
Inter-organisational leadership development	Weak	Strong

Source: Author's own illustration.

Although the framework may not be appropriate for some intra-organisational HRM functions, its strength and uniqueness is that it provides a meso level perspective to leadership competency and competence, compensates for weaknesses of intra-

organisational and job specific frameworks, and further highlights the relationship between individual and collective leadership competence at the intra- and inter-organisational levels. The interdependencies illustrate the relevance of CLT in meso level CAS and the need for a multi-level (i.e. micro and meso level) approach when studying leadership practice and competence in inter-organisational arrangements such as the G&A Cluster given (a) their existence within and alongside hierarchical structures, and (b) the role played by the same group of agents (i.e. DGs, DDGs and CDs) in the intra- and inter-organisational contexts. The study has thus provided an empirical lens on the relevance of CLT's integrative and relational features (Lichtenstein *et al.* 2006; Uhl-Bien and Marion 2011; Craps *et al.* 2019; Tourish 2019) and the dynamic nature of the CAS approach (Rhodes and MacKechnie 2003; Blandin 2007; Uhl-Bien and Arena 2018) through elaborating on the underlying causes for a disjuncture between collective leadership perspectives and practice amongst G&A Cluster members as a basis to identify and propose competencies plus principles to support the connection and continuum between individual and collective leadership practices as well as intra- and inter-organisational leadership interdependencies.

Having outlined the possible uses of the proposed competency framework, section 6.3 below outlines the key principles that should underpin a competency framework for inter-organisational leadership and the rationale thereof.

6.3 INTER-ORGANISATIONAL LEADERSHIP COMPETENCY PRINCIPLES

The constitutional foundations for inter-organisational structures such as the G&A Cluster illustrate the centrality of collaboration and network governance in public administration reform. While chapter 3 of the *Constitution*, 1996 (South Africa 1996) outlines the principles of cooperative government and IGR that should be adhered to by all institutions within and across all spheres of government, the empirical results presented in chapter five have shown that in spite of its conceptualisation as a horizontal network structure, the G&A Cluster is susceptible to hierarchical and leader-centric practices that stifle dynamic interactions amongst its members. The study attributes these practices to, amongst others, the dilution and personification of collective institutional representation with individualised positional power; the conflation of coordination/administration leadership with substantive leadership; the influence of hierarchical intra-organisational practices; unclear or lack of governance

mechanisms to guide and regulate engagements amongst G&A Cluster members and the lack of an inter-organisational competency framework. Therefore, the proposed principles are designed to serve as a regulatory mechanism to counteract the identified challenges in order to enhance dynamic interactions amongst G&A Cluster members.

As demonstrated in Table 6.2, the principles are informed by the study's theoretical framework, which is elaborated upon in chapters two to four, as well as the empirical results that are discussed in chapter five. Specifically, the principles are derived from the critical success factors for network governance, CPM within the context of IGR/IGM and Public Administration reform in the NPG era, as well as CLT's conception of leadership as a relational and collective phenomenon within a CAS. The principles are also derived from the factors that enhance and/or inhibit the effectiveness of collective leadership, as articulated by participants in chapter five. Due to differences and complementarities between intra- and intra-organisational leadership and the central role of the human factor, the need for appropriate and complementary governance structures and operational processes at the intra- and inter-organisational levels were also taken into consideration when developing the principles. The principles, which are grouped into three categories, namely, contextual dynamics, regulatory structures and processes, plus leadership conceptions and practice, are as follows:

- (a) collaboration is an essential and central feature of public administration within the IGR/IGM and NPG context;
- (b) the G&A Cluster is a complex mandated structure whose operations should balance the formal operations of government and emergent network structures and processes through strengthening capacity to deal with complexity;
- (c) appropriate regulatory structures, processes and support mechanisms are necessary to ensure effective distributed and collective leadership practices;
- (d) openness, mutual trust, respect and reciprocity are essential amongst participating agents (i.e. individuals and departments) in intra-organisational teams and inter-organisational collaborations;
- (e) leadership, especially in an inter-organisational CAS, is not a person, title or position – it is an influence and interaction process that generates creativity, innovation and adaptive capacity;

- (f) in a CAS such as the G&A Cluster, no one is wholly in charge - everyone has the responsibility for and is capable of leadership, irrespective of positional power and title; and
- (g) integrative and collective forms of leadership such as CLT are not a solution to everything; they must be used appropriately in complex environments that require collective action.

Apart from their role in providing guidance on the governance of inter-organisational structures, the principles have the potential to create what Eckert *et al.* (2014:1) describe as “a new mind-set” for leadership practice. The new mind-set is essential in light of the concerns and challenges raised by participants regarding positional power relations and perceived dominance by few departments, especially because the G&A Cluster is not just an IGR structure, it is an established adaptive space within and alongside the Public Service bureaucracy. Therefore, lack of appropriate governance mechanisms is a constraint to the optimal operation of the G&A Cluster as a CAS.

The study posits that the adoption and application of the principles will support adaptive and enabling leadership practices amongst G&A Cluster members and further neutralise administrative/formal leadership practices within the G&A Cluster. In turn, this will enhance the alignment between the conception of leadership as a collective and relational process and collective leadership practice. Although the context specific nature of the proposed framework does not make it suitable for generalisation, the proposed principles can guide the development of inter-organisational frameworks in other contexts.

In addition, though the principles are meant to serve as a normative and operational guide on the conditions and processes for effective inter-organisational leadership, the study argues that they can also be adapted for intra-organisational leadership in organisations that are more inclined to dispersed/distributed leadership practices because such practices create a meso level platform through teams or formal and informal networks for the application of CLT and the CAS approach. Therefore, the adoption of adapted principles will create a learning platform for shared responsibility (Sanders 2014:141) and enhance distributed leadership practices by supporting adaptive and enabling leadership practices, whilst minimising the stifling effect of intra-organisational hierarchy and formal leadership.

As a precondition for shared and collaborative leadership at the inter-organisational level (Brookes 2007:15-17), dispersed leadership practices will also reinforce the relationship and continuum between intra- and inter-organisational leadership practices (Brookes 2007:15-17; SR-21 2020) and competencies. The empirical results and above analysis demonstrate that CAS that are found in hierarchical structures and contexts (Dooley 1997; Rhodes and MacKechnie 2003; Uhl-Bien *et al.* 2017) can be enabled and equally constrained by their environment; hence, there is a need for appropriate regulatory mechanisms.

The principles and their theoretical as well as empirical basis are presented in Table 6.2 below.

Table 6.2: Guiding principles for inter-organisational leadership

Category	Principles	Theoretical and empirical basis, plus selected sources	Elaborating sections
Contextual dynamics	a. Collaboration is an essential and central feature of public administration within the IGR, IGM and NPG context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration is central to IGR/IGM and collaborative public management (Wright and Krane 1998; Radin 2007, Agranoff and McGuire 2003; O’Flynn 2009; Vangen and Huxham 2010; Morse 2012; Agranoff 2017). • Post-NPM initiatives placed emphasis on coordination and collaboration (Denhardt and Denhardt 2000; Christensen and Laegreid 2008; Bryson <i>et al.</i> 2014). • The relationship between public value, network governance and the NPG (Moore 1995; Rhodes 1997; Lovan <i>et al.</i> 2004; Stoker 2006; Osborne 2010; Bryson <i>et al.</i> 2014; Peters and Pierre 1998; Amsler 2016; Bovaird and Loffler 2009). 	<p>Chapter 2 (2.2.4; 2.3 and 2.4)</p> <p>Chapter 2 (2.2.4)</p> <p>Chapter 2 (2.2.4)</p>
	b. The G&A Cluster is a complex mandated structure whose operations should balance the formal operations of government and emergent network structures and processes through strengthening capacity to deal with complexity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Similar to mandatory networks (Popp <i>et al.</i> 2013), the G&A Cluster is an executive, mandatory and formal or semi-formal coordination structure (DPME 2014). • IGR mechanisms can be legislated or established through executive decisions, cooperative agreements and other formal or informal arrangements (Thornhill 2002; Malan 2005; Behnke and Mueller 2017; Phillimore 2013). • The principles of co-operative government and IGR as outlined in chapter 3 of the <i>Constitution</i>, 1996. • The “Law of Requisite Complexity” requires that a CAS should be able to adapt its level of complexity to match the corresponding environmental complexity (Boisot and McKelvey 2011), Uhl-Bien and Arena 2018). 	<p>Chapter 1 (1.3)</p> <p>Chapter 2 (2.3.3)</p> <p>Chapter 2 (2.5.2)</p> <p>Chapter 3 (3.5.1)</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CLT serves as a lens to explore dynamic relations in bureaucratic organisations that are generally not designed to be adaptive (Uhl-Bien and Marion 2011; Tourish 2019). 	Chapter 3 (3.5.3)
Regulatory structures and processes	c. Appropriate regulatory structures, processes and support mechanisms are necessary to ensure effective distributed and collective leadership practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective coordination is dependent on multiple factors, including organisational culture, human capabilities and appropriate systems (Christensen and Laegreid 2007; Wegrich and Štimac 2014; Peters 2018). • The human factor is important in the success or failure of IGR mechanisms (Wright 1974; Agranoff 1999; Malan 2008). • The success of PVM is dependent on the practice of and motivation from dialogue and exchange (Stoker 2006). • Static IRC and CRC serve as the basis for dynamic IRC and CRC, provided there are appropriate group dynamics, social regulation structures and feedback mechanisms (Hannah <i>et al.</i> 2011). • “Compilational aggregation” effect suggests that CRC has a transformational feedback mechanism on individuals and the collective over time (Hannah <i>et al.</i> 2011). • Exposure to critical feedback from peers made DGs conscientious of the quality of work they were submitting to the clusters (DG-7 2020). 	<p>Chapter 2 (2.4.2)</p> <p>Chapter 2 (2.2.4.2)</p> <p>Chapter 2 (2.6)</p> <p>Chapter 3 (3.5.2)</p> <p>Chapter 3 (3.5.2)</p> <p>Chapter 5 (5.3.6.2)</p>
	d. Openness, mutual trust, respect and reciprocity are essential amongst participating agents (i.e. individuals and departments) in intra-organisational teams and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A culture of cooperation, mutual respect and trust is essential for effective IGR (Reddy 2001; Du Plessis 2008). • Trust in “boundary spanners” who can mobilise diverse teams across silos is important (Agranoff and McGuire 2003). • Amongst others, lack of trust especially in multi-party governance systems inhibits effective coordination (Johns <i>et al.</i> 2007). 	<p>Chapter 2 (2.6)</p> <p>Chapter 2 (2.6)</p> <p>Chapter 2 (2.4)</p>

	inter-organisational collaborations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inter-organisational trust is essential for the management of collaborative public networks (Cristofoli <i>et al.</i> 2017). • Leadership unfolds over several stages, as trust, respect and loyalty grow (Bass and Riggio 2006). • Trust is an essential competence for inter-organisational leadership (Beechler <i>et al.</i> 2004; Connelly 2007; Muller-Seitz 2012; Williams 2013). • Respect and openness are important competencies for boundary spanners (Beechler <i>et al.</i> 2004). • Respectful, non-judgemental and unbiased interactions and meaningful participation by all members are essential for the development of collective competencies (Endres and Weibler 2019). • “Leadership is based firstly on trust and respect” (SR-21 2020). • Trust, respect and frankness amongst cluster members as well as with the G&A ministerial cluster and other clusters, even when dealing with difficult issues, are critical factors in the success of some G&A Cluster programmes (DG-2 2020; SR-9 2020; SR-21 2020). • The precondition for innovation is organisational stability and trust (DG-4 2020). 	<p>Chapter 3 (3.4.3)</p> <p>Chapter 3 (3.4.2.2)</p> <p>Chapter 4 (4.5)</p> <p>Chapter 4 (4.5)</p> <p>Chapter 4 (4.5.2)</p> <p>Chapter 5 (5.3.5.1)</p> <p>Chapter 5 (5.3.6.5)</p> <p>Chapter 5 (5.3.7.1)</p>
Leadership conceptions and practice	e. Leadership, especially in inter-organisational arrangements, is not a person, title or position – it is an influence and interaction process that generates creativity,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Leadership for the 21st century” is defined as “an influence relationship amongst leaders and collaborators” (Rost 1991). • Shared leadership is a group level phenomenon that involves the mutual influence of assigned and unassigned or emergent leaders (Pearce and Manz 2005; Fernandez 2010; Van Wart 2015). 	<p>Chapter 3 (3.2)</p> <p>Chapter 3 (3.4.2.3)</p>

