

**EXPLORING LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES OF SENIOR MANAGEMENT
SERVICE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN PUBLIC SERVICE**

BY

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DECLARATION

I, Khuliso Kennedy Maimela, hereby declare that this thesis for the (Doctor of Administration) degree in (Public Administration) titled "Exploring Leadership Competencies of Senior Management Service of the South African Public Service.". submitted to the (Department of Public and Development Administration) at the University of Venda has not been submitted previously for any degree at this or another university. It is original in design and execution, and all reference material contained therein has been duly acknowledged.

Student Signature:



Date: 14 February 2025

DEDICATION

Finally, a dedication. I would like to dedicate this achievement to two thoughtful and generous souls, my mother (Grace Maimela) and father (Ezekiel Maimela), both deceased. Throughout time, they inspired me to seek greatness and “leave footprints in the sands of times”. I fondly bestow this emphatic work to my late Mom and Dad.

I express a deep sense of longing and grief, signifying that I miss my deceased elder brothers, Hayward and Manasseh Maimela who would have been looking at this remarkable work and saying, "Well done mfowethu".

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My dedication will not be complete without rightfully mentioning the continued embodiment of my lovely wife Sandra Maimela and the "apple of my eye" God-given kids, Makulana Kennedyjr and Khuliso Kensandra Maimela in my quest to finally complete my studies.

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore the literature on leadership competencies of the Senior Management Service (SMS) of the South African public service by incorporating international best practices from selected countries. The thesis focused on the challenges confronting members of the South African SMS and also on the regulatory frameworks underpinning leadership development in the South African public service. The study also focused on the leadership theories and leadership styles underpinning leadership competencies in the public service. The research determined whether it is possible to align the agile leadership model to the public service leadership competency model. To address the main aim of the study and the underlying research problem, a non-empirical approach was adopted. This research adopted a qualitative research method using scholarly literature. The post-positivist research paradigm was utilised. The findings of the study are that the competencies identified in the SMS Competency Framework (CF) do not adequately prepare public servants to perform their duties effectively in the networked governance context, that SMS members are failing to attend training due to operational requirements, that competency assessments results are not made available to SMS members, that assessment results are not a consideration when deciding on the appointment of a candidate, that departments experience financial constraints for financing the resources needed to implement CFs and that coaching and mentorship in the public service is not yet formalised. The study recommends that the directive on the implementation of competency based assessments for members of the Senior Management Service (SMS) in the public service, as amended (Minister for the public service and administration, in terms of chapter 4, part II (D) and chapter 4, part IV of the public service Regulations, 2001) be reviewed and, assessment results to be a consideration when making appointment decision for SMS posts, departments to partner with Public Sector Education and Training Authority (PSETA) to solicit financial support for SMS training/development where appropriate budget should be reserved specifically for competency related training interventions, introduce stringent measures to stop training budgets from being shifted to other needs should be introduced, departments to formalise senior management mentorship programme in order to address the identified competency gaps and departments to use online leadership programmes offered by the National School of Government (NSG) and other training institutions.

For researchers, the findings can add to leadership competency theories, especially in the public service. For policymakers, the findings can form a solid foundation that they can rely on to work out public policies for leadership development in the South African public service. For Public Administration, the findings will contribute to the development of the body of knowledge of the discipline of Public Administration. Further studies are recommended towards understanding the challenges confronting SMS members in the implementation of competency frameworks, and the determination of the effectiveness of competency frameworks. The study is limited to SMS members in the South African public service.

KEYWORDS: Leadership, Competence, Leadership Competence, Agile Leadership, Senior Management Service, Public Service, New Public Service, Public Administration and New Public Management.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

Abbreviation / Acronym	Description
AAPAM	African Association for Public Administration and Management
AGSA	Auditor General South Africa
ANC	African National Congress
CF	Competency Framework
CPP	Cognitive Process Profiler
CLT	Complexity Leadership Theory
CoGHSTA	Co-operative Governance, Human Settlement, and Traditional Affairs
DARD	Department of Agriculture and Rural Development
DoE	Department of Education
DoH	Department of Health
DoT	Department of Transport
DPT	Department of Provincial Treasury
DPWRI	Department of Public Works, Roads and Infrastructure
DSAC	Department of Sport, Arts and Culture
DSD	Department of Social Development
DSSL	Department of Safety, Security & Liaison
DGs	Directors-General
DPASA	Department of Public Service and Administration

FET	Further Education and Training
HODs	Heads of Departments
HR	Human Resources
HRD	Human Resource Development
HRM	Human Resources Management
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IFAC	International Federation of Accountants
LDP	Leadership Development Programme
LEDET	Department of Economic Development, Environment & Tourism
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MFMA	Municipal Finance Management Act
MPSA	Minister for the Public Service and Administration
NCLT	New Competency Leadership Theory
NDP	National Development Plan
NPM	New Public Management
NPS	New Public Service
NSDS	National Skills Development Strategy
NSF	National Skills Fund
NSG	National School of Government
NQF	National Qualification Framework
OTP	Office of the Premier

PALAMA	Public Administration, Leadership and Management Academy
PAR	Public Administration Review
PDMS	Performance Management and Development System
PSC	Public Service Commission
PSETA	Public Sector Education and Training Authority
PSR	Public Service Regulation
PSS	Perceived Supervisor Support
R&D	Research and Development
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SAMDI	South African Management Development Institute
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SDG	Sustainable development Goals
SETA	Sector Education and Training Authority
SLT	Situational Leadership Theory
SMS	Senior Management Service
S.M.A.R. T	Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Time-bound
SLT	Situational Leadership Theory
TFL	Transformational Leadership
TPA	Traditional Public Administration
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

USA	United States of America
USFWS	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
VSP	Voluntary Severance Package
WITS	Witwatersrand University

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

After the 1994 national elections in the Republic of South Africa (RSA), a democratic era was ushered in to replace the apartheid regime. A mammoth task awaited that, there had both to be a proactive and reactive restorative process in alignment with the precincts of a democratic constitution, viz. the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996. The workforce of the country that had been racially demarcated for decades, for one, had to be diversified and made representative of the new era. As emphasised by Wissink, Schwella, and Fox (2004), South Africa has undergone economic, political, and social changes after 1994.

Van Zyl (2021) states that worldwide there is a significant focus in leadership-related fields on effective management within the public service. However, there is substantial evidence of ineffective leadership within the public service, and more specifically, within South Africa. While there has been a limited number of studies to date that have highlighted the scale of the problem and some efforts have been made to improve management within the public service of South Africa, there has been little research into the perception of public service employees and their stakeholders.

This study aims to explore the literature on leadership competencies of the Senior Management Service (SMS) of the South African public service by incorporating international best practices from selected countries. The study also determines whether it is possible to align the agile leadership model to the public service leadership competency model. The outcome of this study is presented as a leadership Model for application by public servants, managers, and stakeholders in the service domain.

According to Rahman (2019), leadership is the most important factor in all public institutions, but it is getting tougher due to the intervention of globalization, technological improvement, and diversity management. As the demand for knowledge-based enterprises rises, it is both employees' and managers' responsibility to enhance the success of workplace learning and workforce development. A

successful international leader must know what is expected of leadership and how to execute it accordingly. For developing the institution's role, human resource (HR) professionals are willing to take proactive measures. For the sustainability of leadership, global leaders must diversify themselves according to the cross-cultural trend. It is essential, argues Chuang (2013), that they understand the significance of leadership and leadership expectations, and develop and sustain effective leadership strategies for long-term change.

1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM

Kumar (2014) advises researchers to pay attention when articulating the problem because it essentially informs impending steps that follow, i.e., study design, sampling strategy, research instrument and type of analysis. Differently stated, Brynard, Hanekom and Brynard (2014) argue that a problem statement shows how the research is designed and most importantly, is the centre of the study.

Since South Africa's attainment of democracy in 1994 leadership and management in the public service remains a daunting challenge, especially about the demands for improved service delivery by a vociferous and impatient member of the public. The government recognises that this situation is firstly the result of a lack of capacity and appropriate leadership and management skills in the public service (Cronje & Willem, 2010; McLennan & Seale, 2010). Secondly, the government recognises this situation is the result of the adoption of ineffective and inappropriate leadership approaches in the public service (Naidoo, 2010; Fraser-Moleketi, 2007).

Public service institutions are confronted with the challenge of a shortage of management capacity. Research by Naidoo (2004) states that most Directors General stated that human resources issues, such as lack of capacity, skills and experience, and personnel conflicts were and continue to present a problem. This statement is echoed by Miller (2005) who states that management capacity is a challenge, with many senior managers lacking the ability to make effective decisions, delegate and solve problems innovatively. Related to the problem of human resources, according to Naidoo (2005), is the lack of performance. Non-performance by public servants either took the form of not delivering services at all lack of quality service delivery, or goal displacement by complying with rules and regulations rather than achieving

departmental goals. Occasionally political sensitivities inhibited Director Generals from dismissing a non-performing public servant due to political considerations. Furthermore, most senior managers are not familiar with the style of leadership needed in their departments (Naidoo, 2005). This situation has not changed.

Miller (2005) argues that most Directors General in the South African public service described their leadership style as participative and orientated towards people. Most senior managers in the South African public sector are, therefore only managing rather than leading. Some senior management leads by example, but others are not visible and consistent in their communication. While others have limited themselves by time constraints and are not exploring emerging paradigms and developing new service delivery initiatives. It is seldom that one finds a person at a senior management level with both management and leadership abilities in the South African public service.

Sedibe (2021) argues that, while the South African government 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 emphasizes individual generic competencies. Sedibe further argues that the overarching problem is that the competencies identified in the Competency Framework (CF) do not adequately prepare public servants to perform their duties effectively in the networked governance context.

Emerging out of the research process, the PSETA) & WITS Centre For Researching Education & Labour (2023) report argues that the ways CFs are defined and implemented have severe limitations in dealing with the relatively poor performance of the public service. The report highlights that CFs are often not being implemented as intended whilst there are problems in the CFs themselves. In addition, what emerges is often a lack of departmental ownership towards them, when they are used for the human resources functions of recruitment, selection, developing and managing the performance of human capital. Human capital is the stock of skills that the labour force possesses (Goldin, 2024). Organisational conditions also limit the potential of individual competencies and their CFs. It is argued that the existing institutional arrangements and context of the state administration restrict the use and potential of CFs. It is only with certain enabling and conducive arrangements and environments that slightly differently formulated CFs could contribute to their intended purpose

(Public Sector Education and Training Authority (PSETA) & WITS Centre For Researching Education & Labour, 2023).

Central to CFs is a clear definition of individual competencies, which refer to a mix of knowledge, skills, and personal aptitudes, measured by a long list of behavioural indicators. Yet many departments do not define these terms tightly and often use them interchangeably, leading to a poor distinction between knowledge and skills. The leadership and management CFs in the public service use a combination of core/generic competencies whereas the Financial Management CF and to a certain extent the Monitoring and Evaluation CF also rely on technical competencies. Technical competencies such as knowledge, skills and abilities are the requirement to fulfil job tasks, duties, and responsibilities, which lead to acceptable performance levels at work (Ismail & Hassan, 2019).

It is argued that it is more difficult to assess core/generic competencies, especially when these are decontextualised and content-free, than technical competencies. Technical skills and competencies are sometimes mentioned in public service documents but are broadly defined and not attached to a body of specialised knowledge. The little reference to technical skills and competencies suggests that these are lacking in public service and too often must be outsourced to professional and technical services. Another major problem with leadership and management competencies is that it appears to reduce knowledge to the knowledge of policies, legislation, and regulations such as Public Administration Management ACT11 of 2014 (PAMA and Batho Pele White Paper of 1997), but not the 'knowledge' of the technical field of practice in the sector that they manage. Yet, it is argued, that if leaders and managers in a department do not have some grounding in a specialised body of knowledge related to their sector, they are unlikely to effectively assume their roles. This omission of what 'knowledge' entails limits the advantages of individual competencies and CFs in improving public service delivery, explaining why the design of competencies and CFs are not empowering HR tools to improve the performance of leaders and managers.

According to the National School of Government (NSG, 2022), the literature links CFs with various HR functions and the HR value chain. This is why individual competencies

must be easy to assess, measure, and apply but in reality, they are not. CFs are mainly used, as mentioned by the National Framework for the Professionalisation of the Public Service, for competency assessment aimed, not at selection and recruitment or performance management but, for development and training interventions which are not always appropriate. There is a lack of full ownership of these CFs among many departments which treat them as yet another exercise in bureaucratic compliance. Bureaucratic control is the constraint that a superior imposes on subordinate agencies' discretion through guidelines (Xiao & Zhu, 2022). Some departments interviewed, such as the National Treasury, appear more proactive than others in developing more detailed and specific CFs to strengthen their HR functions while, in other departments, the CFs do not seem to lead to the identification of appropriate and effective training courses nor an effective performance management process. In that sense, CFs contribute only to a limited degree to a more developmental and effective public service.

The SMS CF (DPSA, 2003) limits itself to individual competencies that are behavioural (how to do the work) and do not incorporate occupational competencies (what has to be done). It refers mainly to core/generic and process competencies with behavioural indicators and proficiency levels. Core/generic competencies refer to the idea behind the competency: "[they] succinctly define what the idea means and propose behavioural indicators to illustrate the competencies". Examples of core competencies for the SMS are: Strategic Capability and Leadership, People Management and Empowerment, Programme and Project management, Financial Management, and Change Management. Process competencies refer to "how the function is performed by employing certain competency techniques". Examples in the SMS CF are Knowledge Management, Service Delivery Innovation, Problem Solving and Analysis, Client Orientation and Customer Focus and Communication. Behavioural indicators are attached to these competencies and are used by assessors to rate and score the level of proficiency. The 2003 SMS CF document does not foreground or clarify the meaning of knowledge underpinning these management competencies which appear to exist out of context, making it difficult to assess them effectively and objectively.

The research findings point to the fact that, while CFs are supposed to help develop the human resource value chain, what is happening in reality is something different.

The reason for this lies partly in the frameworks themselves but also more importantly in the context and environment in which they are supposed to be implemented. Ultimately, the CFs will not achieve their intended purpose if there is a lack of departmental ownership of them and if they are not located in an enabling and conducive environment. This article notes that the existing institutional arrangements and context of the state administration restrict the use and potential of CFs. It concludes with the argument that, with specific enabling and conducive arrangements and environments, slightly differently formulated, CFs could contribute to their intended purpose (De Clercq, 2023).

From the above problem statement, the study proposes to explore the leadership competencies of the senior management service of the South African public service and then develop a model for the Senior Management Service.

1.3 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study aims to explore leadership competencies of the senior management service in the South African public service with the purpose of developing a leadership competency model. Cognisant of the statement of the problem and the research questions, the study will be guided by the following research objectives:

- To describe the challenges faced by the SMS of the South African public service in the performance of their duties.
- To describe the constitutional, legislative, and policy frameworks underpinning leadership competencies in the South African public service.
- To determine the leadership theories and styles underpinning leadership competencies in the South African senior management service.
- To determine whether it is possible to align the agile leadership model to the public service leadership competency model.
- To recommend the mechanisms for enhancing public service competencies for the South African senior management service.

The South African public service occupies a strategic position in the leadership and governance systems of the RSA. Modern public administration needs professional public managers who can make sense of the ambiguity inherent in their job. This study

is an attempt to identify important competencies required of senior public administrators, specifically those who are part of the senior management service.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions for this study are as follows:

- What are the challenges faced by the SMS of the South African public service in the performance of their duties?
- What are the constitutional, legislative, and policy frameworks underpinning leadership competencies in the South African public service?
- Which leadership theories and styles underpin leadership competencies required of the senior management service?
- Is it possible to align the agile leadership model of public service leadership competency model?
- What are the mechanisms for enhancing public service competencies for the South African senior management service?

1.5 JUSTIFICATION OF THE RESEARCH

According to the DPSA (2023)'s effectiveness of the Competency Framework & Capacity Measures for Senior Managers in the Public Service, the SMS Competency Framework is critical to the success of the professionalizing Framework. It brings a consistent approach to HR performance throughout the public service and drives all SMS performance initiatives. There is a need to strengthen, develop and train managers in the public service. It is necessary to strengthen the current frameworks and interventions to ensure the acquisition of the necessary skills and competencies for public servants, particularly for management in leadership positions in the public service. An increased investment in human resources is therefore necessary. A strong skills base for managers should be evident across the entire public service. The incumbents of leadership posts have the responsibility to transfer these skills to the management cadre and public servants below them. Leadership and management development should therefore remain a priority for the South African public service.

This study will be beneficial to the development of the body of knowledge of the discipline Public Administration. It will be a resource to scholars who conduct research

and also teach public service leadership. It will also be beneficial to public service practitioners, especially those at the SMS level. The study is essential in that it identifies the competencies which are needed by members of the SMS. It will also indicate how those competencies can be instilled in the members of the SMS.

The importance of the study on developing a competency-based framework for selected departments of the South African public service has significant implications for enhancing service delivery, professionalizing services, and improving overall governance practices. These departments, which have extensive public interaction, play a crucial role in delivering essential services to citizens. The significant import was that by adopting competency-based management, these departments can achieve several positive outcomes that foster good governance (Ram & Aswin, 2023).

Lastly, members of the public will benefit from the study because senior managers, after developing the relevant leadership competencies, will be effective, efficient, and economical in performing their assigned duties. They will use the competencies to manage public resources. As a result, service delivery will improve.

1.6 DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Delimitations describe the scope of the study or establish parameters or limits for the study. A researcher must set limits on the sample size, extent of the geographical region from which data will be collected, response formats including data-collecting instruments, or the time frame for the study to make the study feasible for the researcher (Baron, 2012). Denzin and Lincoln (2009) encourage researchers to select sites and develop rationales for their choices of the research sites. The research will be limited to the senior management service in the South African public service. The South African public service is composed of officials in the national and provincial departments. Reference will be made to political office bearers and junior public officials at both the three spheres of government for comparative analysis.

1.7 RESEARCH PARADIGM

Guba and Lincoln (1994) define a paradigm as a basic set of beliefs or worldviews that guide research action or an investigation. Similarly, Denzin and Lincoln (2000) define paradigms as human constructions, which deal with first principles indicating where the researcher is coming from to construct meaning embedded in data. Kivunja and

Kuyini (2017) argue that paradigms are thus important because they provide beliefs and dictates, which, for scholars in a particular discipline, influence what should be studied, how it should be studied, and how the results of the study should be interpreted. The paradigm defines a researcher's philosophical orientation and as envisaged in the conclusion, this has significant implications for every decision made in the research process, including choice of methodology and methods. And so, a paradigm tells us how meaning will be constructed from the data we shall gather, based on our individual experiences, (i.e., where we are coming from). It is therefore very important, that when one writes one's research proposal, he/she clearly states the paradigm in which he/she is locating his/her research.

According to Allemang, Sitter and Dimitropoulos (2022), a research paradigm is an individual's ontological commitments, epistemological beliefs, and methodological choices that serve as a set of guiding principles for scientific inquiry, and it is often employed in four important research rational initiatives, setting study techniques, goals, driving forces, and expected results, and understanding research pillars. The positivist paradigm is a way of thinking about human behaviour that turns people into variables that can be investigated scientifically and are based on observation and reason, while the interpretivist paradigm is centred on understanding the perspective of the study observer or researcher in order to gain knowledge of the perceptual world of human experience.

Pragmatics is a research paradigm that uses the best techniques to address problems in the real world, drawing on a variety of information sources and expertise to address research questions (Allemang, Sitter and Dimitropoulos, 2022). Postpositivist research is also another design. According to Maksimovic and Evtimov (2023), post-positivism is a departure from positivism. Further, they argue that post-positivism acknowledges human subjectivity and the ambiguity of reality, arguing that research should aim to best represent it. Post-positivists think that there is no objective external reality that exists but rather that reality is constructed. Constructivism represents another paradigm.

According to Mohammed et al., (2020), constructivism emphasizes active learning, focusing on societal interaction and multicultural science instruction. It shifts focus

from individual to societal construction, enhancing understanding of diverse realities. Constructivism acknowledges various realities and various understandings of truth and holds that reality is socially built through common meanings impacted by language, culture, and social interactions (Pilarska, 2021 & William, 2024). The study used post-positivism research paradigm to address the reality of the status of leadership competencies in the SMS of the South African public service.

1.8 RESEARCH DESIGN

Design is concerned with the aims, uses, purposes, intentions, and plans. Research design is a reflection upon a researcher's ideas. It helps prevent frustration by binding the research together through a structured plan that shows how all the major parts of the research work in unison to try to address the research questions (Asenahabi, 2019).

The study seeks to propose an alternative leadership CF for the senior management of the South African public service. Research design provides the scope and plan of research that ought to be conducted. Research design also has the potential of establishing approaches and methods that will contribute towards answering the research question by applying various methods of data analysis.

There are several strategies for doing this, depending on the nature of the study, but Babbie and Mouton (2003) opine that there are two major aspects of research design. Firstly, the aim, objective, and questions of the research must be well-detailed. Secondly, the method selected to analyse data should correspond with the research methodology and approach.

1.9 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

According to Asenahabi (2019), research is a careful and systematic way of solving problems and gaining new knowledge. It can also be defined as being a systematic process of discovery and advancement of human knowledge. It should solve a problem or make an innovative contribution to the existing body of knowledge. For something to be counted as research, it must be systematic and methodical in its approach and procedures and has to meet relevant norms and standards for validity and reliability.

Jongbo (2014) argues that an inquiry is categorized as a research if it meets specific standards: it has to be based on a precise research problem and Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Time-bound (S.M.A.R.T) objectives; it has to be informed in appropriate ways by theories and concepts; it must have appropriate data collection, organizing and analysing techniques; it must offer an informed interpretation of results, and its findings must be consistent with the research question and implementation of the research design. This section will focus on the research methodology used in non-empirical study. This research adopts a qualitative research method using scholarly literature. These include critical scholarship review, conceptual analysis, philosophical analysis, theory-building, and content analysis.

According to Pandey and Pandey (2015), the word 'research' is comprised of two words "re" and "search". It means to search again. As such research means a systematic investigation or activity to gain new knowledge of the already existing facts. Research is an intellectual activity. It is responsible for bringing to light new knowledge. It is also responsible for correcting the present mistakes, removing existing misconceptions and adding new learning to the existing fund of knowledge. According to Leedy (1993), research methodology is "a basic procedure, and the steps in solving an unresolved problem..." whereas Brynard and Hanekom (1997) define research methodology in more specific terms as "the how of collecting data and the processing thereof within the framework of the research processes". Mouton (2005) explains that the research methodology "focuses on the research process and the kind of tools and procedures to be used". Compared with research design, the research methodology is concerned with the collection of data using the most objective procedure.

This study is non-empirical in nature and therefore posits a conceptual question. In the context of the foregoing, the question is: which methodological research approaches can be used to acquire insights necessary to engage with a non-empirical object of the study? In the literature on social science research there are a variety of non-empirical research methods, which, as part of the preparation for the execution of the study, will be analysed. Maserumule (2011) found the following are to be more appropriate to engage with a non-empirical object of the study:

- Critical Scholarship Review.
- Conceptual Analysis.
- Philosophical Analysis.
- Theory Building.
- Content Analysis.

According to Bak (2004) and Mouton (2005), these research methods are used to engage with theoretical, non-empirical, or conceptual questions or problems. An analysis of research literature in human sciences reveals that there are other methods that are appropriate in the study of the meaning of concepts. These methods are textual analysis, hermeneutics, discourse and conversational analysis, and ideological critical reading. However, these research methods are, as compared to the ones mentioned above, categorised as empirical methods in terms of Mouton's (2005) epistemological template. The primary, secondary and official data were explored to gain understanding of competency frameworks in the public service. In the context of this study official literature refers to the official publications such as the files and policy documents of the Department of Public Service and Administration.

1.9.1 Critical scholarship review

Harman (2007) explains that the term scholarship has usually referred to uncovering or generating new knowledge or solving particular practical or theoretical problems. As scholarship has increased in importance, so have various elaborations in definitions been introduced, especially to account for a wider range of research activities and disciplines, including research and development (R&D) activities aimed at making scientific discoveries and inventions more commercially attractive to business firms. Thus, today the extension of knowledge is widely accepted as including the discovery of previously unknown phenomena, the development of explanatory theory and its application to new situations, and work that provides significant contributions to disciplines, tackling problems of social and economic significance or producing original works of intellectual merit.

According to Maserumule (2011), a review of scholarship is an important “component in any type of research. Leedy (1993) argues that a review is about “*looking again*

(+view) at the literature or scholarship (reports of what others have done) in a related area: an area not necessarily identical with, but collateral to, your own area of study". With scholarship review, as Mouton (in Maserumule, 2011) explains, the researchers are not merely interested in literature, "which sounds as if it refers merely to a collection of texts, but in a body of accumulated scholarship". An adjective *critical* is added to *scholarship review* to emphasise an in-depth manner that a body of scholarly literature is engaged in the study. In the context of this study, a *critical review* should be understood as a rational reflection, which takes the form of inductive reasoning, on scholarship engagements with scientific phenomena. It is about critical engagement with scholarship, which, using Bak's (2004) conceptualisation, means:

- Giving a clear exposition of the argument.
- Determining and assessing the support for a certain claim made to get a clearer understanding of an issue.
- Determining the truth of the premises and the validity of argument.
- Clarifying and analysing the language used and the meaning of concepts.
- Showing how the article or book fits into the academic debates and current literature.
- Discussing the theoretical and social context in which ideas are developed.
- Discussing possible implications that the ideas or claims could have.
- Demanding informed thinking and creativity.

1.9.2 Conceptual analysis

In particular, conceptual analysis generally concerns articulations of the primary meanings of common terms that are of philosophical interest. These meanings are thought to reflect how the terms are typically understood in the general linguistic community, leading to a concern with how they are ordinarily used (Sytsma, 2010). Baldwin (2008) describes concept analysis as a rigorous and pragmatic approach to define concepts that can significantly contribute to knowledge and can be applied to nursing practice. Walker and Avant's (2005) concept analysis method were used to examine the structure and function of the concept "perception." This method uses eight steps to capture the essence of the concept:

- Selecting a concept.
- Determining the aim of the analysis.
- Identifying all possible uses of the concept.
- Determining the defining attributes.
- Identifying a model case.
- Identifying additional cases.
- Identifying the antecedents and consequences.
- Defining empirical referents.

The aim of the study was to develop an operational definition of “perception” to provide a linguistic basis for what is being evaluated with the various measures of patient perceptions about health and actions. According to Maserumule (2011), conceptual analysis refers to that type of method of research concerned with the analysis of the meaning of words or concepts. It explains the relationship of a concept to other concepts and points out the implications of a concept as used in a particular context (Bak 2004; Mouton 2005).

Conceptual analysis, as also in the case of critical scholarship review, is dependent on secondary textual data. It is used in the study to analyse the meaning of leadership competency as propagated in the contemporary body of scholarship. This entails systematic analysis of the different dimensions of leadership competency and clarification or explanation of its theoretical linkages to other concepts such as democracy. The implications of different viewpoints on the meanings of leadership competency are revealed in the study. And, more importantly, conceptual propositions on the meaning of leadership competency in so far as their contextual appropriateness or inappropriateness to the public service are concerned, are considered and delineated. This intellectual exercise is aimed at making a scholarly contribution toward the understanding of the meaning of leadership competency in the context of the public service for Public Administration.

1.9.3 Philosophical analysis

According to Soames (2003), philosophical analysis was in the 20th-century called analytic philosophy. There were numerous conceptions of analysis, and it was widely held that some form of philosophical analysis is the central preoccupation of

professional philosophy. One example that nicely illustrates the prime importance of philosophical analysis in 20th-century analytic philosophy is Soames's (2003) celebrated two-volume history of this tradition: *Philosophical Analysis in the Twentieth Century*. However, according to Soames (2003) and Haug (2013), philosophical analysis is no longer seen so favourably in contemporary analytic philosophy, and its importance as the key preoccupation of philosophy has faded—although it is still a widely practiced method, as even the critics of philosophical analysis acknowledge. One reason for this loss of centrality might be that various flagship projects of philosophical analysis, such as the analysis of *knowledge*, have not produced any commonly accepted results.

According to the standard *textbook view*, as I will call it, a philosophical analysis aims at necessary and sufficient conditions that are expressed by a strict biconditional. The textbook view is untenable, however, because it fails to accommodate several conditions of adequacy on good philosophical analyses that guide our practice of philosophical analysis. But once the textbook view is out of the game, it is difficult to see which alternative might take its place. At this stage, we thus face a pressing internal challenge to philosophical analysis, namely, that its success conditions are deeply unclear (Soames, 2003).

Mouton (2005) explains that philosophical studies are aimed at analysing arguments that propagate or reject a particular epistemological position, “sometimes of a normative or value-laden kind”; they “develop substantive points of view about the meaning of life (metaphysics), morally acceptable behaviour (ethics) and coherent and consistent forms of reasoning (logic)”. These types of studies address, according to Bak (2004: 10), “some problems in thinking”. They are concerned with seeking better ways of thinking and understanding of intellectual phenomena. The philosophical studies deal with “questions of meaning, explanation, understanding and normativity” and their analytical methods take the form of normative analysis, ideology critique, deconstruction and phenomenological analysis (Mouton 2005).

This study is concerned with the meaning of leadership competency, which is a normative or value-laden concept that can mean different things to different people depending on the context in which it is used (Maserumule, 2011; Maserumule 2005a). The usage of philosophical analysis as a research method to generate philosophical

insight for engagement with the non-empirical research questions of this study is therefore an appropriate approach to establish conceptual clarity on the meaning of leadership competency in the context of public service.

1.9.4 Theory-building

One of the objectives of this study is to develop an epistemological framework that can be used to better understand leadership competency in the public service. An appropriate non-empirical methodology will be used in the study to specifically realise this objective is theory-building, which, Du Toit, Knipe, Van Niekerk, Van der Waldt, Doyle (2002: 410) refers to as "a process which begins with a set of observations (i.e., descriptions) and moves on to develop theories of these observations". For science to make progress, theory-construction should always be at the 'centre' of scholarship endeavours in the expansion of the boundaries of knowledge (De Vaus, 1994.

This study examined the definition of theory and the implications it has for theory-building research. By definition, theory must have four basic criteria (Walker, 1998):

- Conceptual definitions.
- Domain limitations.
- Relationship-building.
- Predictions.