	<p>innovation and adaptive capacity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership is not a position, job title, person or static concept (Bolden 2004; Drath 2004; Goldstein <i>et al.</i> 2010; Hartley and Benington 2011; DuBrin 2016; Northouse 2016). • In the governance era, public leadership is relational and collective and dictates that public institutions should collaborate with each other and other stakeholders to achieve a shared vision and shared public value (Sindane 2011; Ospina 2016). • Leadership is not a person or place in the organisation; it is a verb to signal the response that every employee makes to a challenge or opportunity at hand in order to add value to themselves and others. (Bellingham and O'Brien 2005). 	<p>Chapter 3 (3.2)</p> <p>Chapter 3 (3.4.3.1)</p> <p>Chapter 4 (4.2.2)</p>
	<p>f. In inter-organisational arrangements such as the G&A Cluster, no one is wholly in charge - everyone has the responsibility for and is capable of leadership, irrespective of positional power and title</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the networked governance context, no one is entirely in charge (Bryson <i>et al.</i> 2015). • There are no leaders and followers in collaborative networks, but there are “equals” even though some may have more formal power due to their positions, professional education, training, political clout and resource (Mandell and Keast 2009; Vangen and McGuire 2015; Popp <i>et al.</i> 2013). • Substantive leadership responsibility for the G&A Cluster is with all cluster members (perspective shared by multiple cited participants) • All DGs have the responsibility to contribute because of their leadership role in their own departments and the leadership of the Public Service as a whole (DG-2 2020; DG-5 2020). • Everyone needs to share leadership experience, not in a sequential way, but in a concurrent, collective, collaborative and compassionate way (Raelin 2005). 	<p>Chapter 3 (3.4.2.3)</p> <p>Chapter 3 (3.4.3)</p> <p>;</p> <p>Chapter 5 (5.3.5.3)</p> <p>Chapter 5 (5.3.5.3)</p> <p>Chapter 3 (3.4.2.3)</p> <p>Chapter 4 (4.5.2)</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collective leadership requires that individuals, including those with different views, should take responsibility to proactively claim leadership for themselves and for granting it to others on a rotational basis (Hannah <i>et al.</i> 2011; Eckert <i>et al.</i> 2014; Endres and Weibler 2019). 	
	g. Integrative and collective forms of leadership such as CLT are not a solution to everything; they must be used appropriately in complex environments that require collective action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative management is not a solution for all organisational challenges; many organisational issues should still be addressed by individual public sector institutions (O’Flynn, 2009). • PVM is not a solution to all complex problems that confront government and society, but will always form part of a combination of management approaches adopted by government (Stoker 2006). • Coordination is central and essential to the purpose of IGR but it is not always a solution to complexity because it has “inherent complications” that require careful design, management and governance (Keast and Brown 2002). • Coordination and collaboration should be used when dealing with interdependent and complex situations (Malone and Crowston 1994; Malan 2005). • Individual and plural forms of leadership must be used appropriately when necessary and feasible, depending on the urgency, employee commitment, need for creativity, interdependence and task or problem complexity, thus justifying the adoption of hybrid approaches to leadership (Pearce and Manz 2005; Gronn 2007). • CLT is not a solution to all leadership, competency and public administration challenges and is not a replacement for other types of leadership, it must coexist with them (Blandin 2007; Gronn 2007). 	<p>Chapter 2 (2.2.4.2)</p> <p>Chapter 2 (2.2.4.2)</p> <p>Chapter 2 (2.6)</p> <p>Chapter 2 (2.6)</p> <p>Chapter 3 (3.4.23.3)</p> <p>Chapter 3 (3.5)</p>

Source: Author’s own illustration.

Mindful of the inter-organisational leadership competency principles outlined in Table 6.2 above, section 6.4 below provides an overview and interdependency analysis of the competencies identified in chapter five. The interdependency analysis will therefore serve as a basis to synthesise and categorise the multiple competencies into foundational (or threshold/baseline) and core (or differentiating) competencies.

6.4 PROPOSED COMPETENCIES AND CATEGORISATION

The key competencies presented below are mainly derived from chapter five, whereas their supporting foundational competencies are informed by discussions in chapters two to five. The discussion also explores the application of CLT's three leadership functions that are explained in chapters one and three, namely: administrative/formal, adaptive/entrepreneurial and enabling leadership (Uhl-Bien *et al.* 2007; Uhl-Bien and Marion 2011; Uhl-Bien and Arena 2018) in relation to the competencies and the inter-organisational context.

6.4.1 Inventory of identified competencies

The competencies listed in Table 6.3 below, which are discussed in detail in chapter five, are derived from the empirical results and the theoretical framework that is elaborated upon in chapters two to four.

Table 6.3: Key competencies identified by participants

1. Intra-organisational team leadership and collaborative leadership	13. Emotional intelligence (EQ)
2. Effective political-administrative leadership	14. Continuous learning
3. Stakeholder management	15. Vision and visionary leadership
4. Mediation and conflict resolution	16. Commitment and responsibility
5. Values driven leadership	17. Respect for and compliance with prescripts
6. Flexibility and adaptability	18. Inspiration and motivation
7. Systems and strategic thinking	19. Diligence
8. Creativity and Innovation	20. Technical expertise
9. Foresight	21. ICT knowledge
10. Communication	22. Economic knowledge
11. Interpersonal skills	23. Understanding the broader context
12. Problem solving	

Source: Author's own illustration.

As indicated in chapter five, 25 competencies were initially identified and the discussion on the theoretical support or lack thereof for the competencies, though not repeated in this section, resulted in the decision to elevate the 23 competencies listed in Table 6.3 above into the inter-organisational leadership context by excluding “delegation of authority” and IQ as unique competies. Equally, the chapter five discussion highlighted multiple interdependencies amongst some of the competencies. The first interdependency emanates from the fact that some competencies serve as a foundation base for the development and mastery of other competencies, and the second interdependency arises in a context of mutual reinforcement since the acquisition and mastery of some competencies occur simultaneously. Consequently, key competencies such as communication and technical knowledge are also foundational to the acquisition and mastery of other key competencies, as illustrated in Table 6.4 below.

Although it is possible to identify endless interdependencies, the analysis is restricted to the 23 identified competencies plus the interdependencies that were mentioned by participants in chapter five and cited sources in chapters two to four. Restricting the analysis to the issues covered in this study is essential because collective competencies and competence, attest Bonotto and Bitencourt (2008:7), should be understood in relation to context specific processes and interactions. The interdependency analysis further categorises the competencies into multiple skills domains, namely, cognitive, social and technical skills, as illustrated in Table 6.4 below. Notwithstanding that the categorisation is debatable, the analysis revealed that some competencies can be grouped into multiple skills domains. Since values form an integral part of social and technical skills in the NPG and are central to CLT’s conception of leadership as a social and relational process, value-focused competencies are not classified into any of the three skills domains, but are regarded as cross-cutting. This led to the conclusion that the 23 identified competencies comprise a combination of predominantly cognitive and social skills and few relate to values and generic and specific technical skills/knowledge, whereas the interdependent foundational competencies are spread across cognitive and social skills, technical skills/knowledge as well as values.

An overview of the interdependency analysis is provided in Table 6.4 below.

Table 6.4: Key competences and analysis of competency types and interdependencies

Key competencies	Type of competency	Competency interdependencies
1. Intra-organisational team leadership and collaborative leadership	Social skill	Foundational base: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Technical knowledge</u>, • <u>Values</u>: Integrity, honesty, trust, humility • <u>Social skill</u>: Diplomacy
2. Effective political-administrative leadership	Combination of social and technical skills	Foundational base: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Technical knowledge</u> (i.e constitution, legislation) • <u>Social skill</u>: communication
3. Stakeholder management	Social skill	Foundational base: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Values</u>: Integrity, honesty, trust, humility and empathy • <u>Social skills</u>: diplomacy, communication Mutual reinforcement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mediation and-conflict resolution
4. Mediation and conflict resolution	Social skill	Foundational base: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Values</u>: Integrity, honesty, trust, humility • <u>Social skills</u>: Diplomacy, communication Mutual reinforcement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholder management
5. Values-driven leadership	Cuts across social, technical and cognitive skills	Foundational base: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intra-organisational <u>values</u> such as trust
6. Flexibility and adaptability	Cognitive and social skills	Foundational base: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Cognitive/social skills</u> such as being open minded
7. Systems and strategic thinking	Cognitive skills	Foundational base <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical knowledge
8. Creativity and innovation	Cognitive skills	Foundational base: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Traits</u> such as intrinsic motivation • <u>Social, cognitive and technical skills</u> such as self-management, interpersonal management, strategic and systems thinking, project management and content management • <u>Value</u>: trust

9. Foresight	Cognitive skill	Foundational base: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Cognitive skills</u>: framing, scanning, futuring, designing, visioning, adapting, strategic and systems thinking, creativity and innovation
10. Communication	Combination of social and cognitive skills	Foundational base: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Technical expertise/content knowledge</u>
11. Interpersonal skills	Social skills	Foundational base: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Values</u>: empathy, compassion, trust and respect • <u>Trait</u>: open mind
12. Problem solving	Cognitive skill	Foundational base: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Cognitive skills</u>: strategic and systems thinking • Specific and generic <u>technical knowledge</u>, plus awareness of complexity dynamics and fragility of systems
13. Emotional intelligence (EQ)	Combination of social and cognitive skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The context and content of many competencies because it is a baseline/foundational competence for leadership.
14. Continuous learning	Cognitive skill	Foundational base: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cognitive <u>skills</u> and self-management skills
15. Vision and visionary leadership	Combination of cognitive and social skills	Foundational base: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cognitive and communication <u>skills</u>
16. Commitment and responsibility	Cuts across technical, social and cognitive skills	
17. Respect for and compliance with prescripts	Technical skill and cross-cutting value	Foundational base: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical <u>knowledge</u> (e.g constitution, legislation)
18. Inspiration and motivation	Social skills	
19. Diligence	Cognitive skill	
20. Technical expertise	Cognitive and technical skills	Foundational base: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Cognitive skills</u> and continuous learning
21. ICT Knowledge	Cognitive and technical skills	<i>Linked to technical competence</i>
22. Economic knowledge	Cognitive and technical skills	<i>Linked to technical competence</i>
23. Understanding the broader context	Cognitive and technical skills	<i>Linked to technical competence</i>

Source: Author's own illustration.

Since the study contends that new or enhanced competencies are required for inter-organisational leadership, it is not surprising that the competencies identified by participants in chapter five consist of many competencies that are usually incorporated in intra-organisational competency frameworks, but equally exclude competencies that are found in job specific and intra-organisational competency frameworks such as planning, delegation and project and financial management. With respect to competencies that are similar to those found in intra-organisational competencies, the study argues that the intensity of the competencies is differentiated by, amongst others, the scope and complexity of the intra- and inter-organisational environments, as well as the enabling and constraining dynamics of positional power and formal authority. As shown in Figure 6.1 below, the leadership of “others” as well as the complexity and power relations differ at the intra- and inter-organisational levels.

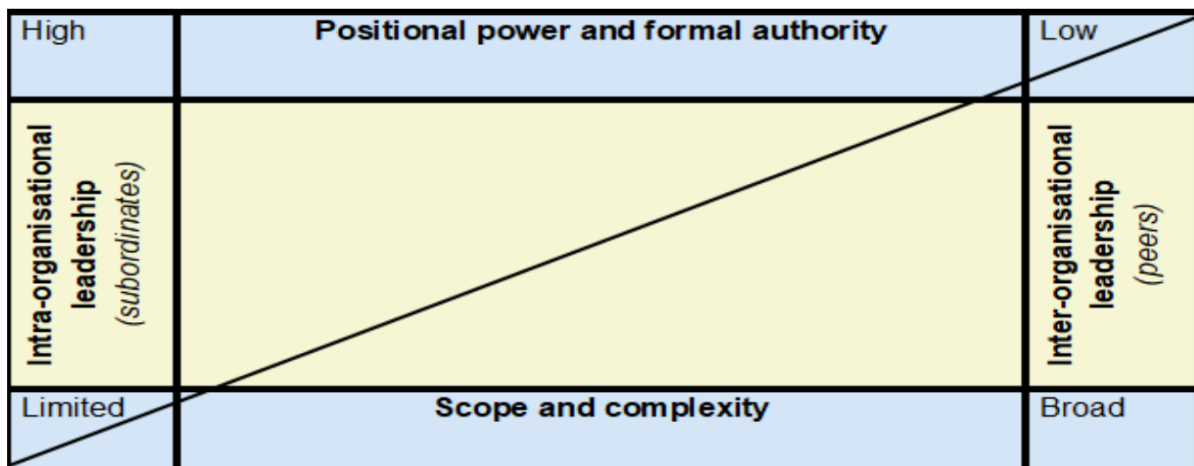


Figure 6.1: Relationship and difference between intra- and inter-organisational leadership

Source: Author’s own illustration.

Figure 6.1 shows that at the intra-organisational level, leadership is first and foremost hierarchical, even though it can also be distributed through the formal delegation of authority as well as organisational support for formal and informal networks and teams. At the inter-organisational level such as in the G&A Cluster, leadership is or is supposed to be horizontal because the G&A Cluster comprises agents (i.e. departments) with equal influence. Although the institutions are often represented by SMS members who have varied positional powers, the study argues that in the inter-organisational context, no agent has formal authority over others due to the equal status of the core institutions. Consequently, the application of CLT in hierarchical

intra-organisational institutions such as the G&A Cluster departments differs from application in an inter-organisational structure such as the G&A Cluster. In the latter context, the collective is responsible for protecting the already-created adaptive space whereas in the hierarchical intra-organisational context, leaders with positional power are responsible for creating and protecting the adaptive space.