Mouton (2005) explains that theory-building is "aimed at developing theories to explain scientific phenomena". It is used to address "questions of meaning and explanation; questions of the theoretical linkages and coherence between theoretical propositions; questions related to explanatory and predictive potential or theories and conceptual models" (Mouton 2005:176).

Theory-building is important because it provides a framework for analysis, facilitates the efficient development of the field, and is needed for its applicability to practical real-world problems. To be a good theory, a theory must follow the virtues (criteria) for 'good' theory, including uniqueness, parsimony, conservation, generalizability, fecundity, internal consistency, empirical riskiness, and abstraction, which apply to all research methods. Theory-building research seeks to find similarities across many different domains to increase its abstraction level and its importance. The procedure for good theory-building research follows the definition of theory: it defines the

variables, specifies the domain, builds internally consistent relationships, and makes specific predictions (Walker, 1998).

According to Walker (1998), there are additional reasons why theory is important for researchers and practitioners: it provides a framework for analysis; it provides an efficient method for field development; and it provides clear explanations for the pragmatic world. The first reason is that good theory provides a framework of analysis for public administration since it provides structure for where differences of opinion exist. The second reason for developing theory is efficiency. Theory development reduces errors in problem-solving by building upon current theory. Building upon current theory is equivalent to incorporating all that is known from the current literature (theoretical, mathematical, empirical, and practitioner research) into a single, integrated consistent body of knowledge. For researchers, using a single integrated body of knowledge for analytical and empirical testing gives the results a deeper theoretical meaning by differentiating between the competing theories. An integrated body of knowledge can only be pursued efficiently if integrated theory is developed through consistent theory-building methodologies.

Because of the need for 'good' theory, the purpose of this study is to set guidelines for integrating theory-building research. In order to achieve this lofty goal, this study first determines what a 'good' theory is. Next, it closely ties 'good' theory to specific research procedures. After the good-theory-building procedures are outlined, this study categorizes different research methodologies by their theory-building purpose and depicts how all theory-building procedures are similar.

1.9.5 Content analysis

Content analysis has been defined as a systematic, replicable technique for compressing many words of text into fewer content categories based on explicit rules of coding (Stemler, 2001). When used properly, content analysis is a powerful data reduction technique. Its major benefit comes from the fact that it is a systematic, replicable technique for compressing many words of text into fewer content categories based on explicit rules of coding. It has the attractive features of being unobtrusive and being useful in dealing with large volumes of data. The technique of content analysis extends far beyond simple word frequency counts. Many limitations of word

counts have been discussed and methods of extending content analysis to enhance the utility of the analysis have been addressed.

According to Krippendorff (1980), six questions must be addressed in every content analysis:

- Which data are analysed?
- How are they defined?
- What is the population from which they are drawn?
- What is the context relative to which the data are analysed?
- What are the boundaries of the analysis?
- What is the target of the inferences?

At least three problems can occur when documents are being assembled for content analysis. First, when a substantial number of documents from the population are missing, the content analysis must be abandoned. Second, inappropriate records (e.g., ones that do not match the definition of the document required for analysis) should be discarded, but a record should be kept of the reasons. Finally, some documents might match the requirements for analysis but just be encodable because they contain missing passages or ambiguous content (GAO, 1996).

There is extensive literature written on leadership competencies of senior management service of the South African public service in particular and that of the international community. This research seeks to compress that literature into fewer words and categories.

1.10 OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

To ensure a common understanding, the author will utilise the meanings provided under the following operational definitions.

1.10.1 Leadership

Drawing on literature, argue Singo, Mafunisa and Vermaak (2022), it can be seen that a leader is a salient person who makes things happen. Leaders are viewed as moral persons who are honest and trustworthy, and who are regarded as principled decision-makers who care about the greater good of public officials, society and public service

values. According to Covrig (2000), leadership is settling what values, practices and structures are acceptable and normal, developing routines around the core of these values, and creating dilemmas for institutional stakeholders when these core values are marginalised. In other words, the leader has the authoritative power to create values that are acceptable in building the institution and providing an enabling environment that will allow the reporting of ethical transgressions.

Marijani (2017) defines leadership is defined as “influencing others to accomplish organizational goals”. In this study, leadership is defined as inspiring junior public administrators to accomplish public service goals or tasks, effectively, efficiently and economically. For the purpose of this study leadership refers to the adherence to public service values and principles when influencing others to attain the public service objectives or when promoting public interest.

1.10.2 Competence

The concept of competency has been used to mean very different things to the extent of creating confusion (Marijani, 2017). Four schools are identified in the literature about the use of the term: One school views the competency as representing specific expertise or accomplishment; another school conceives it as the capacity of an organization; it is also taken to mean specific behaviours contributing to excellence; and finally, there are those who view competency as a minimal level of job proficiency. According to Roberts (1997) competencies are defined as 'all work-related personal attributes, knowledge, experience and skills and values that a person draws on to perform their work well'. Competency-based management is being adopted as an efficient tool by public organizations in various countries today.

Lincoln and Kalleberg (1992) define competence partly as the capacity for hard work (diligence) and perseverance but partly as talent, skill, or capacity. The concept skill can be defined as the ability and capacity acquired through deliberate, systematic, and sustained effort to smoothly carry out complex activities or functions involving ideas (cognitive skills), things (technical skills), and/or people (interpersonal skills). According to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) (2007), capacity is defined as "the ability of individuals, institutions and societies to perform functions, solve problems, and set and achieve objectives sustainably."

The following list of broad abilities forms a basis for defining some of the competencies that are needed for an effective and efficient public manager (Schwella & Rossouw, 2005):

- The ability to locate and interpret relevant information from written, electronic, and people resources and apply it to solve complex, multidimensional problems using processes of analysis, synthesis, and systemic thinking.
- The ability to communicate effectively with diverse groups of people and individuals on complex issues.
- The ability to apply scientific and mathematical concepts and use relevant technology effectively.
- The ability to operate effectively in multifunctional teams.
- The ability to use time effectively to manage a variety of tasks.
- The ability to manage one's own, often multiple careers and balance occupational, family, community and other demands effectively.

Behind all of these abilities, argues Meyer (in Schwella & Rossouw, 2005), are a host of competencies, which can be defined according to the circumstances in which they are applied. Individuals need individual competencies necessary to function in a modern economy, which are not linked to any particular occupation or profession. These meta-competencies enable the individual to develop occupational competencies and can be categorised into three broad clusters: (a) cognitive skills, (b) relationship skills, and (c) performance skills. Ingraham and Taylor (2005) in answering the question: "Which skills and competencies are valued in this political leadership group?", indicated that at the very top of the appointee group, the answer consists of at least three parts:

- They must be policy experts in – or have substantial experience in – the policies administered by their department or agency.
- They must have enough managerial and leadership experience to lead a large and visible agency; and
- They must be willing to support the ruling party's policy agenda.

Although most other assessments are not nearly so harsh, there have been frequent calls for a programme of education and training for such appointees that would provide some consistency in management and leadership competencies. Arguing that private sector skills, no matter how well developed, cannot be automatically transferred to a public setting, analysts ranging from think tank experts to blue ribbon panels (panels made up of a diverse group of professionals reflective of the community) have urged that appointees receive training before beginning their public service. While it should be noted that a substantial number of top appointees in the past decade have had prior government experience, it remains true that no systematic means exists for educating this group of public servants either about the 'fishbowl' environment of public service or about the many competing – and legitimate – demands for attention and time (Ingraham & Taylor, 2005).

The additional definitions of competency/competencies are provided in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Definitions of competency/competencies

Author/Year	Definition
Boyatzis (1982)	Is an essential characteristic of a person in that it may be a motive, trait, skill, aspect of one's self-image or social role, or body of knowledge which he or she uses
Spencer and Spencer (1993)	An underlying characteristic of an individual that is causally related to criterion-referenced effective and/or superior performance in a job or situation
Dubois (1993)	A competency is the capability of applying or using knowledge, skills, abilities, behaviours, and personal characteristics to successfully perform critical work tasks, specific functions, or operate in a given role or position.
Quinn, Faerman, Thompson, and McGrath (1996)	Competency that recognizes the importance of skills, knowledge, and personal characteristics and the linkages between possessing these competencies and performing certain tasks or roles
Wynne and Stringer (1997)	As the things people have to be, know, and do, to achieve the outputs required in their job
Tas (1988)	Competence is the performance of duties based on one's ability to accomplish specific job-related tasks and assume the role connected to the position
Lucia and Lepsinger (1999)	Competencies, or individual characteristics, were recognized as significant predictors of employee performance and success, equally as important as an individual's academic aptitude and knowledge content as indicated by test scores or results.
Hoffmann (1999)	Summarized three key points in defining a competency: (a) underlying qualification and attributes of a person, (b) observable behaviours, and (c) standard of individual performance Outcomes
van der Klink and Boon (2002)	Defined competencies in terms of three distinct perspectives: competencies as individual characteristics; competencies as characteristics of organisations; and the notion of competencies as a tool to structure and facilitate
Bartram (2005)	Assets of behaviours that are instrumental in the delivery of desired results or outcomes

Source: Shet, Meena & Chandawarkar (2017)

From the above definitions, it can be argued that in this study, competence refers to the application of skills, capacities, attitudes, and abilities in the performance of assigned duties by the public service SMS.

1.10.3 Leadership Competence

Leadership competence is defined as the ability to attract, recruit, and nurture new talents, retain skilled and motivated staff by coaching and mentoring, motivate and reach staff's outperformance, ability to delegate, be visionary, be a role model for leadership (Schreier, Udomkit & Capone, 2019). Leadership Competency Model Guide (SWE, 2010) defines leadership competencies simply as leadership skills and behaviours that contribute to superior performance within an organization.

With the above definitions in mind, it can be deduced that in this study leadership competencies refer to those skills, abilities, and behaviours required from public service leaders for them to perform assigned duties effectively and efficiently. It is therefore essential for public service leaders to attract, recruit, select, and nurture qualified and experienced people with relevant skills and behaviours. This will ensure effective service delivery.

1.10.4 Competency Frameworks

A CF is a way for the public service to communicate which behaviours are required, valued, recognised and rewarded in leadership and management occupational roles. They also identify skills, knowledge, behaviours, and abilities needed to meet current and future talent selection needs, depending on organisational strategy, priorities and thinking, or their subordinates' problem-solving skills to make decisions that affect change. Some exceptions exist for leaders and managers who act decisively and proactively despite their constraining organisational environment. performance. In addition, they are used to develop individual and organisational development plans to bridge the gap between the skills the organisation needs to work with and the available skills. So, for example, in the PSS, most leadership and management CFs use a combination of core, generic, and process competencies, while others (such as the Finance management CF and the monitoring and evaluation CF) also rely on technical competencies (PSETA & WITS Centre For Researching Education & Labour, 2023).

Currently, within the PSS, various interventions seek to manage performance. Competency frameworks (CFs), which are in place in the PSS, are key mechanisms for assessing competency. A CF is effectively a model that describes performance excellence within an organisation. Such a framework usually includes several competencies applied to multiple occupational roles within the organisation, mainly management roles. Each framework sets out and defines individual competencies an organisation requires to meet performance standards (PSETA & WITS Centre For Researching Education & Labour, 2023).

Linn (2003) describes four uses of performance standards: exhortation, exemplification of goals, accountability, and the certification of student achievement. Performance standards and associated cut scores are essential only for the fourth use. Although reporting results in terms of performance standards is often done to exhort teachers and students to exert greater effort standard-based reporting is not essential to that use. Nor are performance standards essential for the purpose of exemplifying goals. One of the purposes of introducing performance standards is to provide a means of reporting results in a way that is more meaningful than a scale score.

The four CFs — senior management services middle management services, monitoring and evaluation services, and financial management - are performance tools to assess individuals, and guidelines for recruitment, selection, developing and managing human capital. CFs are supposed to help develop the human resource value chain, but this research revealed that CFs are not optimally used. The reason for this lies partly in the frameworks themselves but, more importantly, in the context and environment in which they are supposed to be implemented. Ultimately, if a CF is not located in an enabling and conducive environment, the framework on its own will not achieve its intended purpose. In other words, building and exercising competencies in a space where people are not encouraged to learn and make mistakes is challenging. This is compounded by some incompetent and corrupt officials who create a culture and climate of chaos and dysregulation (PSETA & WITS Centre For Researching Education & Labour, 2023).

Weinzimmer and Esken (2017) suggest that learning from mistakes may be particularly important for understanding the relationship between organizational

learning and performance given its focus on organizational experiences involving exploration. That is, organizations explore when tactics are unsuccessful and result in mistakes. These mistakes motivate organizations to pursue more effective tactics, which result in more useful organizational knowledge.

1.10.5 Senior Management Service

According to Daweti and Evans (2017), the establishment of the SMS was its intention a response to "the challenge of developing managers into leaders" and a quest to produce "a leadership cadre for the public service". As a relatively small population of the public service, SMS members "must walk the talk" of government ideals, "serve with humility" and lead the delivery of "a globally competitive service to citizens" (DPSA, 2008; DPSA, 2015). They must espouse the constitutional values and principles for service and be exemplary in the management functions they carry out. The latter incorporates strategic roles of shaping the vision, values, and culture of their departments or institutions; creating enabling conditions for individuals and teams to thrive; supporting the expansion of individuals' capabilities; and ensuring sustained implementation of policies and plans; avoiding any conflict of interest in their interaction with political office-bearers and the public; and declaring their financial and private interests in line with the financial disclosure framework.

The word senior (in Senior Management Service) denotes rank and is not a reference to age or seniority in terms of length of career or tenure. In the majority of countries, this group includes the top two levels of the administration under the Minister, but in some countries, this group includes additional layers beneath. Senior civil servants can be younger and have fewer years of experience than middle managers if they are, in fact, their superiors in terms of hierarchy. Senior public servants are also separate from elected officials, although they may be appointed by them. In this report, references to "leadership" refer to administrative and institutional leadership. This report does not look at the leadership of Ministers, or their political cabinet (Gerson, 2020).

Who constitutes the senior "cadreship" of the public sector? The answer to this question is likely to vary from country to country. However, as a basis for the definition in this thesis, the OECD (2008) definition will be used:

"A Senior Civil Service is a structured and recognises system of personnel for the higher non-political positions in government. It is a career civil service providing people to be competitively appointed to functions that cover policy advice, operational delivery, or corporate service delivery. The service is centrally managed through appropriate institutions and procedures, in order to provide stability and professionalism of the core group of senior civil servants but also allowing the necessary flexibility to match changes in the composition of Government by using appropriate due processes."

This band of public servants is located near the vertex of the executive pyramid, just below the ministers. Senior public servants rarely work in technical areas such as law and medicine, in frontline service delivery, or as personal staff of a minister. Their job content has more of a professional management and less of technical expertise. The senior management service is a subset of the universe of general civil servants, to whom they are expected to provide leadership through their vision, performance, integrity and innovation. It is an enclave within the public service that receives broader opportunities, has special conditions of employment, is held to rigorous standards of performance and behaviour, is paid a higher rate of remuneration, and has less job security. In many countries, the functional titles of senior public servants and the number of functional levels for the senior public service positions differ. Level 1 normally consists of Permanent Secretaries/Director-Generals. Level 2 consists of Directors who head directorates and Level 3 may be occupied by Commissioners, Under-Secretaries, etc. as head of department (Kauzya, 2017).