Equally, the scope and complexity of individual and collective leadership is different at the intra- and inter-departmental level. The latter is more complex and broad whereas the former is narrower and less complex. Simply put, intra-organisational leadership is, in many instances, exercised by one/few people with more formal authority within a focused and less complex environment, whereas inter-organisational leadership in a CAS such as the G&A Cluster is (supposed to be) applied by many people without formal authority over each other in a broad and complex environment. The differences highlighted in Figure 6.1 and the preceding discussion suggest that intra-organisational leadership competence is not equivalent to nor is it a guarantee for inter-organisational leadership competence, but, as already stated, it might serve as a foundation/building-block for inter-organisational leadership, provided the leadership substance and orientation are aligned and complementary.

As already stated and demonstrated in Table 6.4 above, some of the competencies are interdependent, and as such, in section 6.4.2 below, the competencies are analysed further and compressed into coherent competency clusters.

6.4.2 Categorisation of competencies and relationship with complexity leadership theory's leadership functions

The analysis in section 6.4.1 and Table 6.4 highlighted interdependencies across many competencies, which resulted in some competencies being repetitively listed. Furthermore, the analysis revealed that competencies such as technical expertise and continuous learning are broadly described, thus making it possible to adapt the competencies within specific contexts, whereas competencies such as ICT and economic knowledge represent specific forms of technical expertise and can therefore be subsumed under technical expertise. Besides, long lists of competencies are unmanageable (Hondegheem 2002; Bolden *et al.* 2003) and do not fully account for complexity dynamics within a CAS, but they serve as a good starting point for

competency development. As such, an analysis of the 23 competencies listed in Table 6.3 above in relation to the study's theoretical framework and empirical results and the classifications and interdependency analysis presented in Table 6.4 resulted in the 23 key and the associated interdependent competencies being further grouped into cognitive, social and technical skills domains as reflected in Table 6.5 below. The new categorisation reduced repetition, but some competencies are still grouped into two domains, whereas values-oriented competencies are classified as cross-cutting.

Table 6.5: Categorisation of competencies into skills domains

Cognitive skills domain	Social skills domain	Technical skills domain
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility and adaptability • Systems and strategic thinking • Creativity and innovation • Foresight • Problem-solving • Continuous learning • EQ (self-awareness, self-management, maturity) • Flexibility and adaptability • Vision and visionary leadership • Diligence • Technical expertise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ICT Knowledge ○ Economic knowledge ○ Understanding the broader context 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intra-organisational team leadership and collaborative leadership • Effective political-administrative leadership • Flexibility and adaptability • Stakeholder management • Mediation and conflict resolution • Communication • Interpersonal skills • EQ (self-awareness, self-management, maturity) • Vision and visionary leadership • Inspiration and motivation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective political-administrative leadership • (Respect for and) compliance with prescripts • Technical expertise <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ICT Knowledge ○ Economic knowledge ○ Understanding the broader context
<p>Cross-cutting values</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Values-driven leadership • Commitment and responsibility • Respect for (and compliance with) prescripts 		

Source: Author's own illustration.

The repetitive listing of the competencies into the three skills domains plus cross-cutting values in Table 6.5 above illustrates additional connections between the competencies and provides guidance on how the competencies can be further grouped into competency clusters. This resulted in the competencies being grouped into four foundational and two core competency clusters. The labels attached to each competency cluster are broad in order to capture the essence of the key competencies and associated competency interdependencies that are highlighted in Table 6.4 above. The foundational competencies consist of values orientation, disciplined-agile behaviour, dynamic interactions and communication, and expansive intra-organisational knowledge and skills, whereas cognitive complexity and boundary spanning knowledge and experience constitute the core competencies. The six

competency clusters are interrelated because without the foundational competencies, the core competencies would not make a difference and *vice versa*. A brief description and rationale for each competency cluster is provided below.

6.4.2.1 Foundational competencies

The four proposed foundational competencies discussed in this section constitute a base or minimum requirement for inter-organisational leadership competencies because they include competency clusters that could be regarded as a common frame of reference for the G&A Cluster with regard to “values orientation” and the differentiating value-add that each member should contribute in terms of “expansive intra-organisational knowledge and skills”. All four competency clusters are interdependent and equally important; therefore, they are discussed in random order.

(a) Values orientation

This competency places emphasis on a range of values that are considered essential for IGR and collaborations in the NPG era and its emphasis on public value, public values and democratic accountability (Van Wart 2013:521). The values emphasised in the study include trust, ethics, integrity, respect, honesty, openness, empathy, commitment, accountability and respect for prescripts. Though not exhaustive, the values are aligned with the principles for cooperative government and IGR that are stipulated in section 41(1) of the *Constitution*, (1996), and the values and principles that govern public administration across all spheres of government, as outlined in section 195 of the *Constitution*, 1996 (South Africa 1996). The values are relevant at the intra-personal, intra- and inter-organisational levels and within the broader public administration system. This is illustrated by their articulation in the *Constitution*, 1996 (South African 1996) and centrality in collaborations (Cristofoli *et al.* 2017), as well as relational conceptions of leadership (Bass and Riggio 2006; Raffel *et al.* 2009; Van Wart 2013; Broussine and Callahan 2016; Crosby and Bryson 2018). The importance of these values is also illustrated by their integration in some cited leadership competency frameworks in chapter four (Virtanen 2000; Getha-Taylor 2008; OPM 2012).

The study argues that the mentioned values are necessary to support the three leadership functions of CLT because in the Public Service context, it is essential to

simultaneously maintain stability and transform the system. Administrative leadership, which supports formal operations and maintains organisational stability (Uhl-Bien and Marion (2009), justifies the importance of “respect for and compliance with prescripts”. Equally, the role of enabling leadership in creating, engaging and protecting an adaptive space (Uhl-Bien and Arena 2018) such as the G&A Cluster can be enhanced through application of the values, because high ethical standards, honesty, empathy, trustworthiness and integrity are important when dealing with colleagues, stakeholders and topical issues such as corruption (DG-2 2020; DG-4 2020; DG-7 2020; DG-8 2020; DG-9 2020). In addition, several cited authors (Blandin 2007; Connelly 2007; Müller-Seitz 2012; Williams 2013; Endres and Weibler 2019) attest that values such as trust, honesty, respect and humility are essential for inter-organisational collaboration and leadership. Likewise, multifaceted forms of accountability are an integral part of public administration leadership in democratic governance systems (Stoker 2006; Denhardt and Denhardt 2011; Getha-Taylor 2012; Bryson *et al.* 2014).

From the above analysis, the study argues that the values orientation competency cluster provides insights on the underlying content and operating conditions that support enabling leadership practice, which according to Uhl-Bien and Arena (2018:89), is the most intangible and difficult to explain by those who practice it from the top, bottom and/or margins based on tacit knowledge (Uhl-Bien and Arena 2017:17; Uhl-Bien and Arena 2018:101).

(b) Disciplined-agile behaviour

The concerns and challenges alluded to regarding power relations and institutional domination demonstrate that inter-organisational structures such as the G&A Cluster are not inherently dynamic and agile because they comprise agents with a hierarchical and bureaucratic foundation, which reflects the importance of discipline and agility. As such, this competency cluster comprises of the following interlinked characteristics: flexibility and adaptability; being open minded; tolerance for ambiguity, courage and persistence; diligence and compliance with prescripts. In addition to these competency characteristics, several authors (Rodriguez *et al.* 2002; Beechler *et al.* 2004; O'Brien and Robertson 2009; Op de Beeck and Hondegheem 2010; Archer and Cameron 2009) have also alluded to the value of tenacity, agility and courage when dealing with complexity and inter-organisational leadership in the 21st century.

Discipline and agility may be perceived as contradictory but they are complementary in network governance arrangements because inter-organisational networks such as the G&A Cluster do not replace but coexist with traditional management and governance systems (Stoker 2006; Christensen and Laegreid's 2010a; Rhodes 1996; Agranoff 2017). The co-existence contributes to hybrid governance systems (Stoker 2006; Christensen and Laegreid's 2010a; Rhodes 2017) and the need for hybrid (Gronn 2007), integrative (Raelin 2005; Rhodes 2017) and plural (Denis *et al.* 2012; Sergi *et al.* 2017; Storey *et al.* 2017) forms of leadership, as well as the mastery of old management capabilities and new skills (Agranoff 2007; Raffel *et al.* 2009; Chow *et al.* 2017). Therefore, the collective G&A Cluster leadership should balance stability, compliance and consistency with flexibility, adaptability and agility. The study argues that the latter capabilities can be associated with CLT's adaptive and enabling leadership functions and the former with CLT's administrative leadership function.

As noted by Probst *et al.* (2011:329) and Uhl-Bien and Arena (2018:92), ambidexterity in balancing efficiency and innovation as well as stability and adaptability is dependent on the development of individual and collective leadership ambidexterity across the organisation's hierarchy and networks. While leadership ambidexterity can be developed at the individual level, the study concurs that at the inter-organisational level it is a shared capability (Probst *et al.* 2011:329) because it is unrealistic to expect a single person to master all areas of leadership in all contexts (Friedrich *et al.* 2011:39). According to the study's participants, the diversity of the G&A Cluster agents requires tolerance for diverse views, being open to persuasion (DG-1 2020; SR-39 2020) and the ability to engage with internal and external stakeholders with respect and an open mind (DG-1 2020, DG-3 2020; SR-18 2020; SR-40 2020).

The required skills and attributes illustrate the interdependency between this competency cluster with the values orientation competency cluster as well as cognitive and social skills. Furthermore, it illustrates the need for and role of CLT's integrative leadership functions, because in the G&A Cluster administrative leaders are also required to be adaptive. Thus, G&A Cluster members are responsible for managing the entanglement between their responsibility to maintain stability and the responsibility to pursue and support adaptation; hence, there is a need to develop diverse sets of leadership capabilities and the ability to use them appropriately in

specific contexts (Blandin 2007). The study argues that this is an illustration of end-to-end self-management and leadership at the individual and collective level. This is contrary to the intra-organisational bureaucratic environment wherein the administrative leader, according to Uhl-Bien and Marion (2011), is responsible for (a) creating and protecting an adaptive space without necessarily being an active or dominant player in that space, and (b) for managing the entanglement between administrative (positional power) leadership and the adaptive (distributed) leadership (Uhl-Bien and Marion 2009; Murphy *et al.* 2017).

(c) Dynamic interactions and communication

This competency cluster comprises of the following qualities: EQ (self-awareness, self-management, maturity); inter-personal skills and values (listening, humility, empathy, compassion); communication (verbal and non-verbal, feedback); negotiation, mediation and conflict resolution; diplomacy; stakeholder management; effective political-administrative interface; and multi-disciplinary team leadership. The identified characteristics and interdependency analysis that is presented in Table 6.4 above highlight the social skills, cognitive skills, values and technical knowledge dimensions of dynamic interactions and communication. Therefore, the study argues that the competency cluster is central to the conception of leadership as a social and relational process (Lichtenstein *et al.* 2006) and the achievement of IGR objectives. As stated by the study's participants, communication is a means to share information and experiences, engage with internal and external stakeholders, and provide guidance and feedback.

In the context of IGR and CPM, the frequency and intensity of interactions between officials and spheres of government (Wright's 1978:8-9) have an influence on the objectives of IGR (Wright, 1978; Watts 2006). This is because networks require more than "signatory" participation; they require robust deliberations on the technical issues that are core to the underlying challenges (Agranoff 2017:203). Accordingly, Mandell and Keast (2009) as well as Vangen and McGuire (2015) attest that interactions enable members within collaborative arrangements to leverage from each other's strengths. Authors such as Perry (1989:7) and Stoker (2006:41) have also emphasised the importance of relational competencies in IGR and IGM. Contrary to the assertions made by the cited authors, the empirical results have shown that not all

inter-organisational participation and interactions contribute towards the achievement of IGR objectives due to multiple factors.

The results have shown that lack of guidance and support, inadequate technical expertise, silo perspectives and the exercise of positional power can inhibit dynamic interactions amongst members, and can also result in passive participation (DG-1 2020; DG-4 2020; DG-8 2020; SR-30 2020), disengagement (SR-35 2020), leadership “credibility gap” (SR-3 2020), erratic interactions that are characterised by arrogance (SR-41 2020) and domination by one or a few departments (DG-2 2020; DG-6 2020; SR-6 2020). Such unintended consequences of interactions can be neutralised and managed through the adoption of appropriate and enabling regulatory structures, such as the proposed principles for inter-organisational leadership. The processual and relational (Blandin 2007; Goldstein *et al.* 2010; Uhl-Bien and Marion 2011) nature of this competency cluster makes it central to the three leadership functions of CLT, but in a CAS such as the G&A Cluster, technical knowledge, appropriate regulatory structures and social values are also required to support the adaptive and enabling leadership functions, whilst limiting administrative leadership.