Since improving public organisations' performance is the overall goal of governments, the senior public servants are therefore expected to provide leadership and management to that effort. Such senior officers can be a useful bridge between policy making and implementation. Drawing on their knowledge of government laws, procedures and resources, senior public servants can present information to ministers in a way that helps them make policy choices. They can advise on what is implementable within the country's financial situation and available human resources. Experience in government organisations' functioning and their managerial perspective enables the senior officers to shape and guide implementation strategies (Kauzya, 2017).

The above is underscored in the Public Service Regulations (PSR) (Regulation 81 of 2016): A SMS is created to promote a public service management culture of excellence based on values and principles provided for the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 and the provisions of the Public Service Act; 1994 (Proclamation 103 of 1994) to facilitate co-operation amongst management structures of departments; transfer organisational, managerial, professional and strategic expertise across the public service; and provide an organised network for the dissemination of policy, strategy and expertise.

According to Daweti and Evans (2019), the framing of the SMS is guided by dominant worldviews about leadership and approaches to leadership development, which emanate mostly from business and economic management sciences. There are several contributing factors to this circumstance (Daweti & Evans, 2019):

- Prior to the democratic dispensation, leadership roles in the public service had not been explicitly assigned. The new delineation of SMS for leadership roles was an extraordinary adjustment from the previous minimisation of public service seniority as implementation and enforcement of the policy, and assurance of compliance (Latib, 2014). There was no real point of reference for an "actual leadership agency" within the public service.
- Even though notions of leadership are now not completely disregarded in the disciplinary discourse, Public Administration generally leans toward public management and managerial concepts. In the absence of a strong voice about leadership from public administration, public service managers tasked with developing strategies for leadership development looked to psychology and business management for cross-disciplinary exemplars. These are the same disciplines, besides political science, that swayed Public Administration in its early days.
- Under the invocation of the New Public Management (NPM) movement, the public service work environment has been receptive to private sector human resource management and development consultants and nifty solutions for a range of organisational, management and leadership issues. This inclination corresponded with the "modernisation and implementation (1999–2004)" phase of public service transformation (PSC, 2008).

Table 2: SMS Responsibilities with associated Competencies

Director: Supervise operational staff at a Unit level and ensure adherence to policies, practices, procedures in order to achieve project/Directorate goals	
Chief Director: Manage functions of Directors and components, and oversee the achievement of project/Chief Directorate goals	
Deputy Director-General: Manage a group of Chief Directorate functions and oversee the achievement of programme/Branch goals	
Director-General: Manage a department, set the vision and strategic direction in order to achieve Departmental goals, and oversee programmes	
Core Competencies (thought processes that influence behaviours and the functional characteristics that represent what needs to be done by SMS members in demonstration of their leadership and managerial roles):	Process Competencies (the most useful, externally observed set of behaviours that determine how leaders make successful or poor decisions; the process competencies influence the success of the core competencies):
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic capability and leadership • People management and empowerment • Programme and project management • Financial management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge management • Service delivery innovation • Problem solving and analysis • Client orientation and customer focus. • Communication

Source: Daweti & Evans (2017)

From the Table 1 above it can be deduced that that the SMS consists of the top four employment categories in the public service – that is, directors-general (Salary Level 16), deputy directors-general (Salary Level 15), chief directors (Salary Level 14), and director (Salary Level 13)

1.10.6 Public Service and New Public Service

According to Nengwekhulu (2009), the delivery of public services by governments all over the world requires a government administrative system. Such a system is generally called public service or bureaucracy. But in certain quarters, bureaucracy is considered a derogatory name. Historically bureaucracy means a public administrative system designed for the delivery of public services. Current connotations of the word refer to an administrative state machinery that is characterised by rule-fetishism,

impersonality, uncaring, and rabid inefficiency. But whatever derogatory meaning attached to it, today bureaucracy refers to administrative machinery through which government services are delivered to the public. Public service can therefore be defined as an administrative vehicle using which governments deliver all kinds of services to their citizens.

Pearson and Ndlovu (2018) state that the public service is constituted by 150 national and provincial departments, plus government components, that are listed in schedules one (1) to three (3) of the Public Service Act, 1994 (Proclamation 103 of 1994). The Public Service is differentiated from local government, which is governed by its legislation, principally the Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act, 2003 (Act 56 of 2003), the Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000) and Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act 117 of 1998).

Section 197 of the Constitution, 1996 stipulates that public service is within public administration, which is a broad body with multiple institutional arrangements, consisting of the Public Service and other related institutions. By implication then, a public servant is defined broadly as someone who works in public administration. This framework document will use the term 'public servant' to refer to employees in any institution within public administration (NSG, 2020). Sedibe (2021) concedes 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. 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 and evaluate the legitimacy of their actions (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2011).

The New Public Service (2011), which first appeared as a Public Administration Review (PAR) article in 2000 and later as a book, presented a set of ideals and related practices emphasizing democratic norms and citizen engagement in the conduct of public administration. Offered as an alternative to the NPM, the New Public Service addressed core questions about the nature of public service, the role of administration

in governance, and the value tensions surrounding bureaucracy, efficiency, equity, responsiveness, and accountability (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2015). Define governance Denhardt and Denhardt (2015) state that their purpose was not to develop a set of novel ideas but rather to give voice to the traditional and significant democratic perspectives we felt were becoming overshadowed by the NPM rhetoric of “fixing” a broken government by running it like a business. The New Public Service describes a set of norms and practices that emphasize democracy and citizenship as the basis for public administration theory and practice.

Denhardt and Denhardt (2015) argue that since they first wrote about the New Public Service, the design and implementation of public policy have moved even further away from a single governmental unit acting alone or in close concert with one or two others to a complex system featuring complex governance networks comprising a plurality of actors— public, private, and nonprofit—each bringing their own special interests, resources, and set of expertise. Sørensen and Torfing (2007) define a governance network as "1. a relatively stable horizontal articulation of interdependent, but operationally autonomous actors; 2. who interact through negotiations; 3. which take place within a regular to, normative, cognitive and imaginary framework; 4. that is self-regulating within limits set by external agencies; and 5. which contributes to the production of public purpose”.

If this is the case, argue Denhardt and Denhardt (2015), traditional leadership models emphasizing hierarchical power, authority based on position, and strict managerial control seem ill-suited for the modern governance system. Denhardt and Denhardt (2011) have thus organised the diverse ideas that constitute the NPS into seven themes or normative principles that emphasize 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 TPA and NPM, as presented in Table 2.1 below. Despite the differences, Denhardt and Denhardt (2011) 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.

The pursuit of New Public Service values poses potential problems or barriers. Some expressions of the public interest that emerge from political process and dialogue are not equally compelling morally (Moore 2014). In addition, Jacobs (2014) thinks that public dialogue can be dominated by well-resourced special interests and partisan activists who are skilled at framing issues. Besides, there are times when market models may be appropriate. The market is an efficient way to direct governmental activity and expenditures toward the satisfaction of individual preferences (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2015). As indicated in the delimitation of the study the public service, in the case of the Republic of South Africa, refers to employees in the national and provincial government departments.

1.10.6 Public Administration and New Public Management

Different scholars define the concept of Public Administration differently. Table 2 below identifies some of the definitions of Public Administration.

Table 3: Definitions of Traditional Public Administration

Author(s)	Description
Thornhill & Van Dijk (2010)	Public Administration studies human beings engaged in administrative and managerial duties in organs of state.
Raadschelders (1999)	The intrinsic function of public administration is the governance of society. Public administration exists to realize the governance of society. The purpose of public administration is to govern, and thus government and governance are the core concepts that help us to organize the study of Public Administration.
Rhodes (2015)	Traditional public administration refers to classic bureaucrats working in a hierarchy of authority and conserving the state tradition. Their task is to provide policy advice for their political masters and oversee the implementation of the politician's decision.

Source: Author's illustration

From the above definitions, it can be argued that traditional public administration refers to human beings or employees in government structures with a view of executing public policies or providing goods and services with the aid of administrative and management functions. Two distinguishable sides of public administration, however, exist. There is that part of public administration that refers to the activities of government, that is, the practice of public administration by public officials. The other part refers to public administration as an academic discipline that is taught at institutions of higher learning. In South Africa, we refer to Public Administration in capital letters as an academic discipline and to public administration in small letters as the practice of public administration as an occupation or profession.

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 (Sedibe, 2021). As early as 1971, Vincent Ostrom explored the use of public choice theories due to P(p) public A(a) administration's inability to deal with increasingly difficult problems in the USA (Denhardt 2008:134; Osborne 2010:13). The pragmatic and incremental developments (Denhardt 2008) 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 (Sedibe, 2021). Researchers and practitioners refer to the reforms of the last few decades as new public management (NPM). For Hood (1991), these reforms represented a paradigmatic break from the traditional model of public administration. During this era, several countries became exemplars of NPM, in particular New Zealand and Australia which undertook significant public sector change to break from the bureaucratic paradigm of public administration. In articulating this NPM paradigm in the early 1990s, Hood (1991) set out its key doctrinal components:

- Hands-on professional management.
- Explicit standards and measures of performance.
- Greater emphasis on output controls.
- Disaggregation of units in the public service.
- Greater competition in the public sector.
- Private sector styles of management practice.
- Greater discipline and parsimony in resource use.

Within this new paradigm, the doctrinal components sat alongside four reinforcing mega-trends: slowing down or reversing government growth; privatisation and quasi-privatization; automation in the production and distribution of public services; and an international agenda in public service reforms (Hood 1991). Several years later, Hughes (2006) in his paper on the 'new pragmatism' articulated four grand themes which characterised NPM:

- Management (i.e., results and managerial responsibility) is a higher-order function than administration (i.e., following instructions).

- Economic principles (i.e., drawn from public choice theory, principal-agent theory, contracting, competition, and the theory of the firm) can assist public management.
- Modern management theory and practices (i.e., flexibility in staffing and organisation) can improve public management; and
- Service delivery is important to citizens.
-

According to O'Flynn (2007), NPM can be characterised as both post-bureaucratic and competitive with a clear and dominant focus on results. Public managers in this paradigm had goals built around the achievement of performance targets. In this study, considerable attention will be devoted to the development of new competencies if the SMS are to effectively navigate the complexities that come with paradigmatic Change from traditional public administration to NPM.

1.10.8 Comparison among TPA, NPM, and NPS

The table below provides a comparative analysis of the concepts: of traditional public administration, NPM, and NPS.

Table 4: 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, a more sophisticated dialogue based on positive social science	Democratic theory is, a 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
Mechanism 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 is needed but constrained and accountable
Assumed organizational structure	Bureaucratic organizations are 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
The assumed motivational basis of public servants and administrators	Pay and benefits, civil service protection	Entrepreneurial spirit, ideological desire to reduce the size of government	Public service, desire to contribute to society

Source: Adapted from Denhardt and Denhardt (2011)

1.11. OUTLINE OF THE THESIS

Chapter 1 of the study focuses on the background of the study, the statement of the problem and research questions, the justification of the study, the aim and objectives of the study, research questions, delimitation of the study, limitations of the study, defining operational concepts, and the structure of the thesis.

Chapter 2 explores the constitutional, legislative, and policy frameworks underpinning leadership development in the context of the Republic of South Africa. It examines the leadership challenges confronting the SMS in the context of the South African public service, such as administration dynamics, policy analysis, and implementation.

Chapter 3 focuses on the leadership theories and leadership styles underpinning leadership competencies. Leadership theories include transactional theory, transformational theory, trait leadership theory, complexity leadership theory, contingency theory, and the New Competency Leadership Theory (NCLT). Leadership styles are transformational and transactional leadership styles.

Chapter 4 deals with the significance of developing leadership competencies in public service, approaches to developing leadership competencies and frameworks in public service, comparative analysis of competency frameworks around the world, and strengths and weaknesses in leadership competencies.

Chapter 5 focuses on the mechanisms to enhance the competencies of the SMS of the South African public service. The mechanisms include induction, development through education and training, the role of performance management in enhancing effective performance and succession planning, secondment and exchange, regional workshops, and establishment of a public sector senior leadership development forum.

Chapter 6 presents the main findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the study based on analysis and interpretation of the non-empirical data. The chapter will also summarize the implications of the study.

The next chapter focuses on the constitutional, legislative and policy frameworks underpinning competency development in South Africa.

CHAPTER 2

CONSTITUTIONAL, LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY FRAMEWORKS UNDERPINNING COMPETENCY DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter focused on the Introduction of the study, depicting all the technicalities of the Research. Ineffective leadership in public service is detrimental to the advancement of any society, particularly in a developing country such as South Africa because of a lack of service delivery, low-capacity development, slow building of communities, and the perceived neglect of individuals. However, by identifying the critical success factors for effective management within the Public Service, a framework could be constructed. This leadership framework has the potential to improve service delivery which is beneficial to all citizens regardless of taxpayer status (van Zyl, 2021). This chapter focuses on the leadership challenges confronting the SMS of the South African public service as well as the Constitutional, Legislative, and Policy Frameworks underpinning competency development in South Africa.

2.2 CHALLENGES CONFRONTING LEADERSHIP IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN PUBLIC SERVICE

A study by Kauzya (2017) affirms that South Africa, hence Africa needs a transformative and development-oriented public service leadership to implement the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It argues that one of the biggest challenges in African countries is how to develop and sustain such a leadership. The author contributes to addressing this challenge by outlining what he considers as most critical challenges that must be urgently addressed to have in place the requisite leadership capacities in the public service for transformation and sustainable development (Jabareen, 2008). SDGs bring about a rapprochement between ecological (sustainability) and economic (development) interests. The author challenges South Africa's public service political, technical, and managerial leaders to work with the people and pinpoint the SDGs and objectives that constitute; the higher purpose of public service leadership, commit to eradicating poverty, develop an anti-corruption public service and citizenry, strengthen professionalism, ethics and integrity in the public service, develop durable,

accountable and effective public service institutions, develop transformative service and development orientation in the public service, ensure planned and managed succession, and harness the potential of the diversity in Africa's public service to spearhead sustainable development.

2.2.1 Pinpointing the Higher Purpose of South African Public Service Leadership

Since leadership is essentially a purposeful undertaking, leaders should pursue a higher purpose. This higher purpose motivates junior public servants to “do good for others and shape the well-being of society (Vandenabeele, 2014). Therefore, leaders in Africa’s public service need to be highly purposeful and to be able to make others understand and share in the higher purpose. The very first challenge for any leader in Africa’s public service is to pinpoint the higher purpose that resonates with the aspirations of the African people. The current reality is that the world is complex and is getting more so. Consequently, the leadership’s higher purpose for Africa’s public service is no longer seen in the light of only the national or even regional aspirations of Africans but global as well. Identifying the higher purpose is therefore itself a complex undertaking. It includes community, local, national, regional and global development agenda some of which are not clear even to the people they directly concerned (Kauzya, 2017).

2.2.2 Ensuring Sustainable Development and Poverty Eradication and Freeing the South African People from Poverty and Hunger as a Matter of Urgency

From the 20th to 22nd of June 2012, the heads of state and government and high-level representatives meeting in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, rightly observed that "poverty eradication is the greatest challenge facing the world today and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development". After 15 years of implementing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the first one of which was on poverty eradication, and despite the positive achievements, the proportion of the Sub-Saharan African population living on less than 1.25 dollars per day is 28 % having dropped from 57 % where it was in 1990. (United Nations New York, the Millennium Development Goals Report 2015). Kauzya (2017) argues that this is still unacceptable. African leadership, therefore, should set for themselves a higher target because even if they achieved this, Africa would still be very poor.