(d) Expansive intra-organisational knowledge and skills

Analyses of the empirical results led to the conclusion that this competency cluster consists of a combination of knowledge, perspectives, skills and experience at multiple levels. At the personal level, it is concerned with a leader’s knowledge, experience and skills in a specific area or specific areas. The organisational level of this competency cluster includes a shared understanding, translation and implementation of the organisation’s mandate in relation to the constitutional, legislative and regulatory imperatives. At the system level, the competency deals with an understanding of the public administration governance system, as well as the utilisation of that knowledge for the effective management and leadership of the political-administrative interface at the intra- and inter-organisational level. In addition to the empirical results, the basis for this competency cluster is supported by the recognition of technical expertise as a foundational competency for public sector leaders (Pearce and Manz 2005; Adair 2011), intra-organisational leadership (Brookes 2007; Bao *et al.* 2012) as well as the network governance and CPM context (Brookes 2007; Koliba and Koppenjan 2016).

Due to the diversity of the agents within the G&A Cluster, the knowledge, experience and skills will be diverse because agents contribute unique knowledge, perspectives and capabilities (Sanders 2014:141), but are also connected through the constitutional imperatives and cross-cutting legislation. This justifies the need for inter-organisational leadership as well as dynamic interactions in order to develop collective leadership competence. At the intra-organisational level, the competency cluster is more aligned with the administrative leadership function wherein the administrative head is responsible for creating an adaptive space that encourages distributed and bottom-up leadership, whereas at the inter-organisational level, all three functions of CLT would be randomly distributed amongst agents with equal influence.

The inclusion of this competency cluster in a CAS such as the G&A Cluster confirms the assertion by Brookes (2007) as well as Koliba and Koppenjan (2016) that intra-organisational technical expertise is an important determinant for effective inter-organisational leadership. Furthermore, it contributes towards the conceptualisation of leadership development for organisational adaptability by addressing the content dimension of leadership, which is not emphasised in CLT. The study argues that since CLT is meant for application in bureaucratic organisations with formally defined mandates, processes and procedures, it should also be explicit about the perceived or actual role of technical knowledge and skills in relation to the administrative and adaptive leadership functions. Therefore, this competency cluster contributes towards an understanding of the prerequisite content of enabling leadership, which is derived from administrative and adaptive leadership.

6.4.2.2 Core competencies

The study aligns itself with Boyatzis' (2008) assertion that core competencies distinguish superior from average performance because the proposed core competencies place emphasis on boundary spanning knowledge and experience as well as the integration and expansion of mental and information processing domains. A brief overview of the two core competencies is provided below.

(a) Cognitive complexity

Cognitive characteristics are often included in competency frameworks as stand-alone competencies or as part of a collection of social, cognitive and technical skills that

support specific meta-competencies (Op de Beeck and Hondeghem 2010; OPM 2012, Chow *et al.* 2012; Steiner 2013). For this study, cognitive complexity is conceptualised as a competency cluster because it involves the integration of multiple intellectual and information processing capacities (Hannah and Lester 2009; Lord *et al.* 2011), in addition to the multiple interdependencies highlighted in Table 6.4 above. As such, this competency cluster comprises of strategic and systems thinking; creativity, foresight and innovation; visioning; problem solving, continuous learning, flexibility and adaptability, diligence as well as EQ (self-awareness, self-management, maturity).

While cognitive intelligence (IQ) is regarded as a threshold/foundational leadership competency (Williams 2013), the analysis in Table 6.4 above demonstrates that many cognitive competencies are mutually interdependent and are also connected to social and technical skills. For example, strategic and systems thinking are foundational to foresight, creativity, innovation and problem solving. In addition, while cognitive competencies are foundational to the acquisition of knowledge, their mastery is also influenced by context specific technical knowledge. The interdependencies and integrated nature of cognitive complexity illustrates that within a CAS, agents can be individuals, ideas, groups, networks or organisations and the “head” or intellectual process is also an adaptive space (Lichtenstein and Plowman 2009; Uhl-Bien and Arena 2018), which is nested within another adaptive space. Also, this competency cluster shows that within a CAS such as the G&A Cluster, there are multiple interconnected CAS’s (in the form of cognitive processes and relational engagements) as well as multiple interacting agents that can be categorised as intrapersonal and interpersonal ideas, individuals and departments (Lichtenstein *et al.* 2006; Uhl-Bien and Arena 2018).

The study has also shown that interactions amongst agents within each CAS have an influence on interactive dynamics in other CAS’s; hence, individual and collective cognitive processes are constrained by the same factors that inhibit dynamic interactions and communication amongst cluster members during meetings, namely lack of guidance and support, inadequate technical expertise, silo perspectives and the exercise of positional power by some members. This observation suggests that the role of CLT’s enabling leadership function of engaging with and protecting the adaptive space (Uhl-Bien and Arena 2018) extends beyond the relational and

engagement space to the cognitive space. Therefore, the G&A Cluster leadership collective can enable and protect the individual and collective cognitive spaces by adopting appropriate regulatory structures (Hannah *et al.* 2011), such as the proposed principles for inter-organisational leadership, and through putting in place mechanisms such as training and support to develop cognitive complexity at the individual and collective levels.

Similarly, Nootboom and Termeer's (2013:29) study in two public sector institutions led to the conclusion that enabling leadership supports adaptive leaders through the provision of resources such as time and space to manoeuvre, as well as advocacy support for innovative ideas. The proposed interventions and those identified by Nootboom and Termeer (2013) partly describe the elements of enabling leadership, which according to Uhl-Bien and Arena (2018:101), is intangible because those who practice it simply do so from the top, bottom and/or margins based on tacit knowledge. The study posits that by engaging with and protecting the cognitive space, the G&A Cluster will contribute towards the cognitive dimension of social capital development (Arena and Uhl-Bien 2016), because contextualised reflection at the workplace is essential to develop social capital skills and collective leadership (Raelin 2017:10-11). Therefore, the cognitive complexity competency cluster can be enhanced by creating conditions to simultaneously support the adaptive and enabling leadership functions, and neutralise administrative leadership.

(b) Boundary spanning knowledge and experience

The transversal nature of the issues dealt with at the G&A Cluster and the need for a broader understanding of the Public Service and government operations as well as the broader political system that underpins it have implications for leadership competencies. As such, this competency cluster deals with a combination of expanded knowledge, skills and experience at different levels of the governance and public administration system. At the public administration system level, it is concerned with expanded knowledge of public administration and related legislation and the utilisation of such knowledge to manage the political-administrative interface at the inter-organisational level and to facilitate effective IGR. At the broader governance context, emphasis is placed on the political and governance system of the country as articulated in the *Constitution*, 1996 (South Africa 1996), interdependencies between

government institutions, sectoral mandates and government spheres, as well as awareness of interdependencies with regional and international developments. In addition, the need to understand the economy as well as awareness and optimisation of the impact of ICT on government operations were also mentioned. Several cited authors (Bryson and Crosby 2007; Hartley and Benington 2011; Steiner 2013; Williams 2013; Rhodes 2017) have also alluded to the need for political awareness, an understanding of the broader governance context, knowledge on the functioning of entire systems and their intra- and inter-dependencies, and transdisciplinary knowledge. Due to differences in the mandates of the G&A Cluster members, the knowledge and experience of agents will differ. Like the competency cluster relating to “expansive intra-organisational knowledge and experience”, this competency cluster contributes to the content dimension of leadership development for organisational adaptability, which is not highlighted in CLT. A summary analysis of the six competencies is presented in Table 6.6 below.

Table 6.6: Inter-organisational leadership competency clusters

Category	Competency clusters	Competency focus areas
Foundational	Values orientation	Trust; ethics; integrity; respect; honesty; openness; commitment; accountability; respect for and compliance with prescripts
	Disciplined-agile behaviour	Flexibility and adaptability; agility, being open minded; diligence, tolerance for ambiguity; courage and persistence; compliance with prescripts
	Dynamic interactions and communication	EQ (self-awareness, self-management, maturity); inter-personal skills and values (listening, humility, empathy, compassion); communication (verbal and non-verbal, feedback); negotiation; mediation and conflict resolution; diplomacy; multi-disciplinary team leadership; stakeholder management; effective political-administrative interface
	Expansive intra-organisational knowledge and skills	Combination of knowledge (i.e. constitution, legislation, technical content), skills and experience at the personal, intra-organisational and system levels
Core	Cognitive complexity	Strategic and systems thinking; creativity, foresight and innovation; visioning; problem solving; continuous learning; flexibility and adaptability; diligence
	Boundary spanning knowledge and experience	Combination of expanded knowledge, skills and experience at the system level, understanding of the broader context, including: the political and governance system of the country, awareness of interdependencies with regional and international developments, inter-disciplinary knowledge, awareness and optimisation of the impact of ICT on government operations and understanding of the economy

Source: Author’s own illustration

The competency clusters listed in Table 6.6 above do not constitute collective leadership competence *per se*; they represent the individual and “compositional” aggregate static (Hannah *et al.* 2011:218-219) competencies (or competency inputs) of the G&A Cluster members/agents (as individuals or departments). As much as the foundational competencies are essential, the study concurs with Friedrich *et al.*'s (2011:39) assertion that it is unlikely and would be unrealistic to expect that the level of competence of agents will be equally strong in all areas. In particular, varied levels of competence would be expected in relation to “expansive intra-organisational knowledge” and “boundary-spanning knowledge” competencies due to, amongst others, different levels of work experience, different intra-organisational mandates and leadership cultures, as well as varied exposure to different organisational contexts and work portfolios. The unevenness and/or gaps in the agents' competency profiles and in relation to the three leadership functions of CLT (Uhl-Bien and Arena 2017) justify the need for collective leadership practice and approaches (Friedrich *et al.* 2011; Probst *et al.* 2011). Furthermore, analyses of the proposed competencies highlighted differences in the application of CLT and the CAS approach at the intra and inter-organisational levels and elaborated on the content dimension of enabling leadership, which is generally not emphasised in CLT.

As noted by several authors (Uhl-Bien *et al.* 2007; Hannah *et al.* 2011; Northouse 2016), the critical success factors for collective leadership competence lie in the protection of adaptive spaces by administrative leaders, who in this case, are all members of the G&A Cluster as stated in section 5.3.5.3 of chapter five, the existence of conducive regulatory structures (Hannah *et al.* 2011; Lingard (2012; 2016), dynamic interactions (Goldstein *et al.* 2010; Uhl-Bien and Marion 2011; Avelino *et al.* 2017), the proactive and concurrent assumption of leadership roles (Hannah *et al.* 2011; Eckert *et al.* 2014; Endres and Weibler 2019) and deployment of diverse leadership skills in different contexts by agents (Blandin 2007; Gronn 2007; Canwell *et al.* 2018; Oswald-Herold *et al.* 2018). The empirical results have thus demonstrated that the lack of governance structures and processes (rules/principles and role clarification) for inter-organisational leadership, have a negative impact on the performance of the G&A Cluster in some areas, as illustrated by identified areas of poor performance, and the extent to which the static competencies brought into the CAS by members could be expanded (at the personal, intra-organisational and cluster level) and converted into

dynamic inter-organisational competences. These observations and conclusions justify the need for the proposed principles for inter-organisational leadership.

The study has also shown that though the G&A Cluster has formal mechanisms to provide high level feedback to its members and other external stakeholders, it relies on the (individual and intra-organisational) agents to facilitate comprehensive feedback between the collective, individual intra-organisational members and other stakeholders. Also, the cluster relies of its members to institutionalise its collective outcomes in a manner that will achieve intra-organisational and inter-organisational objectives and further generate new or expand on the strength of existing foundational and core competencies. These observations and the proposed competency clusters confirm the assertions made by several authors (Pearce and Manz 2005; Brookes 2007) in chapter three that self-leadership is a precondition for intra- and inter-organisational leadership, hence the integrative nature of CLT does not preclude the role of individual leadership in collectives (Uhl-Bien and Marion 2011). Nevertheless, the empirical results have alluded to the constraining effects of conflating and equating institutional representation with positional powers, thus justifying the need for (a) the proposed principles for inter-organisational leadership in order to protect the adaptive space and simultaneously neutralise the dominance of administrative leadership and some institutions, and (b) the proposed complexity leadership competency framework.

A graphic illustration of the proposed competency framework and the supporting principles for inter-organisational leadership is provided in Figure 6.2 below.

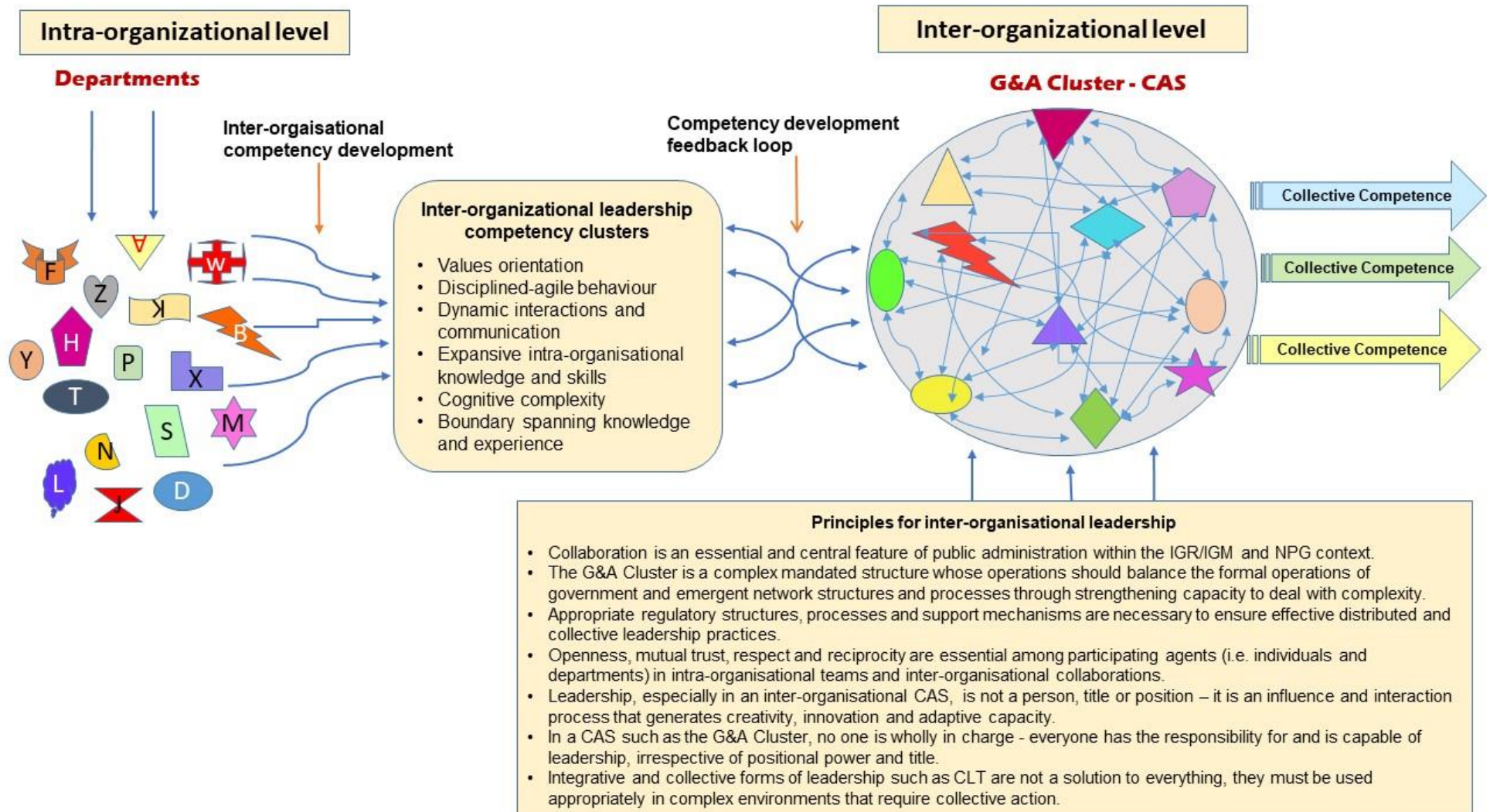


Figure 6.2: Proposed complexity leadership competency framework for the G&A Cluster

Source: Author's own illustration.

6.5 IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSED FRAMEWORK FOR INTER-ORGANISATIONAL COMPETENCY DEVELOPMENT

Identifying and knowing a list of competencies and their indicators does not automatically result in their acquisition and mastery (Tubbs and Schulz 2006; Avelino *et al.* 2017), but it is an important starting point. Formal and informal platforms to develop new or refine existing competencies should be created and pursued (O'Brien and Robertson 2009:378), although, as noted by Allen (2009:42) in chapter four, leadership development involves a combination of planned and unplanned initiatives. The study concurs with Allen (2009:41-42) that though the outcomes of planned or unplanned initiatives may be predictable or unpredictable, resources should be invested into multiple leadership development mechanisms, instead of assuming that leadership will develop through what several cited participants in chapter five referred to as learning by observation (DG-2 2020), trial and error (DG-6 2020), osmosis (DG-7 2020), catch up as you go (DG-3 2020) and swim or sink (DG-4 2020). Nevertheless, leadership development through observation plus trial and error can form part of a "multi-faceted approach" (Allen 2009:42-43).

The processes of developing collective leadership competence, as alluded to in chapter four, include collective sense-making and utilisation of collective knowledge and collective identity creation (Boreham 2004; Bonotto and Bitencourt 2008) through dynamic interactions (Bonotto and Bitencourt 2008, Uhl-Bien and Marion 2011; Avelino *et al.* 2017). Other strategies include task and role rotation within the organisation or placement in other organisations and geographic boundaries (Bonotto and Bitencourt 2008; Hannah *et al.* 2011; Williams 2013; Beechler *et al.* 2004); game-based competency development (Covalciuc and Kerleguer 2019:2) as well as formal training, peer and expert mentoring, coaching, and assignment of challenging tasks (Allen 2009; Raelin 2017). The suggested approaches for collective leadership development are in line with the University of Cambridge's (2017) approach of dividing workplace experience, learning from others and structured or formal learning into the 70:20:10 learning ratio, as explained in section 3.3.1 of chapter three. In spite of the promotion of multiple strategies to leadership development, the results in chapter five allude to the lack of a systematic approach to leadership development within the G&A Cluster due to, amongst other factors, the lack of a meso level leadership competency

framework and the continued implementation of systems that reinforce departmental silos and individual leadership competence.

The study argues that at the elementary and intermediate level, the development of the listed competencies is primarily the responsibility of the (individual and intra-organisational) agents within the G&A Cluster. It is thus not surprising that some of the study's participants indicated that the competencies required at the inter-organisational level are also developed at the intra-organisational level to a limited degree because of differences between the intra- and inter-organisational environments. In addition, the G&A Cluster can also serve as a platform to develop elementary and intermediate competencies through exposing SMS members to the structure's dynamics, since this was found to be beneficial by some participants (DG-2 2020; DG-7 2020; DG-8 2020). The G&A Cluster as a collective can also play a role in the advancement and "compilation" (Hannah *et al.* 2011:218-219) of the members' competencies into dynamic individual and collective competences by ensuring dynamic interactions within the Cluster as well as dynamic feedback mechanisms between the Cluster and other clusters/stakeholders.

The direct and indirect role of the G&A Cluster in enhancing and developing competencies at the micro (intrapersonal and intra-organisational) and meso (G&A Cluster) level is affirmed by the Cluster's mandate, including the mandate of its successor – the GSCID Cluster, of ensuring the development of state capacity across the Public Service (macro level). Therefore, the study aligns itself with O'Brien and Robertson's (2009:378) view that organisational support for (intra- and inter-organisational) leadership development should include policy and systemic interventions such as the review and alignment of existing competency frameworks with future needs, as well as the alignment of performance management, career development and succession planning with the reviewed competency frameworks. In the context of this study, as emphasised in chapter five section 5.3.6.4, the interventions highlighted by O'Brien and Robertson (2009) form part of the G&A Cluster's mandate. As such, the proposed framework can enable the G&A Cluster to put measures in place to develop its collective leadership competences in a manner that would enable it to deliver on its system-wide leadership development mandate.

6.6 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the 23 inter-organisational leadership competencies that were proposed in chapter five were thoroughly analysed and categorised into cross-cutting values, technical knowledge, cognitive and social skills. Multiple competency interdependencies were also identified, thus serving as a basis to organise the competencies into six competency clusters. The competencies were also discussed in relation to CLT's three leadership functions, thus providing the basis to identify the relative strength of each competency in facilitating dynamic collective competence. In addition, the study's theoretical framework and insights from the empirical results were used to develop normative and operational principles for inter-organisational leadership. On the basis of the analysis, a high level complexity leadership competency framework for the G&A Cluster was proposed, and the leadership competency development implications of the proposed framework were outlined.

Chapter seven provides a summary of the study and further reflects on the implications of the study for collective leadership practice and research.

CHAPTER SEVEN: FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

7.1 INTRODUCTION

To address the overarching research question for the study, namely: *what leadership competencies should underpin a CAS such as the G&A Cluster in the South African Public Service?*, chapter six provided a synthesis of the literature review and empirical results, critiqued the results presented in chapter five in relation to the CAS approach and the three leadership functions that underpin CLT, and presented the outcome of an interdependency analysis of the competencies identified in chapter five. The synthesis, critique and inter-dependency analysis culminated in the articulation of principles for inter-organisational leadership and six competency clusters as part of developing a high level complexity leadership competency framework for the G&A Cluster. The implications of the proposed framework for inter-organisational leadership competency development were also outlined. Therefore, chapter seven concludes the study through providing an overview of the research orientation and context, as well as a reflective summary of the findings and conclusions made in each chapter in relation to the problem statement, research question, purpose and objectives. On the basis of the summary and reflections, the theoretical and practical contributions of the study are highlighted. The implications for inter-organisational leadership competency development and practice, in addition to recommendations for further research, are outlined.

7.2 RESEARCH ORIENTATION, PROBLEM STATEMENT AND DESIGN

Chapter one introduces the study through providing an overview of the theoretical orientation and contextual factors that underpin the already stated research question and research problem, namely: *the lack of complexity leadership competency framework to support the G&A Cluster as a CAS*. The problem statement and research question were influenced by concerns regarding the unevenness or absence of appropriate leadership competencies, behaviours and skills (DPME 2014) to make the government cluster system effective and the inadequacy of the Public Service SMS Competency Framework in supporting organisational and collective leadership competence in an inter-organisational structure such as the G&A Cluster due to its emphasis on individual generic competencies (DPSA 2014; PSC 2016). A brief

analysis of existing literature on public sector reforms and developments in leadership theory and practice led to the conclusion that the G&A Cluster, which is an IGR structure, exists within and coexists alongside the Public Service bureaucracy and other governance models (Rhodes1996; Agranoff 2017), thus leading to the conclusion that the G&A Cluster is an integral part of hybrid and complex organisational arrangements (Christensen and Laegreid 2010a) and a CAS (Dooley 1996; Lichtenstein and Plowman 2009; Uhl-Bien and Marion 2009) whose effectiveness require a different approach to leadership. Due to its integrative, collective and relational approach to leadership, CLT was adopted as an appropriate theoretical lens for the study, in spite of its newness (Avolio *et al*, 2009) and limited application in the public administration context. To address the research problem, question and purpose, five objectives were outlined and a predominantly qualitative, mixed methods research approach was adopted. Therefore, the findings and conclusions are summarised according to the objectives of the study.

7.3 SUMMARY OF AND REFLECTIONS ON RESEARCH FINDINGS

The summary and reflections are organised according to the five research objectives, and further aligned to chapters two to five of the study. The contribution of each chapter in response to the problem statement and research question and connections between the chapters are also highlighted.

7.3.1 Research objective one

The first objective of the study, which is addressed in chapter two, sought to describe the legislative and policy framework that underpins the South African government's coordination mechanisms, inclusive of the cluster system. Addressing this narrowly defined objective did not preclude the need to conceptualise the study within P(p)ublic A(a)dmistration due to, amongst other things, the need to clarify the orientation of the study within Public Administration and the centrality of coordination across various public administration reforms. Consequently, chapter two provides a broad overview of the evolving nature, scope as well as the incremental effects of various paradigms, reforms and frameworks on the complexity of P(p)ublic A(a)dmistration in the governance era. The analysis reveals that developments from TPA to NPM and NPG are characterised by nonlinear and overlapping transitions across prominent, modest and contested paradigms, reforms and frameworks as new paradigms, reforms and

frameworks attempt to remedy the weaknesses of and challenges created by old and/or existing paradigms, reforms and frameworks without necessarily abandoning their strengths. The analysis further demonstrates that cyclical reform processes have resulted in bureaucracy being embedded in democratic principles (Agranoff 2017:3,221) and also integrated into hybrid models that enable or require the coexistence of hierarchy with market and network forms of governance (Stoker 2006; Christensen and Laegreid 2010a; Rhodes 2017).

The analysis proceeds to create a link between the political, socio-economic and other contextual factors (Thornhill and Van Dijk 2010:97; Zalmanovitch 2014:1) that influence the complexity of public administration and the objectives of formal and informal coordination mechanisms in public administration globally and in South Africa. The findings justify the need to contextualise the study within the historical, political, legal and constitutional imperatives of IGR globally (Wright and Krane 1998; Tapscott 2001; Watts 2006; Newbold 2014), as well as the legislative and policy frameworks that underpin the South African government's cluster system and other coordination mechanisms. The contextual analysis enables the study to demonstrate a disjuncture between public administration practice and some of Wight's (1998:67) and Benton's (2018:16-17) IGR phases, as well as connections between some IGR phases and public administration reforms from the 1980s to date. The influence of connections between some IGR phases and public administration reform on the existence of hybrid organisational structures are also highlighted. The study argues that the centrality of coordination, integration, collaboration and networks to the objectives as well as the critical success factors of IGR and public administration reform in the governance era highlight further connections, implications for leadership practice and the need for more research on individual and collective leadership competencies in the 21st century, thus creating a link between objective one and objective two plus the research question.