The MDGs were the most widely supported and comprehensive development goals the world has ever established. These eight goals and 18 targets provided a concrete framework for tackling poverty, hunger, maternal and child mortality, communicable disease, education, gender inequality, environmental damage, and the global partnership for development. A major part of the MDGs has been at least partially accomplished and many countries are on the way to achieving the MDGs and trying to adopt a sustainable path. However, despite the general positive outputs, global targets will not be met in some regions, particularly sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia. Indeed, MDGs have encountered a range of common challenges. First, they were not the product of a comprehensive analysis and prioritization of development needs and consequently were sometimes too narrowly focused. The inconsistent progress partly indicates a trend over time to focus on a subset of specific targets that were easier to achieve, implement, and monitor. The untied nature of many goals has often affected the creation of the synergies that could arise across these targets and between education, health, poverty, and gender. Even if acceleration in one goal is likely to improve progress in others, these synergies are not always evident and often vary across countries (Lomazzi, Borisch & Laaser, 2014).

Kauzya (2017) argues that the fight against poverty in Africa did not start and did not end with MDGs. The 2015 MDG target year has passed. The United Nations General Assembly in its September 2015 Summit outcome document titled: "Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" set 17 SDGs to replace the MDGs and guide development efforts in all countries for the next 15 years. Goal number one is to end poverty by 2030 in all its forms everywhere. South Africa signed up to the SDGs as a UN member state, and as a developing country with significant socio-economic challenges, including poverty, unemployment, and inequality, the SDGs provide a roadmap for addressing these and promoting sustainable development in the country. While South Africa remains committed to achieving the SDGs and has made some progress towards meeting some targets, it has faced some challenges, notably persistent socio-economic issues, environmental degradation, inadequate infrastructure (including schools), limited resources to invest in the SDGs, poor governance, quantification difficulties and implementation inefficiencies (Jenkin & Sibiya, 2023).

Table 5: Mindsets and Competency Framework for SDGs Implementation

Mindsets	Beliefs	Attitudes	Competencies
Agile Mindset	Change is possible and necessary to address multiple possibilities before quickly reaching a solution; failure is momentary, and any obstacles can be quickly overcome.	Is proactive, comfortable with the uncomfortable and complexity, uses inquisitive thinking and critical reasoning, adopts a holistic view of challenges, eager to learn and improve, willing to fail, and embraces constant change and encourages collaboration and trust.	To have an agile mindset, public servants need to develop competencies in systems-thinking to perceive the links, cause-effect relations, and dynamics affecting sustainable development; risk informed adaptation to maintain effectiveness when experiencing change and continue delivering results within new structures or despite external shocks; and collaboration to perceive problems of common interest and positively conceive that dialogue, coordination, partnerships, and networks can address problems.

Source: United Nations/ Department of Economic and Social Affairs (updated)

2.2.3 Creating and Sustaining Legitimate State Institutions and Boosting Trust in Government

According to Kauzya (2017), the only question worth exploring is how to develop institutions of the state so that it becomes and remains not only capable but also legitimate in the eyes of all stakeholders especially the citizens of the country in question. We must add that the legitimacy of the state resides in several apparatuses including its legal base (e.g., the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 and various legal and policy frameworks), and the effectiveness and durability of public

institutions. One of the biggest challenges of public service leadership in Africa is how to build strong public administration institutions on which to anchor the legitimacy and capability of the state.

According to Pillay (2018), the opinion that there are multiple ways to measure the effects of the perceived lack of integrity on popular trust. Internationally, several surveys have attempted to measure and analyse levels of trust, mainly in the developed world. Most of them, if not all, are perception-based but provide valuable information on the issue. In the South African public opinion political terrain, the recently released opinion polls on existing trust levels towards the state and its organs paint a bleak picture, with a very serious feeling of mistrust towards them. The opinion-based Afrobarometer survey that took place in August-September 2015 (Afrobarometer, in Pillay, 2018), indicated that because of a series of well publicized and much-talked-about events related to the rand and political and administrative corruption, mistrust has become a cruel reality in the country. This mistrust is also rooted in harsher economic conditions for the whole population, especially the most vulnerable sections, and the middle classes, and the lack of service delivery in all layers of the governing apparatus. What also needs to be taken into account is that media reports and an almost relentless wave of community protests have shaped these attitudes.

Efforts to build state capability often take the form of commonly used, highly designed, and engineered best practice solutions that have worked in many other places and that we suspect (and hope) will work again in many contexts. Such interventions do sometimes work, especially when the treatment addresses problems that fester in the context. Where the contextual problems are different, however, the treatment is just isomorphic mimicry - it looks good but will not be a solution to problems that matter. Development organizations often cannot see this, however, and offer the same solution again and again hoping for a different outcome but imposing a capability trap on the policy context, where a new diagnosis and prescription is needed (Andrews, Pritchett & Woolcock, 2015).

2.2.4 Developing and Ensuring Professionalism, Integrity, Ethics, and Accountability to Prevent Corruption in the South African Public Service

Kauzya (2017) argues that the public sector's biggest resource is the people it employs in government departments. In addition, let it not be forgotten that even public service leadership at whatever level is composed of people employed by the public service. Skills and professionalism are scarce resources in the public service. According to Mafunisa (2001), professionalism imbues its practitioners with a *public service ideal* and code of ethics - that is, internalised standards. Pascal Moloi (in Kauzya, 2017) states: "Skills and Professionalism are scarce in public service" in City Press (South Africa, April 2012). Many ingredients need to be combined in strategies and actions for preventing corruption in the public service.

2.2.5 Developing Anti-Corruption Citizenry

Corruption is like a mushroom. You give it the right soil and environment, and it will grow. The right soil and environment for the growth of corruption are constituted by systemic weaknesses in the general society, institutions, and systems, leadership both at political and technical levels and in public servants collectively and as individuals. Strategies for preventing corruption in the public sector must therefore aim at eliminating weaknesses in these areas. This is where those who work on citizen's engagement in preventing corruption in the public service need to be extra careful. The general assumption is that citizens will automatically fight corruption if given an avenue to do so (Kauzya, 2017).

Amongst other mechanisms, the South African government has passed various legislative and policy frameworks for combating unethical conduct in the public service. Sections 181-194 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 provides for chapter 9 institutions for supporting South African democracy. These institutions include the Public Protector, South African Human Rights Commission, Auditor-General, and Electoral Commission. According to Mahomed (2018), South Africa's state institutions supporting democracy, commonly referred to as Chapter 9s, play several roles that overlap significantly with those played by the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government. Dedicated to the entrenchment of good governance, these bodies exist independently from the traditional structures of government, designed to guard against acts of impunity and to foster balance in much

the same way that the checks and balances system, derived from the doctrine of separation of powers, intends to.

Given the above functional interpretation, this chapter contends that the Chapter 9 institutions do constitute a "fourth branch", and that there are significant potentialities for them to utilise this role to contribute to good governance. Ultimately, however, it is recognised that there remain significant challenges that impede the ability of these fourth-branch institutions to contribute robustly and meaningfully to good governance, including a lack of clarity about their position; questions about the enforceability (or lack thereof) of their findings; a paralysing lack of resources; and intrinsic and extrinsic weakening or undermining of the Chapter 9 bodies, often for political purposes. This chapter suggests that these challenges will need to be overcome if the Chapter 9 institutions are to live up to their considerable potential as custodians of good governance in South Africa's constitutional order (Mahomed, 2018).

2.2.6 Developing Service, Transformation and Development-Oriented Leadership

Developing professionalism in the public service needs public sector leaders with capability for the creativity that can shape and project the future of public services. The Public Service Commission (2001) recognizes that corruption is a problem in all spheres of government and as such has established the Chief Directorate: Professional Ethics and Risk Management. The role of this Directorate is to identify and address the weaknesses and vulnerabilities of state management systems and highlight the possibilities these offer for abuse by individuals and syndicates. The development of such a transformative and development-oriented leadership is a challenge that must be addressed because it is part of the key to developing professionalism in the public service on the continent. In this regard, assessment of the type of institutional frameworks and leadership capabilities that are spearheading the public service in light of the requirements that would promote professionalism and prevent corruption is another critical ingredient in the whole task of developing professionalism in the public service (Kauzya, 2017).

Picard (2005) in his book, *The State of the State*, focuses on Institutional transformation, capacity and political change in south Africa and argues that "reorganisation of the South African civil service was needed to create a single set of

structures to ensure that black South Africans could take senior positions in government at both central and local levels”.

Transformative leadership is paramount in creating momentum to pursue excellence in all aspects of public governance; especially in the quality of public services as well as in the way the services are delivered. Transformative leadership will devise the means to scan the future, forecast the coming problems and challenges, and find solutions to them before they emerge. Transformative leadership is critical to achieving sustainable development, not only because of its goals and drive for innovation but also given what it should value: moral courage and human dignity of individuals, collective goals and values of organisations, and social justice and democracy of society (United Nations, "Innovating Governance and Public Administration for Sustainable Development", 2014).

2.2.7 Leading in Times of an Information and Technological Revolution

In layman's language, the way of doing public administration and providing services to the public has drastically been transformed by advances in information and communication technologies. Governments are currently emphasising the power of information and communications technology to strengthen good governance and public service delivery. Consequently, public service leadership seeking to plan, implement, monitor, and evaluate large-scale transformation for Africa's development must master how to lead the large-scale transformation in the context of an information revolution that has the power to change speed, accuracy, timeliness, accessibility, and especially volume and exchange of information and data. Where the public service used to emphasise confidentiality and monopoly of administrative data and information, the demand and necessity now for effective and efficient public service functions require open government data, networked and shared information and data. Open government and open data are becoming buzzwords for openness, transparency, inclusiveness, participation, and accountability (Kauzya, 2017).

Murenzi and Olivier (2017) note that there are increasingly violent community protests throughout the country because of failure to deliver services or poor service delivery; this remains a serious concern for the government in South Africa. The total failure or partial failure to provide quality public services by municipalities in South Africa is often and principally associated with a lack or shortage of skills in municipalities. However,

the lack or poor utilisation of e-government in the majority of municipalities might be another major cause of poor service delivery and the reason for failing to give the best possible value for money. In addition, as more government information and services are moved online, there is an increasing concern that a significant portion of the population, especially the poor and rural population, will be shut off from government information and services and therefore shut off from opportunities for employment, tenders, bursaries, health care, education and other services. This will probably worsen the existing economic inequalities and the digital divide and, will generate more community protests in the future.

Below are some of the policies and legislative frameworks that can assist in the proper implementation of e-service delivery.

- Public Service Act, 1994 (Proclamation 103 of 1994)
- Public Service Corporate Governance of Information and Communication Technology Policy Framework, 2012
- Policy Framework for the Corporate Governance of ICT applies to Corporate Governance of ICT Policy Framework, 2012
- Public Service Regulations (2001) as amended.
- State Information Technology Agency Act, 1998
- Electronic Communications and Transactions Act, 2002; and
- Electronic Communications Amendment Act, 2014.

The purpose of information and communication technology (ICT) is to enable the Public Service in its quest for service delivery. This is the position and the aim of e-service delivery and e-governance, which are primarily aimed at augmenting service delivery and improving relations between municipalities and the general citizenry. There are four pillars of e-governance. However, this is not to suggest that these listed and discussed below are the only pillars. The four pillars below are critical and relevant to South African municipalities given their geographic location. Such pillars are connectivity, knowledge, data content, and capital (Singh, 2012).

2.2.8 Managing and Harnessing the Potential of South Africa's Diversity

Kauzya (2017), argues that African countries have a wealth of diversity in many respects including the diversity of the people. Diversity means different things to

different people. As the number of diverse individuals entering the workplace grows, the issue of "workplace diversity" becomes even more significant. However, workplace diversity refers to more than just cultural differences. It also includes other differences, such as race, sexual orientation, gender, parental status, age, language, geographic origin, differently abled, religion, and culture, and any difference that is irrelevant to one's success in an organisation (Chang, 1996). Managing diversity requires the creation of an open, supportive, and responsive organisation in which differences are valued, encouraged, and managed.

Therefore, diversity management is about taking diversity as part of a country's social capital for development and must include (Kauzya, 2017):

- Identifying and analysing various types of diversities in the society in question in terms of both differences and similarities as well as the potential for development.
- Promoting recognition and acceptance of the various diversities as components of the country's/society's capital.
- Harnessing and tapping the contributions of the various diversities in terms of values, skills, knowledge, and other resources in the process of development.
- Continuous monitoring and evaluation of the evolving diversity components of the society to ensure that new and emerging differences and similarities are not left to develop without being included in the overall picture of the diversity of the society; and
- Providing appropriate incentives and environments for the deployment of the diversity components for positive development purposes that benefit all.

Kauzya (2017) further states that diversity in Africa's public services can be seen in terms of ethnicity, religious affiliations and beliefs, political affiliations, gender, sexual orientation, race, linguistic pluralism, age differences, etc. But for diversity to be effectively managed in a way that taps its potential for development, it must be understood more deeply and widely to include the way people think, norms, values, various knowledge, skills, attitudes, aspirations, outlooks, and organisational culture. Xiaoming and Junchen (2012) define organisation culture as a pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation

and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new employees as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems. This is a critical responsibility for public service leaders in Africa.

2.2.9 Ensuring Orderly and Effective Successions in the South African Public Service Leadership

Organizations of all sizes and industries are currently facing a range of leadership development challenges, including decimated mid-management levels that often rob high-potential managers of critical on-the-job experiences, depleted resources for employee development, and a rapidly aging workforce that may create shortfalls of experienced managerial talent for senior leadership positions (Groves, 2007). In addition, a recent *Journal of Management Development* article (Kilian, Hukai & McCarty, 2005) articulated the specific career advancement challenges that women and people of colour often face in corporate environments, including a lack of mentors and personal networks, stereotyping, and a lack of visible and/or challenging assignments. However, research (Conger & Fulmer, 2003) evidence suggests that many highly successful companies overcome these and other challenges by marrying the leadership development and succession planning processes for optimal identification, development, and placement of leadership talent.

In African countries, argues Kauzya (2017), succession planning is mostly discussed only in terms of politics and elections. It is only looked at in terms of replacement for those who leave the public service leadership. This could be attributed to what happened at independence where Africans had to replace the colonial public service leaders that left. It is also attributed to the traditional career system of the public service where one enters the public service and stays working until retirement. Succession does not have to depend on an executive departure. Effective succession planning should not be a periodic occurrence triggered by such an event. It must be a proactive and systematic investment in building a flow of leaders within the public service, so that when transitions emerge, public service leaders at all levels are available and ready to take up the baton for the relay. The challenge for public service leadership is how to ensure that there is a pool of leaders always to take the lead in knowledge, in innovation, and in transformation in all fields.

African governments must put in place and develop clear and known talent pipelines of capable leaders for the future not only because senior public service leaders eventually retire, but most importantly because issues, challenges, needs, and required capabilities shift with development trajectories. A talent pipeline is a system through which organizations identify, attract, develop, and retain talented people (Drewery, Pretti, Church, 2020) This will avoid the tendency of using leadership capacities and capabilities of yesterday to solve tomorrow's problems.