7.3.2 Research objective two

The implications of P(p)ublic A(a)dmistration complexity and IGR on leadership practice are explored further in objective two, whose focus is to examine leadership theory and practice within the context of Public Administration as a discipline and practice. In spite of the discipline-specific focus of objective two, chapter three

commences with a broad analysis of the leadership field as a result of the limited contribution of public administration leadership literature to the broader leadership field and the lag of public administration literature in relation to integrative and collective leadership conceptions and practices (Raffel *et al.* 2009a:10; Ospina 2016:275,284) due to the dominance of hierarchical paradigms and leader-centric practices (Raelin 2010:xviii; Crosby and Bryson 2018:1265). Another contributing factor to the expanded scope of the literature review relates to the historic focus of public administration leadership literature on frontline officers plus executive political figures and the general disregard for top-level administrative leadership (Van Wart 2003:216; Raffel *et al.* 2009a:3), which is the focus of this study. Despite these weaknesses, the study recognises the contributions made in the area of network and collaborative leadership by scholars such as Agranoff (2007) and Vangen and Huxham (2010) and also concurs with Crosby and Bryson (2018:1267, 1277) that public leadership practitioners and scholars should be free to learn from other disciplines and fields.

Thus, an analysis of relevant literature that cuts across different disciplines confirms that the leadership field has evolved in response to the weaknesses of earlier theories and the inadequacy of leader-centric theories, models and practices in complex environments that are characterised by hybrid organisational and governance arrangements. The analysis in chapter three recognises the uniqueness and complexity of public administration due to its sensitivity to constitutional, socio-political and multiple accountability issues (Raffel *et al.* 2009a; Rhodes 2014; Broussine and Callahan 2016) and further highlights concerns regarding theory disintegration as well as construct proliferation and redundancy (Mango 2018; Day 2014; Banks *et al.* 2018). Nonetheless, the study concurs with several authors (Friedrich *et al.* 2011; Rhodes 2014; Storey *et al.* 2017) that construct proliferation emphasises an important conceptual shift from leader-centric to relational (Marion and Uhl-Bien 2001; Craps *et al.* 2019; Tourish 2019), collective (Raelin 2005; Ospina 2016; Denis *et al.* 2012), integrative (Lichtenstein *et al.* 2006; Crosby and Bryson 2018) and collaborative (Brookes 2007; Vangen and McGuire 2015; Van Wart 2015; Ospina 2016) leadership theories and approaches. Thus the analysis demonstrates the relevance of CLT for the study owing to the recognition of its relational, collective and integrative nature (Van Wart 2015:11; Ospina 2016:281; Sergi *et al.* 2017:44; Crosby and Bryson 2018:1271, 1275). Building on the analysis provided in chapter two, the analysis

highlights the implications of CLT and broader developments in the leadership field on leadership development and practice.

Due to the scarcity (Bryson and Crosby 2007; Raffel *et al.* 2009a; Ospina 2016) and fragmented state (Raelin 2005; Denis *et al.* 2012; Storey *et al.* 2017; Banks *et al.* 2018) of integrative and collective leadership literature in general and in the public sector, the analysis identifies a disjuncture between the discourse on collective leadership theory and leadership practice. Furthermore, chapter three pinpoints the divergence between the conceptual shift from intra-organisational to inter-organisational leadership, as well as the poor articulation of leadership competencies and implementation of leadership development programmes required to make collective leadership effective (Morse and Buss 2007; Hartley and Benington 2011; Van Wart 2013; Broussine and Callahan 2016). In spite of these weaknesses, some of the reviewed sources suggest several requisite competencies for leadership practice in complex environments. Thus, chapter three reiterates and expands on the list of competencies identified in chapter two and further contributes to the preliminary formulation of a tentative response to the research question and problem statement.

7.3.3 Research objective three

Objective three of the study, whose purpose is to discuss the role of leadership competency frameworks in an evolving public administration context, is addressed in chapter four. In addition to clarifying the difference and similarities between competence and competency, chapter four provides an overview of the CBM movement and the multiple uses of competencies across the HRM field (Spencer and Spencer 1993; Rodriguez *et al.* 2002; Ruben 2019), outlines the strengths and weaknesses of competency frameworks (Intagliata *et al.* 2000; Markus *et al.* 2005; Bolden and Gosling 2006), the widespread use of CBM in public administration (Getha-Taylor 2008; Mau 2009; Op de Beeck and Hondeghem 2010:14; OPM 2012; Virtanen 2000) and their extension to organisational leadership competence and competency (Mau 2009; O'Brien and Robertson 2009; OPM 2012; Müller-Seitz 2012).

Building on the weaknesses identified in chapter three, the analysis confirms the mismatch between collective leadership perspectives and practice (Bolden and Gosling 2006; Avelino *et al.* 2017) due to, amongst others, the lack of empirical,

systematic and integrated research on inter-organisational networks and collective leadership competency development (Popp *et al.* 2013) and the lack of a comprehensive competency list that is supported by scholars and practitioners (Van Wart 2003). The study emphasises the lack of synthesis of public leadership competencies (Van Wart 2003; Getha-Taylor 2008), the insufficient integration of public sector values and other ethical considerations in public sector frameworks (Virtanen 2000; Mau 2009), as well as the failure of existing training programmes to develop value competencies that are essential to the public sector due to difficulties in teaching the acquisition of public value competencies (Virtanen 2000).

Nonetheless, the study acknowledges that the weaknesses of competency frameworks and the identified gaps have contributed to the review of existing and/or development of new frameworks plus proposals for different but complementary competencies (Op de Beeck and Hondeghem 2010; Getha-Taylor *et al.* 2013) that are considered relevant for collective and complexity public sector leadership in the governance era. Analyses in this chapter demonstrate that the weaknesses, research limitations and the strengths and potential positive effect of CBM justify the need to review and expand on many public sector competency frameworks, as well as the study's proposal to develop a complexity leadership competency framework for the G&A Cluster. Despite the mentioned weaknesses and gaps, chapter four identifies several competencies that are considered relevant for inter-organisational leadership in public administration based mainly on theoretical analysis (Virtanen 2000; Beechler *et al.* 2004; Blandin 2007; Williams 2013; Steiner 2013; Chow *et al.* 2017), whereas few proposed competencies are derived from empirical studies (Getha-Taylor 2008).

7.3.4 Research objective four

The study's empirical results are presented and discussed in chapter five. Chapter five places emphasis on objective four, whose focus is on the analysis of leadership challenges and critical success factors that influence the effectiveness of the G&A Cluster and the role of complexity leadership in enhancing its effectiveness. Furthermore, chapter five explains in detail the methods and instruments used for primary data collection, the rationale for a slight deviation from the original plan and the data capturing and analysis processes.

To address objective four, chapter five relies on selected participants from the G&A Cluster to examine leadership perspectives and practice and to identify internal and external factors that enhance and/or inhibit inter-organisational leadership. The identified internal factors that underpin the G&A Cluster's performance include shared vision, commitment and collaborative environment; attendance of and alternate representation in meetings; agenda setting; top-down approach to and capacity constraints for policy implementation; persistence and reinforcement of silos; and effective project management, dedicated funding, constant monitoring and regular reporting. Chapter five further identifies the following external factors that underpin the G&A Cluster's performance: politics and macro level government decisions; instability at the political-administrative interface; and socio-economic climate, whereas the composition of the G&A Cluster structure is not regarded as a major determinant for the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of the G&A Cluster.

In line with the findings made in chapters three and four, chapter five confirms the existence of contradictions between the participants' perspectives of inter-organisational leadership, which cuts across the "leader-centric", "relational/situation focused" and "collective" leadership theories and approaches, and the participants' description of their experience of a predominantly hierarchical, leader-centric and positional power-based leadership. The contradictions illustrate the need for a meso level complexity leadership competency framework. Chapter five also identifies and discusses 25 competencies for inter-organisational leadership and further justifies the exclusion of two competencies from the final list. The empirical results and analysis also show that intra- and inter-organisational competencies can be developed and enhanced through active participation in relevant intra- and inter-organisational structures, provided the regulatory structures, inclusive of mental and social processes, are conducive and characterised by, amongst others, commitment, openness, trust, respect, maturity, flexibility and tolerance for diversity and experimentation.

The results also demonstrate that inter-organisational leadership development cannot be left to chance because unstructured approaches result in some of the reported challenges, frustrations and unevenness in leadership competence amongst G&A Cluster members. The conclusions made from the empirical results are in line with the

assertion that leadership is a complex process and technical competence that should not be rushed (Allen 2009; Ernst and Chrobot-Mason 2011; Raelin 2017), thus confirming the need for a complexity leadership competency framework and a systematic approach to leadership competency development. Overall, the empirical results support the study's theoretical statements and contribute to the formulation of a preliminary empirical response to the research question.

7.3.5 Research objective five

Chapter xix uses the empirical results as a basis to address objective five, whose focus is to propose the development of a complexity leadership competency framework for the G&A Cluster. The proposals, results and conclusions that emanate from the literature review and empirical results are critically analysed and synthesised in relation to the CAS approach and CLT's underlying leadership functions. This informs the articulation of seven context specific, but adaptable, principles to operationalise inter-organisational leadership at the G&A Cluster level. In response to the overarching research question, an inter-dependency analysis of the 23 inter-organisational leadership competencies identified in chapter five is conducted and leads to the categorisation of the competencies into cross-cutting values, technical knowledge, cognitive and social skills. While the categorisation served as a useful tool to enhance understanding, it also resulted in the categorisation of some competencies into multiple groups, thus highlighting the need for further analysis.

Reflections on the categorisation of competencies and further analysis of interdependencies amongst competencies served as a basis to organise the competencies into six competency clusters, namely: values orientation; disciplined-agile behaviour; dynamic interactions and communication; expansive intra-organisational knowledge and skills; cognitive complexity; and boundary spanning knowledge and experience. The six competencies constitute the study's response to the research question. Together with the seven principles for inter-organisational leadership, the six competencies provide a theoretical response to the problem statement. In the absence of a deliberate process to develop inter-organisational leadership competencies through a combination of formal and informal processes, some of which are briefly mentioned in chapter six, the proposed framework serves as a partial practical response to the problem statement. While leadership competency

development, as in training and development, is not the core focus of the study, the importance of adopting a systematic approach to leadership competency development is emphasised.

7.4 CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE

Having articulated the need and rationale for the study as well as the leadership competency implications of P(p)ublic A(a)dministration reforms, IGR developments and leadership evolution from leader-centric to collective and hybrid forms of leadership, the study identifies several gaps. These relate to the scarcity of literature to guide the development of collective leadership practice especially in inter-organisational arrangements; CBM's slow progress in dealing with collective leadership practice; reliance on theoretical analysis as the basis to propose competencies for complexity leadership; and the limited application of CLT in Public Administration, especially in formal or semi-formal inter-organisational arrangements. Therefore, the study contributes towards knowledge and practice in several ways.

The first contribution to knowledge is achieved through providing an empirical lens to the dynamics of collective leadership and applying CLT in a formal or semi-formal inter-organisational government structure. Secondly, the study contributes towards the advancement of CBM through proposing and developing the rationale, purpose, competency clusters and conditions for a meso level leadership competency framework for inter-organisational arrangements in a manner that illustrates the continuum between intra- and inter-organisational leadership. A third contribution is with regard to the application of CLT in P(p)ublic A(a)dministration and improved understanding of CLT's leadership functions by clarifying its competency dimensions. In particular, the study demonstrates that the two competency clusters relating to disciplined-agile behaviour as well as dynamic interactions and communication are more aligned with the processual, relational and interactive nature of CLT, whereas the four competency clusters relating to values, technical knowledge and expertise and cognitive complexity are taken for granted and not clearly articulated in CLT.

7.5 IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR LEADERSHIP PRACTICE AND COMPETENCY DEVELOPMENT

The proposed framework for inter-organisational leadership is not put forward as a “holy-grail” (Williams 2013:28; Marijani 2017:180) for the G&A Cluster’s challenges or for its successor (the GSCID Cluster), because it is developed at a high level and is not informed by the perspectives of all G&A Cluster members. Although some participants specifically alluded to the cluster’s contribution and challenges in addressing local government issues, the study does not incorporate perspectives from the representative(s) of SALGA and it cannot be assumed that the issues raised by non-SALGA senior managers constitute SALGA’s perspective. Besides, the framework has not been subjected to a broader consultation process with all relevant core and non-core cluster members (including technical working group and ministerial cluster members) in line with the BEI, criterion sampling and benchmarking methodologies (McClellan 1973; Spencer and Spencer 1993; Getha-Taylor 2008). Extensive consultation will ensure a holistic perspective of the factors that enhance or inhibit the cluster’s operations and performance and will also enhance the proposed framework’s rigour, relevance and synergy with all G&A Cluster structures. These limitations suggest that the proposed competencies and framework cannot be wholly implemented without considering perspectives from all stakeholders, including SALGA’s representatives, and the impact thereof on the required competencies.

Notwithstanding the above, extant literature and the empirical results have demonstrated that inter-organisational leadership cannot be left to chance. Therefore, in the interim the proposed inter-organisational leadership competency framework can serve as the basis to review the existing SMS Competency Framework to ensure alignment between the existing and proposed frameworks, whilst the inter-organisational leadership framework is still being refined. As part of the review, the proposed principles for inter-organisational leadership should be adapted and implemented at the intra-organisational level to create a meso level learning platform for shared responsibility (Sanders 2014:141) and collective leadership at the inter-organisational level.

Furthermore, the empirical results demonstrate that the disjuncture between participants’ leadership perspectives and practice is influenced by the prevalence of

leader-centric approaches at the intra- and inter-organisation levels. In order to address this weakness and to ensure alignment between collective leadership perspectives and practice, especially at the inter-organisational level, it is essential to create a new mind-set” for leadership practice (Eckert *et al.* 2014:1) by exposing senior managers to collective, complexity and collaborative leadership theories, frameworks and documented practices through a combination of formal and informal leadership development platforms. After all, continuous learning is recognised as a key driver for individual leadership evolution by participants and it is an essential requirement for effective leadership in a continuously changing environment (Dalakoura 2010:435; Broussine and Callahan 2016:496). Without continuous learning, leadership can derail, stall, hit a plateau (Eckert and Rweyongoza 2015:9) and lead to individual and organisational failure (Sanders 2014:139).

7.6 LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Focus on the technical G&A Cluster was adequate for the purpose of this study, as already stated, it does not provide a holistic perspective about the complexity of the G&A Cluster and the overall cluster system. To develop a holistic perspective, studies should be conducted in other clusters using a combination of interviews, surveys and focus groups to interrogate and expand on the findings from this study. The results of such studies will enable government to understand the dynamics of leadership practice and competence across all clusters and to use the knowledge to improve the performance of the cluster system without introducing mechanisms that will stifle interactions and the dynamism and uniqueness of each cluster.

There is also a need for multi-level research to investigate how distributed or non-distributed leadership practices at the intra-organisational level impacts on inter-organisational leadership practices and dynamics. The research should focus on aspects of individual and collective leadership across all G&A Cluster structures, that is, the technical working group, the technical/FOSAD cluster and the ministerial cluster. This is informed by the study’s conclusion, as informed by several cited sources and participants, that intra- and inter-organisational leadership are interrelated and distributed leadership at the intra-organisational level is a prerequisite for shared leadership at the inter-organisational level.

7.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter concludes the study by providing a reflective overview of what was done in each chapter and why. The overview illustrates how the findings and conclusions from the literature review and the empirical results and proposed framework have contributed to the achievement of the research objectives, the articulation of six competency clusters and the development of a high-level complexity leadership competency framework in response to the research question and problem statement. The contributions, implications for practice and recommendations for further research are also presented whilst taking into account the limitations of the study. For now, the study has led the researcher to conclude that in an inter-organisational CAS such as the G&A Cluster, leadership is an aggregation and simultaneous integration of self-leadership plus relational influence. The researcher hopes that the study will contribute to further reflections on the dynamics of collective and complexity leadership practice in inter-organisational arrangements and improvements in the conceptualisation and implementation of CBM and leadership development programmes.

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APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What, in your opinion, makes leadership an important competence for senior managers in the Public Service?
2. How would you describe your leadership style and how would other people (such as peers, subordinates and superiors) describe it?
3. How has your leadership style evolved over the years?
 - (a) What factors influenced the evolution of your leadership style?
4. Please tell me a bit about your involvement in the G&A Cluster.
5. How much of your time is devoted to inter-organisational activities within the G&A Cluster and how does the Cluster contribute towards your department/province's ability to deliver on its mandate?
 - (a) What would have been the results without the Cluster?
6. Please provide one or two examples of successful G&A Cluster programmes or initiatives, which were led by other departments/provinces.
7. What made these programmes successful?
8. How did leadership manifest during the implementation of these successful programmes?
9. In which areas did the G&A Cluster perform poorly?
10. What, in your opinion, was the cause of this poor performance?
11. How did the leadership of the G&A Cluster respond to the poor performance?
12. Where is the G&A Cluster leadership located and why do you say that?
 - (a) Is the Cluster "leaderless", individually led or collectively led?
 - (b) Given that the G&A Cluster has two co-chairs, what is the (leadership) role of the co-chairs in relation to the entire G&A Cluster leadership?
13. How does intra-organisational (i.e. departmental) leadership influence inter-organisational leadership?
14. What competencies are required for leading an inter-organisational structure such as the G&A Cluster?
 - (a) Give examples of the competencies that differentiate intra-organisational from inter-organisational leadership.
 - (b) What collective leadership competencies are required to make the Cluster effective?

15. What guidance and support was given to DG's (and DDG's) to operate effectively in the Cluster system?
 - (a) If none, what guidance and support would be appropriate and how should it be provided?
16. What is your opinion of the influence of the SMS Competency Framework on intra-organisational and inter-organisational leadership?
17. What external forces had an influence on the leadership of the G&A Cluster?
18. What would be the ideal structuring of the G&A Cluster to ensure effective collective leadership?

APPENDIX B: SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Instructions

Complete the survey by ticking the appropriate box, ranking some responses, and completing, in essay form, the open-ended questions. Please note that even though the G&A Cluster has been renamed the Governance, State Capacity and Institutional Development Cluster, focus is on lessons, experiences and insights from the G&A Cluster, hence reference is made to the G&A Cluster.

1. Biographical information

1.1 Please indicate your current designation by ticking the appropriate box.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Director-General
<input type="checkbox"/>	Deputy Director-General
<input type="checkbox"/>	Chief Director

1.2 Please indicate your gender by ticking the appropriate box.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Female	<input type="checkbox"/>	Male	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	

1.3 In which sphere of government is the department you currently work for located?

<input type="checkbox"/>	National
<input type="checkbox"/>	Provincial

1.4 How long have you served as a DG/DDG/CD in one or several departments that comprise the G&A Cluster?

<input type="checkbox"/>	1-3 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	4-5 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	6-8 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	9-10 years	<input type="checkbox"/>	11 years <i>plus</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	

1.5 Indicate your involvement with the G&A Cluster by ticking yes, no or not applicable to the statements.

	Yes	No	Not applicable
a. I attend all G&A Cluster meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. I only attend G&A Cluster meetings when delegated to attend.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. I prioritise attendance of the G&A Cluster meetings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

d. Time permitting, I attend G&A Cluster meetings			
e. I attend G&A Cluster meetings only when the agenda deals with issues relating to my department / province.			

1.6 If you have ticked **not applicable** in all areas in question 1.5 above, does it mean you have never attended or participated in the G&A Cluster meetings?

Yes	No

2. Leadership practice

2.1 Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with this statement: *Leadership is an important competence for senior managers in the Public Service.*

Strongly Agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree

2.2 Indicate the relative importance of the following statements based on your perception of leadership – *and you may not have two or more statements designated the same.*

	Extremely important	Very important	Moderately important	Slightly important	Not important
a. Leadership is a position of formal authority					
b. Leadership is an inborn trait such as intelligence, integrity and self-confidence that differentiate superior from average performance					
c. Leadership is a relational and a social influence process aimed at achieving results					
d. Leadership is an individual's ability to motivate and influence followers to achieve results					
e. Leadership is a collaborative response to a challenge by everyone					

2.3 Select **three (3) statements only** that describe your leadership.

	Always	Often	Sometimes
a. Bureaucratic - rules based approach to problem solving and decision-making			
b. Laissez-faire - maximum delegation to allow people to work with minimum or no interference			
c. Democratic - participative and consultative approach to problem solving and decision-making			
d. Shared/collective - plural and non-hierarchical approach to problem solving and decision-making			
e. Autocratic - significant control and one-way decision-making by the leader or boss without engagement			

2.4 Select **three (3) statements only** that characterise the leadership of the G&A Cluster and indicate the frequency of the selected leadership styles.

	Always	Often	Sometimes
a. The G&A Cluster leadership is bureaucratic			
b. The G&A Cluster leadership is collegial / distributed			
c. The G&A leadership is democratic			
d. The G&A leadership is collaborative			
e. The G&A leadership is autocratic			

2.5 On a scale of 1-10 (*1 being minimal and 10 being extremely high*), how does the G&A Cluster contribute towards your department's or province's ability to deliver on its mandate?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

2.6 Please provide one or two examples of successful G&A Cluster programmes or initiatives, which were led **by other** departments/provinces.

2.7 How did leadership manifest during the implementation of these successful programmes?

--

2.8 In which areas did the G&A Cluster perform poorly?

--

2.9 How did the leadership of the G&A Cluster respond to the poor performance?

--

2.10 Indicate your perception of the G&A Cluster leadership responsibility by agreeing or disagreeing with the following statements.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
a. The leadership of the G&A Cluster is the responsibility of DGs of both coordinating departments.					
b. The leadership of the G&A Cluster is the responsibility of Executive Authorities of all Cluster departments.					
c. The leadership of the G&A Cluster is the responsibility of all Cluster members.					
d. The leadership of the G&A Cluster is the responsibility of the DG in The Presidency.					
e. The leadership of the G&A Cluster is the responsibility of the Executive Authorities of the coordinating departments.					

2.11 Was the G&A Cluster properly structured and coordinated to enhance its leadership capacity?

Yes	No	Not sure

2.12 If not, how was the G&A Cluster supposed to be structured and coordinated to enhance its leadership capacity?

--

2.13 Indicate the level of importance of competencies required to ensure effective leadership in an *inter-organisational* structure such as the G&A Cluster.

	Extremely important	Very important	Moderately important	Slightly important	Not important
a. Cognitive intelligence					
b. Subject matter knowledge / technical expertise					
c. Strategic and analytical thinking					
d. Creativity and innovation					
e. Self-leadership and self-awareness					
f. Interpersonal/relational skills (e.g. open communication, persuasion, negotiation, trust, respect, tolerance for diversity)					
g. Delegation of authority					
h. Organisational management experience					
i. Administrative (and regulatory) effectiveness					
j. Individual and organisational adaptive capacity					
k. Political intelligence and constitutional awareness,					
l. Collaborative / boundary spanning capacity					
m. Understanding of the broader context					
n. Diplomacy and decisiveness					
o. Prudence and wisdom					
p. Courage and persistence					
q. Influence over internal and external stakeholders					
r. Multifaceted forms of accountability					
s. Values-based leadership (e.g. ethics, integrity, honesty, humility, service commitment)					
t. Continuous learning					

2.14 Please indicate if the competencies you identified in question 2.13 above as extremely important and very important to ensure effective inter-organisational relationship are

similar or different from those required for *intra-organisational* (i.e. single department/institution) leadership.

Similar	Partly similar	Different

2.15 Please elaborate upon your selected response to question 2.14 above.

2.16 Based on your responses to questions 2.13 and 2.14 above, indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements.

	Strongly agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
a. The SMS Competency Framework has ensured effective departmental leadership.					
b. The SMS Competency Framework has ensured effective inter-organisational leadership of the G&A Cluster					

2.17 What guidance and support was given to DG's and DDG's to operate effectively in the Cluster system?

2.18 What external forces have an influence on the leadership of the G&A Cluster and how?

2.19 Please provide additional information and comments you would like to bring to the attention of the researcher regarding inter-organisational leadership.

Thank you for completing the survey.

APPENDIX C: PERMISSION TO ACCESS G&A CLUSTER MEMBERS



THE PRESIDENCY: REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA
Private Bag X 1000, Pretoria, 000 1

Ms Kholofelo Sedibe
Email: Kholofelododo@gmail.com

Dear Ms Sedibe

APPROVAL GRANTED TO ACCESS DIRECTORS-GENERAL AND DEPUTY DIRECTORS-GENERAL WITHIN THE G&A CLUSTER FOR YOUR PhD STUDIES

In response to the request letter dated 29 January 2020, permission is hereby granted for you to access Directors-General (DGs) and Deputy Directors-General (DDGs) within G&A Cluster.

In line with the University's Codes of Research Ethics, your commitment to protect the confidentiality and identity of DGs and DDGs who will agree to participate throughout your study is essential.

Good luck with your studies, and on behalf of the Forum of South African Directors-General, we look forward to reading your completed thesis.

With my best wishes


Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Cassius Lubisi'.

R. CASSIUS LUBISI, PhD
DIRECTOR-GENERAL AND SECRETARY OF THE CABINET
DATE: 19/02/2020

APPENDIX D: ETHICAL CLEARANCE BY THE UNIVERSITY

RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE


UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences

Amendment Approval Certificate

29 April 2020

Ms KG Sedibe
Department: School of Public Man + Admin

Dear Ms KG Sedibe

The amendments to the research project described below served before this committee on:
17 April 2020

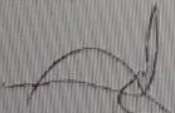
Protocol No:	EMS162/19
Principal researcher:	Ms KG Sedibe
Research title:	Developing a complexity leadership competency framework for the Governance and Administration Cluster of the South African Public Service
Student/Staff No:	18346571
Degree:	Doctoral
Supervisor/Promoter:	Prof HG van Dijk
Department:	School of Public Man + Admin

The decision by the committee is reflected below:

Decision:	Approved
Conditions (if applicable):	Phase 2 of project is approved
Period of approval:	2019-10-01 - 2020-09-30

We wish you success with the project.