On the role of succession planning, Ruderman and Ohlott (1994) argue that 31% of promotions were considered developmental. Some organizations are more intentional than others about using promotions as developmental tools. Some organisations make it a practice to place high potential managers in job assignments for which they are no more than 60–70% prepared, thus making it likely that the kinds of challenges that contribute to ongoing development will be encountered (Day, 2001).

Draper (in Sonko, 2017) has provided a discussion of the following environmental forces impacting public sector organisations and creating challenges for leadership:

- The pace of technological change, particularly information and communication technology.
- Globalisation.
- Rising expectations of citizens and consumers with respect to quality service and demands for inclusion in decision-making.
- Increasing diversity in our societies and growing acceptance of the need for organisations to be more inclusive in their approaches to people.
- The demand for more performance-oriented organisations.
- The growing recognition of the importance of alliances and partnerships, and the consequent need for networking among institutions.
- The need to lead significant transformation in organisations; and
- Economic/fiscal pressure.

With regards to the above outlined forces, globalisation deserves special mention. Globalisation encompasses aspects of integration as well as disintegration; pressures and actions towards liberalisation as well as mercantilist competition between states; convergence as well as the accentuation of differences; interdependencies as well as

dependencies and inequalities; the blurring of internal and external distinctions economically as well as their continuing salience politically; global consciousness and awareness as well as ignorance, hostility, and indifference; and, finally, comprehensive constraint as well as a persuasive opportunity (Conley, 2000). This is because top public officers will find it increasingly difficult to transact their respective roles unless they are ready and willing to accept its impact on their performance.

Globalisation in its many forms defines the fundamental challenge to the role of government and public administration in the twenty-first century. It is shaping new types of interactions and interdependence among nations, economies, and people, and, in the process, it is changing the basic roles and functions of government (Sonko, 2017). The primary challenge to public administration is one of connecting government to an increasingly complex, dynamic and networked global environment. This requires collaborating effectively with non-governmental enterprises, particularly the private sector, to shape policy and deliver services while maintaining public accountability. Globalisation changes the basic role of governance: it requires linking versus commanding, convincing versus controlling, and enabling and partnering versus doing.

Kouzes and Posner (in Sonko, 2017) have correctly pointed out that the leadership challenge is about how leaders Mobilise others to want to get extraordinary things done in their organisations. It is about the practices leaders use to transform values into actions, visions into realities, obstacles into innovations, separateness into solidarity, and risks into rewards. It is about a leadership that creates the climate in which people turn challenging opportunities into remarkable success. Therefore, public sector organisations the world over are being challenged to increase their performance and efficiency, modify their attitudes regarding management and leadership, and provide better services to internal clients and the public. Managerial skills and qualities that were important during the past two decades are no longer sufficient to cope with the future challenges; new competences for public sector management therefore have to be introduced. These days, top public managers are expected to be more performance-oriented and less process-compliant.

According to Rosenbaum (in Sonko, 2017), the contemporary world is both a more complicated and interconnected one than in the past (As a result, top-level government

leaders - whether they are elected, appointed or senior civil servants have to increasingly understand a wide array of issues that impact upon government at all levels (supranational, national and sub-national). Rosenbaum further argues that the understanding of such issues is critical to senior level government leaders in at least two ways. First, such issues often are the sources of the everyday problems that governmental leaders must attempt to solve. Second, even when they are not the direct sources of the problems facing governmental leaders, they create the context within which such individuals must operate on a day to-day basis. This means that for contemporary government leaders, inevitably one of their highest priorities is a better understanding of the many complex issues that impact them and their countries. Indeed, without an understanding of such issues, they will find it difficult to institute policies and programmes which produce outcomes reasonably parallel to the intended goals.

Senior public sector officers like other public servants should be subjected to a performance management regime, which takes into account performance against output objectives and behavioural characteristics and includes a personal development plan, with an agreed plan of action to address identified performance gaps. Individuals should receive regular feedback from those to whom they are accountable on progress and performance (Sonko, 2017).

It is important to reiterate that people who reach the top of their field are always in danger of thinking that they have nothing left to learn. If that happens to anyone, it will mark the beginning of the end. As observed in our earlier discussion; to be effective, leaders must always be learners. Continuous employee learning and development (CELD) is widely recognized as an indispensable and efficacious integrated set of planned programmes to equip employees with new tangible and intangible skills, knowledge, expertise and behaviours or offer them professional development opportunities (Daniel, 2018). Continuous employees' learning and development in the public service are a vital means to equip the workforce to deal with changing political, social, economic and technological revolution demands and challenges in the quest to build an ethical, meritocratic and professionalised public service (NPC, 2021; PSC, 2021) and to render quality services to citizens (DPSA, 2013). One can never arrive - one can only strive to get better. Much of what we have found to be required as the necessary competences for top leaders in the public sector involves a change in

mindsets, attitude and behaviour in order to respond to the leadership changes ahead. The possibility of adopting these required behaviours is therefore open to all (Sonko, 2017).

2.3 REGULATORY FRAMEWORKS UNDERPINNING COMPETENCY DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

Public service operations are governed by national legislation and policies promulgated by central departments, provinces and the various departments within the ambit of legislation. The same applies to the process of people management and employee development, inclusive of training and development and the need for progression towards the 4IR. Consequently, the summary below focuses on relevant sections in legislation that apply to either employee development or 4IR in the Public Service. This will assist in providing clarity and context for the subject (PSC, 2021b).

This section focuses on the selected constitutional, legislative and policy frameworks that govern the development of leadership competencies in the SMS of the South African public service.

2.3.1 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996

Section 195 of the Republic of South Africa's Constitution declares that democratic norms and principles must guide public administration, including ethical human resource management and career advancement. It emphasizes the value of utilizing human capital to its fullest, which may be done by continuously training and developing South African public sector personnel (Mnisi, 2015:55).

Section 195 (1) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 outlines the basic values and principles of public administration, namely accountability, transparency and openness, representativeness, professional ethics, efficiency, economy, effectiveness, equity and objectivity. Table 4 below provides for the basic values and principles.

Table 6: Basic Values and principles that govern public administration

Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996	Values and Principles
Section 195 (1)	<p>a. A high standard of professional ethics must be promoted and maintained.</p> <p>b. Efficient, economic and effective use of resources must be promoted.</p> <p>c. public administration must be development oriented.</p> <p>d. Services must be provided impartially, fairly, equitably and without bias.</p> <p>e. People's needs must be responded to, and the public must be encouraged to participate in policymaking.</p> <p>f. public administration must be accountable.</p> <p>g. Transparency must be fostered by providing the public with timely, accessible, and accurate information.</p> <p>h. good human-resource management and career-development practices, to maximise human potential, must be cultivated.</p> <p>i. Public administration must be broadly representative of the South African people, with employment and personnel management practices based on ability, objectivity, fairness, and the need to redress the imbalances of the past to achieve broad representation</p>

Source: Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996)

Section 95 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 refers to expected behaviour in that it specifically refers to the word 'principle', which means "statements or descriptions of what should or should not be done, that describes the rules,

parameters or guidelines for performing the task". It would be important for the public service to become sensitive to the fact that embedded within the stated principles are specific expectations. Expectations on the side of the government that the appointed public managers (strategic leaders) are able (competent) and willing (motivated) to deliver (perform) supposed responsibilities as cited by article 195, and expectations on the side of the community that they will receive the promised services as a result of the appointed public manager's leadership ability.

However, for the public service to instil effective and efficient public service delivery, as well as proper public service governance, would require a proper public service value system, which forms inseparable constituents of public service strategic leadership role descriptors, in particular the generic tasks describing the characteristics and context of expected (outcomes) conduct at the strategic level. Thus, the strategic leadership level descriptors relate to the relevant knowledge, attitude, and skills of the position (subject matter) and the ability to make the most of such competence. The position might also expect abstract abilities, also known as Metacognitive abilities, which a strategic leader should possess at that level (Schutte, Barkhuizen & Swanepoel, 2014).

Section 195 (1) of the Republic of South Africa governs the public service and sets out the nine values and principles of public administration. For this study, the focus is on principle (h) which deals with the cultivation of good human resource management and career development practices, and principle (i) which relates to a representative public administration with employment and personnel management practices based on ability objectivity, fairness and the need to redress the imbalances of the past. Section 195(2) states that the constitutional values and principles apply to all spheres of government, organs of state, and public enterprises (PSC, 2021b). It is expected of the members of the SMS of the public service to manage and lead their respective institutions within the context of these basic values and principles (Rossouw, 2004).

2.3.2 Skills Development Levies Act, 1999 (Act 9 of 1999)

According to the PSC (2021b), the Skills Development Levies Act, of 1999, was developed to provide for the imposition of a skills development levy and any matters connected therewith. Section 20 (3) indicates that every employer is required to pay a skills development levy of one percent of the leviable amount with effect from 1 April

2001. According to section 4 (a), some employers have been exempted from paying the levy and these include Public Service employers in the national or provincial sphere of government. In the absence of paying the skills levy, the DPSA issued a Directive that states that all government departments are required to set aside an amount equivalent to the skills levy or a minimum of 1% of the total department's annual personal budget for training and development of all employees.

Furthermore, the 1% must be appropriated as follows; the first 30% should be allocated for the administration of the Sector Education and Training Authority (SETA) and special projects. These are projects that benefit disadvantaged people such as women, youth, and disabled people, based on their needs as determined by environmental scanning. The special projects need to be approved by the relevant SETA boards and should be in line with the scope and mandate of the respective SETA and should assist in the advancement of the development of the specific sector. The 20% should be used for training and development of unemployed individuals and should thus be directed towards programmes such as internship and learning1 programmes, artisans and technicians. The last 50% of the 1% is supposed to be directed towards capacity building for serving employees, addressing skills gaps and mandatory training programmes (PSC, 2021b).

2.3.3 The Skills Development Act, 1998 (Act 97 of 1998)

The inception of the Skills Development Act was to provide an institutional framework to devise and implement national, sector and workplace strategies to develop and improve the skills of the South African workforce; to integrate those strategies within the National Qualifications Framework contemplated in the South African Qualifications Authority Act, 1995; to provide for learnerships that lead to recognised occupational qualifications; to provide for the financing of skills development by means of a levy-financing scheme and a NSF; to provide for and regulate employment services; and to provide for matters connected therewith (PSC, 2021b).

2.3.4 White Paper on Affirmative Action in the Public Service, 1998

The White Paper is centred on addressing the disparities of the past and seeks to achieve a Public Service that is equitable, representative and well-skilled. Affirmative Action was intended to fast-track the process of redressing the status of

disadvantaged groups such as black people, women and people with disabilities. It is for this reason that education, training and on-going skills development was identified as vital in achieving the socio-economic goals of the new economy and putting an end to the historic marginalisation of some groups (PSC, 2021b). Chapter 2 of the White Paper highlights the importance of an improved and developed skills force. The White Paper argues that if previously disadvantaged individuals are developed and skilled, there is the possibility to fulfil their maximum potential, which will in turn, benefit the Public Service because diverse skills and talents in the Public Service have the potential to improve service delivery.

To provide an institutional framework to devise and implement national, sector and workplace strategies to develop and improve the skills of the South African workforce; to integrate those strategies within the National Qualifications Framework contemplated in the South African Qualifications Authority Act, 1995; to provide for learnerships that lead to recognised occupational qualifications; to provide for the financing of skills development using a levy-grant scheme and a National Skills Fund; to provide for and regulate employment services; and to provide for matters connected therewith.

The Skills Development Act (97 of 1998) forms part of The Skills Development Strategy and serves as one of the important pieces of legislations for skills development in South Africa. "The first Skills Development Strategy was established in March 2001 with the aim of addressing the social and economic problems in South Africa" (Mnisi, 2015:56). Nel, Warner, Botha, Chinyamuringi, Dodd, Du Plessis, Mey, Ngalo, Poisat, Van der Merwe & Van Hoek (2014) states that "the Skills Development Act was promulgated in 1999 with the aim of providing a provision to a new approach to skills development that compliments formal education and ensure that South Africa has a strategic human development approach that improves human capital".

2.3.5 Public Administration Management Act, 2014 (Act 11 of 2014)

To promote the basic values and principles governing the public administration referred to in section 195(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996; to provide for the transfer and secondment of employees in the public administration;

to regulate conducting business with the State; to provide for capacity development and training; to provide for the establishment of the National School of Government; to provide for the use of information and communication technologies in the public administration; to establish the Public Administration Ethics, Integrity and Disciplinary Technical Assistance Unit; to provide for the Minister to set minimum norms and standards for public administration; to establish the Office of Standards and Compliance to ensure compliance with minimum norms and standards; to empower the Minister to make regulations; and to provide for related matters.

2.3.6 A National Implementation Framework towards the Professionalisation of the Public Service, 2020

The purpose of A National Implementation Framework towards the Professionalisation of the Public Service (2020) is to develop a national implementation framework towards the professionalisation of the Public Service. Under the leadership of the Minister for the Public Service and Administration and mandated through the Governance, State Capacity, and Institutional Development (GSCID) Cluster, the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) and the National School of Government (NSG) have been instrumental in conceptualising this document and undertaking consultations thus far.

The objectives of the framework are as follows:

- Entrenching a dynamic system of professionalisation in the Public Service.
- Strengthening and enabling the legal and policy instruments to professionalise categories of occupations in the Public Service.
- Enhancing and building partnerships and relationships with professional bodies.
- Ensuring meritocracy in the recruitment and career management of public servants, which are in line with the National Development Plan and the Medium-Term Strategic Framework.

- Initiating consequence management for material irregularities through the transgression mechanisms available to professional bodies and the Public Audit Amendment Act, 2018 (Act 5 of 2018).

While public servants who belong to professions such as teaching, nursing, auditing, engineering, law, medicine, etc. have the dual benefit, or burden, of navigating their way through detailed codes of conducts that are externally managed, the majority of public servants whose occupations are not regulated by any independent professional association place reliance on the existing generic framework used by the Public Service. This is notwithstanding the lack of clarity and mechanisms on how the Public Service is leveraging the benefits of external professional membership to enhance the professionalism of its employees, where applicable.

2.3.7 National Qualifications Framework Act (NQF), 2008

The National Qualifications Framework makes provision for the responsibilities of the Ministers of Education and Labour, provides for the South African Qualifications Authority, Quality Councils (SAQAC), and transitional arrangements. Moreover, the National Qualifications Framework Act repeals the South African Qualifications Act (SAQA), 1995 and provides for any matters related to the SAQA. The NQF Act ensures that there are provisions made for further development, organisation and governance of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). Section 3 (a) of the Act states that the Act is applicable to qualifications offered by education institutions and skills development providers (PSC, 2021b).

The National Qualifications Framework Act (NQF) of 2008 updated the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) Act from 1995, which had previously established the SAQA. The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) utilizes SAQA to recognize formal learning accomplishments that have been validated, as well as for the accreditation of training providers and the division of vocational, workplace, and university education. A variety of skill development organizations with specialized learning programs and reward structures are also allowed to be established under its provisions (South African Board of People Practice, 2016).

Mohlala (2011) claims that SAQA is tasked with overseeing the accreditation procedures for learning programs offered by SETA, additionally, it is given the duty of creating the National Qualifications Framework and the national standard organizations to develop training standards. It is once more given responsibilities for overseeing the application of standards, approving secondary accreditation of providers and assessors, and certifying national qualifications and credits (Mohlala, 2011).