Sincerely


pp PROF JA NEL
CHAIR: COMMITTEE FOR RESEARCH ETHICS

Fakulteit Ekonomiese en Bestuurswetenskappe
Lefapha la Disaense tsa Ekonomi le Taolo

APPENDIX E: ATLAS.ti CODES AND THEMES

Clarification Note: Numbering was used to organise related codes together, thus resulting in some numbers being deleted and/or designated with a combination of number and alphabetic letters when the codes were merged and or split during the coding and recoding process. In addition, since the *Atlas.ti* outputs captured mainly qualitative responses from the interviews and survey, some of the sub-themes and themes were also reorganised or integrated during the analysis and writing process.

CODE NAMES AS ORGANISED IN ATLAS.ti	EXTRACTED QUOTES	INITIAL SUB-THEMES	INITIAL THEMES
01 G&A involvement- HOD of a provincial department	1	Participant's various modes of exposure to the G&A Cluster	Participant's profile and G&A Cluster involvement
01 Core member of the cluster	7		
01 Exposure as CD	3		
01 Exposure as DDG	3		
02 Active participation	10		
02 G&A commitment - participation in general	8	Reasons for participation in G&A Cluster	
02 Limited due to leadership instability	1		
02 Responsibility to strengthen cluster	1		
021 Articulate and share a vision	1	Significance and role of leadership in the Public Service and reasons	Public Service leadership and leadership manifestation in the G&A Cluster
021 Being able to discern legal duties and discharge them	1		
021 Being exemplary and appreciative of others	1		
021 Gives direction to an organisation	2		
021 Glue that holds an organisation	1		
021 Lead-manage people and manager other resources	5		
021 Leadership is about inspiring and motivating	1		
021 Provide strategic direction	1		

CODE NAMES AS ORGANISED IN ATLAS.ti	EXTRACTED QUOTES	INITIAL SUB-THEMES	INITIAL THEMES
024 Adaptive	2	Interview participant's descriptions of their personal leadership styles	Individual leadership styles and perceived leadership styles by others
024 Combination of styles	2		
024 Open minded	3		
024 Participative linked with situational	3		
024 Participatory and empowering	1		
024 Situational - adapt to different environments	6		
024 Soft touch leadership	1		
027 A bit abrasive	1	Interview participant's views of how others are likely to describe their personal leadership styles	
027 Aligned to adaptive style	1		
027 Assertive and open to persuasion	3		
027 Bold and courageous	1		
027 Diplomatic - reach amicable solutions through engagement	1		
027 Operational by those who want close monitoring	1		
027 Participatory and empowering	1		
027 Resourceful and helpful	2		
027 Supportive	2		
027 Transformative	1		
0270 - evolution influenced by many factors	8	Interview participant's descriptions of the factors that contributed to the evaluation of their leadership styles	
0270 - leadership evolution led to a combination of styles	2		
0270 - leadership evolution led to enhancement of style	1		
0271 - Reason for evolution - Appreciation of different strengths	2		
0271 - Reason for evolution - Attending training	1		
0271 - Reason for evolution - Became adept - experience	1		
0271 - Reason for evolution - have mellowed due to experience	1		

CODE NAMES AS ORGANISED IN ATLAS.ti	EXTRACTED QUOTES	INITIAL SUB-THEMES	INITIAL THEMES	
0271 - Reason for evolution - Learning from other people and leaders	4			
0271 - Reason for evolution - Maturity - self-awareness, understanding and tolerance for hierarchy	5			
0271 - Reason for evolution - Reading books	2			
0271 - Reason for evolution - Transition from managing files	1			
0271 - Reason for evolution - Transition from small to big organisation	1			
13 a Contribution to programme and institutional/departmental development	4	Multi-level contributions of the G&A Cluster to performance	The cluster system and the G&A Cluster's contribution to improved performance	
13 a Contribution to system-wide enhancement	4			
13 Create exposure for individual growth and development	5			
13 a Enable provincial perspective on issues addressed	4	Role of the cluster system		
13 a Excellent on transversal issues	3			
13 a Processing of policy documents	2			
13 a Secure buy-in from cluster members	3			
13 b G&A limited contribution	6			
13 a A mechanisms to ensure coordination	4			
14 Successful G&A programmes - overall	54	G&A Cluster 's successful and partially successful programmes		
15a CF that EI - Coordinated planning	1	Critical factors that enhance or inhibit the G&A Cluster's performance (<i>link to factors contributing to poor performance</i>)		Internal factors that underpin the G&A Cluster's Performance
15a CF that EI - Agenda setting process and approach	1			
15a CF that EI - Attendance of and alternate representation	5			
15a CF that EI - Collaboration	4			
15a CF that EI - Common - shared Vision	3			
15a CF that EI - Dedicated funding for programmes	1			

CODE NAMES AS ORGANISED IN ATLAS.ti	EXTRACTED QUOTES	INITIAL SUB-THEMES	INITIAL THEMES
15a CF that EI - Frankness and Openness	3		
15a CF that EI - Regular reporting to Cabinet	4		
15a CF that EI - Secured buy-in from stakeholders	2		
15a CF that EI - Successful policy coordination	1		
16 0 Leadership in successful programmes - overall	41	Leadership in areas of complete and partial success	Leadership influence on the G&A Cluster's performance
16 1 Faciliate collaboration	1		
16 1 Practical experience	3		
16 1 Share and learn from experiences	3		
16 1 Share vision and commitment	1		
17 a Areas of poor performance Instability of chairperson and departmental leadership	4	G&A Cluster 's overall and specific areas of poor performance	
17 a Areas of poor performance - Interface with local government	5		
17 a Areas of poor performance - Capacity of the state	4		
17 a Areas of poor performance - dealing with corruption and other governance issues	3		
17 a Areas of poor performance - not sure	1		
17 a Areas poor performance areas	38		
17 b Factors leading to poor performance - Lack of implementation capacity and skills	5	Factors that lead to poor performance	Internal factors that underpin the G&A Cluster's Performance
17 b Factors leading to poor performance – Agenda-driven	1		
17 b Factors leading to poor performance - Complex issues that are beyond the cluster	9		
17 b Factors leading to poor performance - Domination by some departments	2		

CODE NAMES AS ORGANISED IN ATLAS.ti	EXTRACTED QUOTES	INITIAL SUB-THEMES	INITIAL THEMES	
17 b Factors leading to poor performance - People bring personal issues	1			
17 b Factors leading to poor performance - PMDS is individually-focussed	2			
17 b Factors leading to poor performance - Poor and/or inconsistent attendance	6			
17 b Factors leading to poor performance - silo approaches	2			
18a Leadership response to G&A poor performance areas	49			
18b Proposal for improvement - Prioritise refined mandate and name of cluster changed	3	Leadership manifestation in areas of poor performance	Leadership influence on the G&A Cluster's performance	
18b Proposal for improvement - Start initiatives or interventions	1			
18b Proposal for improvement - Very ordinary/ poor	2			
19a a Location of G&A administration leadership - overall	8			
19a The coordinating departments	7	Interview participant's perceptions of administration leadership for the G&A Cluster	Leadership responsibility for the G&A Cluster	
19a The Presidency and DPSA	3			
19b a Location of G&A substantive leadership - overall	11			
19b All cluster members	9	Interview participant's perceptions of substantive leadership for the G&A Cluster		
19b Coordinating departments	1			
19b Key national departments	3			
19b Presidency	4			
20 a Intra inter-org influence - Departments elevate issues	6	Mechanisms to facilitate the relationship between intra- and inter-organisational competencies		Inter-organisational leadership practice and competencies
20 b Intra- Inter-org influence - Collective wisdom of departments/provinces	13			
20 c Intra inter-org influence - Individual intra-org experience	19			
20 d Intra inter-org influence - Exemplary leadership from departmental level	1			
20 x Other comments irt intra-inter organisational complexity	7			

CODE NAMES AS ORGANISED IN ATLAS.ti	EXTRACTED QUOTES	INITIAL SUB-THEMES	INITIAL THEMES
21 a Required IO competencies - Team / collaborative leadership	6	Competencies for inter-organisational (IO) leadership identified by participants	
21 c Required IO competencies - Inter-organisational collaboration	3		
21 d Required IO competencies - Boundary spanning perspective	4		
21 e Required IO competencies - Effective political administrative leadership	2		
21 f Required IO competencies - Stakeholder management	4		
21 g Required IO competencies - Mediation and conflict resolution	4		
21 h Required IO competencies - Adaptable and flexible	5		
21 i Required IO competencies - Communication	4		
21 j Required IO competencies - Interpersonal skills	4		
21 k Required IO competencies - Vision / Visionary	2		
21 l Required IO competencies - Problem solving	2		
21 m Required IO competencies – Values-driven leadership	8		
21 n Required IO competencies - Technical expertise - content subject matter - substance	8		
21 o Required IO Competencies - Lifelong-continuous learning	3		
21 p Required IO Competencies - Systems thinking	1		
21 q Required IO Competencies - Foresight	3		
21 r Required IO Competencies - Creativity and Innovation	6		
21 s Required IO Competencies - Diligence	1		
21 t Required IO Competencies - Inspires / inspirational / motivation	1		
21 u Required IO Competencies - ICT knowledge	1		
21 v Required IO Competencies - Economic knowledge	1		

CODE NAMES AS ORGANISED IN ATLAS.ti	EXTRACTED QUOTES	INITIAL SUB-THEMES	INITIAL THEMES
21 w Required IO Competencies - Emotional intelligence self-awareness self-knowledge	3		
21 x Required IO Competencies - Strategic planning	1		
21 y Required IO Competencies - Respect and compliance with prescripts	2		
21 z Required IO Competencies - Strategic thinking	2		
21 zzz Required IO Competencies - Commitment and responsibility	1		
21 zzzz General comment: required competencies for IO leadership	3		
21 zzzzz Reasons - Different - intra-/inter-organisational competencies	4	Relationship between intra- and inter-organisational competencies	
21 zzzzz Reasons - Partly similar - intra-/inter-organisational competencies	15		
21 zzzzz Reasons - Similar: Intra-/inter-organisational competencies	28		
22a How guidance was provided - Assistance provided at the level of organisation	1	Types of support and guidance provided	Support and guidance to ensure effective participation in the G&A Cluster
22a How support was provided - Good terms of reference	1		
22a How support was provided - Learning through observation	3		
22a Limited support and guidance	2	Provision of support and guidance to ensure effective participation in the G&A Cluster	
22a No support - it is taken for granted	7		
22a Support and guidance is provided	1		
22a z mechanisms used by DG to guide and support SMS members	3		
22b a Proposals for support and guidance - overall	7		
22b Continuous leadership/professional development	1	Proposal for required guidance and support to facilitate effective participation in the G&A Cluster	
22b Coordination of leadership development	1		
22b Executive induction	1		

CODE NAMES AS ORGANISED IN ATLAS.ti	EXTRACTED QUOTES	INITIAL SUB-THEMES	INITIAL THEMES
22b Formal platform for DG to share experience	1		
22b Guide or manual	3		
22b Participate in conferences and workshops	1		
23 Implications for lack of G&A guidance and support	1		
24 a SMS Competency Framework - Worked at the organisational level	5	Influence of the SMS Competency Framework on intra-and inter-organisational and challenges	Inter-organisational leadership practice and competencies
24 a SMS Competency Framework - Influence at personal level	4		
24 a SMS Competency Framework - Limited or no coordinated process to develop competencies	3		
24 b SMS Competency Framework challenges and weaknesses	7		
26 a Macro-level government decisions	3	External factors/forces that influence the G&A Cluster's performance	External factors that underpin the G&A Cluster's performance
26 b Changes at political (and administrative) level	12		
26 bb Politics / Ruling party policy changes	10		
26 c Cabinet and its sub-committees	18		
26 d PCC / Presidential concerns and pronouncements	3		
26 e DG in the Presidency	2		
26 f Failure to use NSG optimally (internal)	1		
26 h Financial constraints / economic climate	5		
26 i Inadequacy of HET training programmes	1		
26 j Time constraints and workload	7		
26 xx Other G&A external influence forces/factors - comments	17		
27 01 G&A structuring - adequate	14	G&A Cluster structuring	G&A Cluster structuring and optimisation
27 02 G&A structuring - partly adequate - need improvement	2		
27 03 G&A structuring - not adequate / not sure	12		

CODE NAMES AS ORGANISED IN ATLAS.ti	EXTRACTED QUOTES	INITIAL SUB-THEMES	INITIAL THEMES
27 a Develop Terms of Reference	7	Proposals to enhance the performance of the G&A Cluster	G&A Cluster structuring and optimisation
27 b G&A representation and membership to be expanded	9		
27 c G&A sub-structures - to be created	3		
27 d Operationalise Provincial equivalent of G&A	2		
27 e Encourage municipal participation in provincial G&A	3		
27 f Diversify membership – SOEs, Unions etc	3		
27 g Department collective capacity - develop and optimise	1		
27 h Re-engineer and reorganise Cluster	4		
27 i Capacitate and strengthen working group	2		
28 a Share information with staff	1		
28 b DG in OtP to share with province	1		
28 c Department to provide feedback to G&A	1		
28 d Regular attendance of provincial DGs	1		
TOTALS:	831		