2.3.8 National Skills Development Strategy III, 2011 -2016

Following the integration of higher education, further education and skills development into a single Department of Higher Education and Training in 2009 the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS III) was introduced. The strategy promotes and prioritises partnership arrangements between employers, public education institutions, private training providers and SETAs. The objectives of the NSDS III must be achieved in such a manner that there will be increased access to training and skills development opportunities for all despite their class, race, gender, age or disability (PSC, 2021b).

The main purpose of the NSDS III is to serve as an overarching strategic guide for skills development and it also serves as a guideline for sector skills planning and implementation in SETAs. The strategy also provides a framework for the skills development levy and the resource utilisation of these institutions as well the NSF and sets out the linkages with, and responsibilities of, other education and training stakeholders.

The NSDS III has eight goals, which are listed below (PSC, 2021b):

- Establishing a credible institutional mechanism for skills planning.
- Increasing access to occupationally directed programmes.
- Promoting the growth of a public further education and training (FET) college system that is responsive to sector, local, regional and national skills need and priorities.
- Addressing the low level of youth and adult language and numeracy skills to enable additional training.
- Encouraging better use of workplace-based skills development.

- Encouraging and supporting cooperatives, small enterprises, worker initiated, NGO and community training initiatives.
- Increasing public sector capacity for improved service delivery and supporting the building of a developmental state; and
- Building career and vocational guidance.

2.3.9 White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service, 1995

Chapter 13 of the White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service, 1995 is dedicated to human resource development and training. The development of human resources has been a priority in post-apartheid South Africa and was one of five key programmes of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP, 1994). The White Paper does highlight the fact that the government will not be able to achieve the development of human resources in the country without the collaboration of other stakeholders. The stakeholders that were identified were the community organisations, private sector agencies and institutions of higher learning (PSC, 2021b).

A strategic framework for effective human resource development entails a number of related elements, and these include (PSC, 2021b):

- The elevation of the role and status of human resource development within the overall framework of government policy.
- The development of effective and lifelong career development paths for all categories of public servants.
- The improvement in employment conditions.
- The introduction of effective appraisal systems, and the use of incentives to reward individual and team performance; and
- The basing of promotion and career advancement on performance rather than on seniority or qualifications.

The White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service, 1995 promotes training and development in the public service as it helps in creating a pool of employees that are professional. Firstly, training helps equip all public servants despite their rank with the relevant knowledge, skills and competences to carry out their jobs effectively and efficiently. Secondly, training forms an integral part of the process of increasing

representativeness within the public service. The third point is that training provides public servants with the opportunity to acquire “new development-oriented professionalism”.

The fourth point is that if training is properly planned, conceived and structured, it can be used as a crucial instrument to not only anticipate but also facilitate the introduction of institutional changes within the Public Service. Lastly, appropriate training has the potential to assist public servants in developing a better understanding of the needs of different communities in which they operate and serve and also enable them to have the capacity to respond appropriately to those needs.

In order to ensure that training achieves its optimal impact, training programmes must be directly and systematically structured and they should be linked to the wider processes of social and institutional reconstruction and development in civil society and within the state itself. It is based on this background that training must include the following traits (PSC, 2021b):

- Training should be needs-based and strategic, as opposed to formalistic and static.
- Training inputs must be directly and dynamically aligned to the institution-building and institution-transforming programmes of public sector organisations.
- Training must be linked to the policy-making process, as this defines both its context and strategic purpose.
- Training must be viewed as an interactive process, involving trainers and learners as well as practitioners from outside the Public Service.
- Training will need in particular to be positively related to the policies on recruitment, promotion, career progression and remuneration in the Public Service; and
- The position, role, and values of trainers as human resource development specialists need to be significantly redefined and enhanced. Overall, The White Paper argues that training should have more focus on national and departmental programmes and these programmes are more often than not dependent on the Accounting Officer with the assistance of external service providers.

2.3.10. Human Resource Development for the Public Service Strategic Framework Vision, 2015

The framework defines human resource development in the Public Service as the efforts undertaken by organisations to ensure that employees are well prepared to perform their responsibilities and grow into viable careers, thereby adding value to the productivity and service of their organisations. The HRD Strategic Framework Vision 2015 serves as a blueprint for action and rests on four distinct pillars relating to the following initiatives.

- Capacity Development
- Organisational Support Systems
- Governance and Institutional Development
- Economic and Growth Development

For this report, the focus will be on Pillar 1: The Capacity Development Initiatives. The pillar emphasizes the "development of human capital for high performance and service delivery". Capacity development is considered to be at the centre of human resources development (HRD) as a profession. Embodied in the capacity development pillar are eight areas of strategic interventions. These are as follows:

- Strengthening systems for workplace learning
- Integrated ABET (Adult Basic Education and Training) framework
- Leadership development management strategies
- A more strategic role for professional bodies – Norms, Standards & Capacity Development
- Promoting learnerships, internships & traineeships
- A National/Provincial Public Service Academy
- E-learning for the Public Service
- Fostering higher educational institution (HEI) and FETC Partnerships

2.3.11 Public Service eLearning Policy Framework, 2015

The DPSA established that access to training was still limited and unavailable in the right place, at the right time and for the right target audience (PSC, 2021b). As part of improving access to capacity development, the DPSA developed the Public Service

eLearning Policy Framework. eLearning is a term used for training interventions and materials that optimally utilise Information and Communications Technologies (ICTs) to support and enhance online learning. eLearning has the potential to improve access, promote uniformity in standards and significantly reduce the cost of capacity development. Research has shown that eLearning leverages online internet-based technology to place the learner at the centre of the learning cycle and allows the learner to carry out self-directed learning rather than simply being given knowledge and expertise through face-to-face classroom learning.

2.3.12 Senior Management Service Handbook, 2003

Chapter 4 of the SMS handbook emphasises the need to integrate the Performance Management and Development of SMS members with all other organisational processes for the Performance Management Development System (PMDS) system to be effective. The chapter also highlights the importance of having strategic HR Planning that is linked to PM&D. This will assist, according to the PSC (2021b), with regard to the identification of the human resource development needs of a department. Jobs will need to be designed, analysed and evaluated in terms of the strategic HR plan and job profiles developed for each job.

2.3.13. White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service, 2000

The White Paper focuses on effective career management, and it enables employees to maximise their career potential by availing themselves of job opportunities, training and development. It also enables employers to develop the organization's human resource capacity while supporting, as far as possible, employees' career aspirations.

2.3.14 Policy and Procedure: The Revolving Door Enablers, 2008

Policy and Procedure: The Revolving Door Enablers, 2008 applies to members of the (SMS members) as contemplated in Chapter 4 of the Public Service Regulations, 2001, as amended. The objective of the policy is to provide the enablers and relevant procedures to establish the mechanisms for movement between the Public Service and academic or other institutions. Secondly, the policy seeks to accord the privilege to an SMS member, who qualifies, to engage in special study, teaching, or research (that may or may not necessarily lead to the attainment of an academic qualification) to improve the SMS member's ability to discharge effectively the management duties

and the service obligations in his or her department and to enhance service delivery across the public service PSC, 2021b).

2.3.15 Green Paper for Post-School Education and Training, 2012

Section 5 of the Green Paper focuses on workplace-based learning since it was established that most of the successful vocational or occupational learning takes place because of an integration of theoretical learning, work-based practical learning, and learning in the workplace. Employee development remains the responsibility of the employer whilst the role of Sector Education and Training Authorities (SETAs) focuses on facilitating and funding training where necessary. The government has also involved the National Development and Labour Council and other stakeholders to re-establish and extend the central role of employers in providing on-the-job training and skills development (PSC, 2021b).

2.3.16 Human Resource Development Strategy for South Africa, undated

The Human Resource Development (HRD) Strategy was developed to provide a plan that will ensure that citizens are equipped to fully participate in society and to allow them to be able to compete for job opportunities or create work opportunities. The HRD strategy has five strategic objectives, namely, improving the foundations for human development, improving the supply of skills, increasing employer participation in lifelong learning, supporting employment growth through innovation and research, and ensuring that the four strategic objectives are linked. The relevant focus of this study relates to strategic objective three which talks about increasing employer participation in lifelong learning. Indicator 17 within the strategic objective on Public Sector Skills for Service Delivery emphasizes enhancing skills and capabilities in the public sector as this will contribute towards improving service delivery in the Public Service (PSC, 2021b).

2.3.17 White Paper on Public Service Training and Education, 1997

The principal aim of the White Paper on Public Service Training and Education, 1997 is to establish a clear vision and policy framework for the process of introducing and implementing new policies, procedures, and legislation that are related to the transformation of Public Service training and education. The White Paper, 1997 recognizes that there are many different types and levels of training and education

(from a professional degree to structured forms of on-the-job training). The White Paper nevertheless rejects the rigid distinction between education and training that has been inherited from the past, which equates education with knowledge acquisition and training with operational skills development.

2.4 CONCLUDING REMARKS

This chapter focused on the challenges confronting leadership in the South African public service as well as the theories that underpin leadership competency in the senior management service of the South African public service. The theories include trait leadership, transactional leadership, transformational leadership, and contingency theory. The challenges include a lack of orderly and effective successions in the public service leadership whereas the regulatory frameworks include the White Paper on Public Service Training and Education, 1997 and the Green Paper for Post-School Education and Training, 2012.

The next chapter focuses on leadership theories and styles underpinning leadership competencies in the South African public service.

CHAPTER 3

LEADERSHIP THEORIES AND STYLES UNDERPINNING LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES OF THE SMS OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN PUBLIC SERVICE

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter focused on Constitutional, Legislative, and Policy Frameworks underpinning competency development in South Africa. According to Khan, Nawaz, and Khan (2016), leadership literature reveals that theories have been refined and modified with time and none of the theories is completely irrelevant. As mentioned earlier, relevance depends on the context in which it is applied. The type of leadership used in functions entailing a very high degree of precision, confidence level, sensitivity, care, and technical expertise may be different than in simple management-oriented portfolios, as one that does not fit all heads. It means that situations, contexts, culture, working environment, new laws and regulations, information overload, organizational complexities, and psycho-socio developments remarkably impact the leadership concept thereby, making it commensurate to the changing organizational dynamics. The leadership competency theories underpinning leadership in public service will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

3.2 LEADERSHIP THEORIES UNDERLINING LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES IN THE PUBLIC SERVICE

The theories that underpin the leadership competencies of the SMS are identified and discussed in the paragraphs that follow. According to Scott (2016), leadership theory is a discipline that focuses on finding out what makes successful leaders excel in what they do.

3.2.1 Traits Leadership Theories

According to Havenga, Mehana, and Visagie (2011), one of the oldest theoretical approaches to leadership is the trait approach to leadership. This approach viewed leadership from the "Great person" perspective and postulated that leaders are born and not made. The notion that leaders are born can best be found in Aristotle's expression that "from the moment of their birth, some are marked for subjugation and

others for command". The aristocratic view (Johnson & Johnson, 1999) that the upper class differs biologically from the lower classes underpins this approach.

The early theorists opined that born leaders were endowed with certain physical traits and personality characteristics that distinguished them from non-leaders. Trait theories ignored the assumptions about whether leadership traits were genetic or acquired. Two types of traits can be identified; emergent traits (those which are heavily dependent upon heredity) as height, intelligence, attractiveness, and self-confidence and effectiveness traits (based on experience or learning), including charisma, as a fundamental component of leadership (Khan, Nawaz & Khan, 2016).

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Trait theories are based on the notion that certain personality traits are dominant in a person's life, and these traits impact how a person interacts with others. Some personality traits are more conducive to successful leadership than others. For example, companies that are looking to promote employees to leadership positions may favour a candidate being a good decision-maker or public speaker. Trait theories identify and measure individual personality characteristics to explain behaviour. A person may be labelled as extroverted, narcissistic, caring, honest, or even dishonest (Tucker & Au, 2016).

Trait leadership theory is relevant to public service leadership competencies in those particular traits such as learning, charisma, and experience influence how the leader interacts with his followers. A leader without charisma does not appeal to his/her followers. This theory can also be relevant to the SMS of the South African public service because it can help to identify and develop leaders with the right qualities.

3.2.2 Contingency Theory

According to Tucker and Au (2016), today's business environment is complex, requiring leaders to tackle complicated issues often in a short period. Contingency or adaptive leadership theories focus on the variables that can impact a leader's decision-making style, and these theories are suitable for today's competitive business environment. In the contingency model, managers choose the leadership style that is best suited for a specific situation. Contingency theory of leadership effectiveness focuses on the combination of the leaders' tasks and motivation and the aspect of the specific situation.

According to Khan, Nawaz, and Khan (2016), the theory of contingency recommends that no leadership style is precise as a stand-alone as the leadership style used is reliant upon factors such as the quality, situation of the followers, or several other variables. "According to this theory, there is no single right way to lead because the internal and external dimensions of the environment require the leader to adapt to that particular situation". In most cases, leaders do not change only the dynamics and environment, employees within the organization change. In common sense, the theories of contingency are a category of behavioural theory that challenges that there is no one finest way of leading/organizing and that the style of leadership that is operative in some circumstances may not be effective in others (Greenleaf, 1977). Contingency theory is relevant to public service leadership competencies in that it encourages leaders to adapt to different ways of doing things, depending on the situation. This theory is related to situational theory discussed in the next section because they are both based on the idea that leaders should adapt their style to the situation.

3.2.3 Situational Leadership Theory

According to Walls (2019), situational leadership requires the person leading to be flexible and modify their behaviour to suit individuality rather than using a single approach. As indicated above, the situational leadership model is an extension of the contingency model suggesting that there is not a one-size-fits-all approach to leadership that will work in all situations within an organization. In the situational

model, leaders must identify their most important tasks or priorities, assess the willingness of their employees to deliver the tasks and decide which type of leadership style to apply (Tucker & Au, 2016).

According to Thompson and Vecchio (2009), situational leadership theory (SLT) possesses several distinct strengths (vis-à-vis other theories of leadership dynamics). Specifically, the theory has stood the test of time in the marketplace of leadership training programs, as it is well-known and commonly used for training leaders. Also, SLT is easily understood, intuitively appealing, and seemingly applicable to a wide range of leadership settings. Furthermore, SLT is distinctly prescriptive (whereas other leadership approaches are comparatively more descriptive) and offers guidelines for interpersonal relations. Related to the prescriptive guidance of SLT is the inherent recognition that there is no single universal style of leadership that is best for all circumstances. Finally, SLT emphasizes the value of (a) understanding subordinates in terms of differential readiness for taking greater responsibility and (b) developing the skill set of followers.

Walls (2019) identifies the benefits of situational leadership as follows:

- It is a more flexible approach to leadership,
- It encourages successful collaboration between students and teachers,
- It is fluid and adaptable to different situations, students and teachers,
- It assesses the maturity levels of each student and allows the teacher to accommodate the individual. It is supportive while still allowing students to practise and grow in confidence.

Although the benefits of situational leadership identified above refer to the teacher-student relationship it relates equally well to leader-follower relationships in public service departments. This is so as the teacher is a leader and students are followers. Thompson and Vecchio (2009) argue that several criticisms of SLT have also been identified in the academic literature. A major criticism lies in the ambiguity surrounding the conceptual definition of follower development level. Originally, the dimension of follower developmental level was defined as the (presumably, equally weighted) combination of follower commitment and competence. However, the result of any type of weighting to create a developmental dimension is then converted (for purposes of

explicating the model's dynamics) from a continuous dimension to a set of discrete categories of follower level of development. For leaders in the public service to be effective in building leadership competencies, SLT plays a major role. This is so that a member of the SMS has to adapt his/her style to suit an individual employee or the environment.

According to Cote (2017), situational leadership focuses on how a leader motivates and influences followers in situations. For this style of leadership to be successful, leaders need to adapt their style to the demands of the followers in different situations. Leadership is focused on two types of dimensions, which are directive and supportive. Leaders evaluate and assess employees based on competence and commitment to perform tasks. Depending on the situation and employee's motivation to complete a task, leaders will change the degree to which they are directive or supportive in meeting the changing needs of employees (Northouse, 2016).

In the last 30 years, situational leadership has experienced many changes and advancements. In 1985 the Situational Leadership II (SLII) model was developed to replace Situational Leadership I (SLI). Compared to the SLI model, the four styles of leadership and development of subordinates were added. In the SLII modes, the leadership styles are labeled in the four quadrants to conceptualize the different styles of leadership, which are (Cote, 2017):

- Style 1: directing – high directive/low-supportive.
- Style 2: coaching with high-directive/high-supportive.
- Style 3: supporting – high-supportive/low-directive.
- Style 4: delegating – low-supportive/low-directive.

Based on the revised SLII model, this provides leaders the flexibility to adapt their leadership style based on the situation, difficulty of the task, and the development level of the follower. For situational leadership to have a positive effect, leaders need to understand and determine where followers are on the developmental continuum and adapt the style of leadership necessary to match the level of commitment and competence in achieving a task (Cote, 2017).

Based on the four types of leadership discussed, each has its own merit in followers in organizations. Transformation leadership focuses on inspiring, motivating, and

empowering individuals to be their best. Transactional Leaders focus on the exchange with individuals by setting goals, monitoring progress, and providing rewards or punishment based on performance. While Pseudo Transformational leaders may lead followers in negative, unethical, and moral directions. For characteristics and behaviors to get results. Lastly, Situational leaders focus on how a leader motivates and influences followers in situations. For the leader to be successful, they need to adapt their style to the demands of their followers in different situations. Cote, 2017.

3.2.4 Transformational Leadership Theory

According to Tucker and Au (2016), charismatic and transformational leaders rely on their personalities to appeal to their followers. This type of manager can inspire their employees to achieve their goals through their articulate speaking ability, active listening skills, and positive attitude. Transformational leadership is one of the newer types of leadership researched with a focus on the needs of today's employees, due to the times of uncertainty when employees need to be inspired and empowered. Transformational leadership is a process in which the leader and follower engage and form a connection that raises the level of motivation and morality to a higher level (Cote, 2017).

Transformational leadership occurs when leaders, according to Bas (1990: 19) "inspire, energize, and intellectually stimulate their employees". He believes through adequate training managers can learn the necessary techniques and qualities to make them proficient in becoming transformational leaders. This type of leader focuses on the follower's values, emotions, ethics, and long-term goals while assessing motives, and satisfying their needs in a transformational process that changes people. On the positive side of leadership, transformational leadership can be viewed in a diverse range of leadership roles. In the organization, leaders can influence followers on a one-to-one connection, larger groups, or the entire organization. As organizations precipitate change, the leader plays a pivotal role while the transformational process is dependent on the strong bond between leader and follower (Cote, 2017).

Transformational leadership distinguishes itself from the rest of the previous and contemporary theories, based on its alignment to a greater good as it entails the involvement of the followers in processes or activities related to personal factors towards the organization and a course that will yield certain superior social dividends.

Transformational leaders raise the motivation and morality of both the follower and the leader (Khan, Nawaz & Khan, 2016). It is considered that transformational leaders "engage in interactions with followers based on common values, beliefs, and goals". This impacts the performance leading to the attainment of the goal. As per Bass, a transformational leader, "attempts to induce followers to reorder their needs by transcending self-interests and strive for higher order needs".

Transformational leadership is considered an effective way to mobilize subordinate members of a group to put the organization first and strive to work beyond expectations. Transformational leaders pay attention to the development needs of each follower. Transformational leaders can change the consciousness of the followers to old problems by using new ways, and the leader can get followers to expend extra effort to achieve group goals. The transformational leadership model is more based on the leader's efforts to change the values, beliefs, and needs of subordinates. Transformational leadership is a long-term perspective, which not only emphasizes attention to the present situation but also pays attention to future situations. Which will come (Sari, Alfitri & Najib, undated).

The Seybold Report (Sari, Alfitri & Najib, undated) identifies the characteristics of transformational leaders as follows:

- Charisma: gives vision and a sense of mission, instils pride, and earns respect and trust.
- Inspiration: communicating high expectations, using symbols to focus on efforts, and describing important intentions in simple terms.
- Intellectual stimulation: encourages intelligence, rationality, and careful problem-solving.
- Individual consideration: provide personal attention, serve employees personally, train and advise.

According to Kim, Kang, and Lee (2023), transformational leadership (TFL) is conceptualized as 'the process of influencing major changes in the attitudes and assumptions of organization members and building commitment for the organization's mission, objectives and strategies. Although prior research has proposed a positive or a negative relationship between TFL and ethical behaviour, relatively little research

has specifically examined whether this linear relationship is always consistent. More precisely, although the arguments for the reducing effects of transformational leadership on unethical behaviour are acceptable, we argue that transformational leadership can encourage public employees to act unethically for their organization before arriving at certain levels of intensity.

Research conducted by Naidoo in 2004, 2006, and 2010 found that many managers in the South African public service have been trained in some elements of managerial leadership. However, despite this training, not all managers have a complete understanding of government priorities. Neither do they have the necessary skills to translate government policy into sustainable programs that positively impact the lives of citizens. Vanmullem and Hondeghem (2009) pointed to the critical need for transformational leadership in the public service. They mention the "four I's" skills of a transformational leader, namely idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualised consideration.

Eliassen and Sitter (2008) contended that transformational leadership entails empowering and motivating individuals, which leads to self-sacrificing and minimising resistance to change. According to Ingraham (2009b, p. 218), some leadership challenges pertain to changing mission demands, uncertain resources, human resource issues, and political oversight. Ingraham's view correlates with that of Vanmullen and Hondeghem, namely that transformational leadership needs to be considered. If a leader has the skills of a transformational leader, it will be possible to address the changing mission demands and political oversight, to mention but a few.

We've seen that transformational leadership has proven to be a desired model of leadership based on research regarding the impact on organizational outcomes, follower's commitment, and different types of performance. But how does it perform in the public sector? It should be noted that there are significant dissimilarities between public and private organizations. Major differences relate to values, structure, legal framework, interest representation, purpose, culture, and impact of decisions. Add to this the specific environment of public administration which is traditionally regarded as a system characterized by inertia, rigidity, and immovability (Hinea, 2008) and the fact

that, modern public administration faces tremendous political, economic, technological, and social challenges (Mora & Ticlau, 2012).

The issue of performance also needs considering, performance measurement being more difficult to do in the public sector, in large part because public organizations usually pursue multiple goals simultaneously; many of whose outcomes are noneconomic. Lastly, authority is more diffuse, and fragmented, and outside pressures are stronger, thus decisions are far more complex and cumbersome, leaving leaders in a continuous battle to find support from other stakeholders for their policies. A side effect of lack of authority is a difference in the leader-follower relationship - public sector leaders often lack the range and flexibility of rewards and the discretion and authority with which to incentivize alignment and sanction divergence among subordinates, including the freedom to hire and fire (Van Slyke & Alexander, 2006: 368). All this is an argument for the increased pressures on public sector leaders compared to their private counterparts. Some authors claim that transformational leaders are expected to be both less common and less effective in public sector organizations than in the private sector (Mora & Ticlau, 2012).

It should be noted that emphasis on mission may make transformational leadership particularly useful in public (and non-profit organizations) given the service and community-oriented nature of their missions. The fact that transformational leaders represent models for followers, stimulate innovative thinking, and motivate employees to achieve success and perform beyond their limits, is a strong argument for encouraging this type of leadership in the public sector. One example of a reform that could offer the possibility to promote the transformational leadership model in local public institutions is the introduction of the Public Administrator position starting in 2006. As Balica argues (2008) in some ways the Romanian form of the Public Administrator gives more flexibility and possibility to adapt to a changing environment compared to the American counterpart. Because of the high hierarchical position occupied in the organization, the local Public Administrator can become an agent of change and thus a true transformational leader (Mora & Ticlau, 2012).

Lastly, the issue of ethics and public values does not contradict the transformational model. Bass and Steidlmeier (1999) argue that transformational leaders would use their charisma in a socially constructive way to serve others. Keeley (1995) states that

transformational leaders can be very effective ethical leaders. Burns (1978: 20) claims that transforming leadership is motivating, uplifting, and ultimately "moral, in that it raises the level of human conduct and ethical aspirations of both the leader and the led." In conclusion, transformational leadership has all the ingredients to be implemented and performed successfully in the public sector (Mora & Ticlau, 2012).

3.2.5 Transactional Theory

The leadership theories, by the late 1970s and early 1980s, activated to diverge from the specific perspectives of the leader, leadership context, and the follower and toward practices that concentrated further on the exchanges between the followers and leaders. Transactional leadership was described as that in which leader-follower associations were grounded upon a series of agreements between followers and leaders (House & Shamir, 1993). The transactional theory was "based on reciprocity where leaders not only influence followers but are under their influence as well". Some studies revealed that transactional leadership shows a discrepancy in the level of leaders' actions and the nature of their relations with their followers (Khan, Nawaz, and Khan, 2016).

Transactional leadership mainly relies on the exchange of rewards or sanctions between leaders and employees. In other words, transactional leaders set clear performance targets, monitor employee attainment towards those targets, and take action for results such as rewarding employees for high performance or punishing them if their work results are unsatisfactory. In this sense, this leadership is quite similar to other managerial strategies such as 'management for results' wherein leaders provide support and resources to their followers in return for their efforts and achievements, while punishing them if they fail to achieve their goals. The reward-punishment systems associated with goals have been known to have a significant impact on individual attitudes and behaviours. Using the formal system of rewards and punishments, leaders can exert a strong influence on the ethicality of their subordinates (Kim, Kang & Lee, 2023). It is difficult for one person to have all the competencies needed to get the job done, this refers to the member of the SMS, but everybody, including junior public officials, has certain skills to get the job done. This is at the heart of the transactional leadership theory where both the leader and the follower inspire and complement each other.

3.2.6 New competency leadership theory (NCLT)

According to Tucker and Au (2016), the proposed leadership model, the new competency leadership theory (NCLT), combines leaders' existing competencies with the skills needed in a particular situation. Leaders are cognizant of the leadership competencies they currently possess, concede their competency deficiencies, and comprehend how prospective and current employees align with these competencies. These three C's approaches (cognizance, concession, comprehension) may lead to a more harmonious work environment. The NCLT focuses on both the public managers and the junior officials so both sides address their key competencies in an environment where there is no distinctive hierarchy. Rather, employees and supervisors manage each other. This theory follows a servant-supportive leadership atmosphere where employees and their supervisors focus on their strengths and recognize their weaknesses. This theory takes a manager's traits, skills, and experiences into consideration, as well as the competencies managers are building with employees. For the successful implementation of the NCLT, an organization must have a learning orientation. The process involves managers and employees evaluating each other, and the organization's culture needs to embrace continuous improvement. In a learning organization, managers are open to criticism so they can gain new leadership skills. The significance of NCLT to public service leadership competency is indicated by the acknowledgment of leadership competency gaps within an individual member of the SMS. The NCLT requires the SMS member to acknowledge the competencies he/she currently possesses and seek to develop the ones he/she runs short of.

3.2.7 Agile Leadership Theory

The workload in public administrations increases because of the demands of citizens, crises, or short-term changes in legislation. In these times, in particular, public administrations can be overloaded and must have the ability to react to changes flexibly. This being said public administrations are often clearly defined in terms of their structure and organization and changes can only be implemented with a lot of bureaucratic effort. New developments are managed using established mechanisms of governance, with stability and accountability as the main values. In addition, decisions are made based on fixed criteria. The contracting of projects to external service providers is usually regulated by objective procurement procedures (Looks,

Fangmann, Thomaschewski, Escalona & Schön, 2024). Furthermore, extensive documentation is often used in project management. Requirements tend to already be completely defined at the beginning of a project and the scope is fixed. These conditions in public administrations lead to challenges such as strong hierarchies, insufficient communication, and even anxiety about change.

Chatwani (2019) argues that agility denotes an organisation that is lean, innovative, customer-oriented, flexible, adaptable, and quick to respond to changes. According to Dahmardeh and Banihashemi (2010), the concept emphasises an organisation wide capability to adopt information systems, organisational structures and right mindsets in particular. After critical evaluation of various views expressed on agility, Yusuf et al., (2014) infer that in manufacturing context, agility describes a successful adoption of competitive forces to deliver a customer-driven product and services in an unpredictable business environment.

Agile leadership is defined as the ability of a leader to make judicious and effective decisions amidst complex, volatile and swiftly changing environment. It describes the capacity to take intelligent and prudent actions under situations characterised by high uncertainty, complexity, and rapid change. It is the ability to learn new styles of leadership and flexibly switch the already mastered leadership styles to quickly respond to dynamic and changing circumstances. Agile leadership is more about embracing an adaptively flexible strategy based on external and internal changes and creating a value-connected experience between all stakeholders by empowering organisational actors (Chatwani, 2019).

Table 7: Tenets & Results of connected & agile leadership to public service

Tenets	Description	Results	Description
Empower people	<p>Titles no longer drive power. It comes from relationships and connections in today's organisations.</p> <p>Leadership is no longer just about setting expectations and directing others to meet them. Today's leaders seek to empower employees to make decisions and to contribute their unique perspectives</p>	Invite everyone	<p>Connecting leaders can help convene diverse stakeholders to work toward common goals and drive innovation by making engagement the cornerstone of all economic development efforts. An inclusive effort will unite different sectors, industries and voices that are multigenerational and ethnically, racially, socio-economically, geographically, and gender di-verse.</p>
Be transparent	<p>Along with autonomy and empowerment, connect-ed leadership promotes an inclusive organisational culture through transparency.</p> <p>Leadership must involve employees in decision-making and recognise staff contributions, which will help generate the buy-in needed to execute initiatives and programs successfully</p>	Build trust	<p>Connected leaders can also work to engender a sense of community between team members and stakeholders, which builds trust and increases the likelihood of better outcomes. Public service organisations will foster credibility and support for their initiatives by opening the lines of communication and providing a better under-standing of stakeholder needs and expectations.</p>
Stay agile	<p>In today's rapidly changing world, agility is crucial to organisational</p>	Create consensus	<p>Leaders who emphasise shared values and goals can best facilitate the alignment of stakeholders around a shared</p>

	resiliency. Connect-ed leadership enables public service organisations to respond quickly to shifting market dynamics.		vision for economic development. A collaborative strategic framework and clearly defined priorities ensure that efforts are focused and coordinated.
Create balance	Connected leaders understand the importance of promoting balance and leading with compassion. They are replacing fear-based leadership styles with approaches prioritising empathy and purpose.	Responsiveness	Help generate ideas that will streamline your whole organisation and save money simultaneously. This helps create a culture of continuous improvement. Responsive leaders see and manage the behaviours that aren't helpful and model those that are helpful.

Sources: *Developed by the Authors from McDonald (2023) & Daniels (2021)*

As illustrated in Table 2 above, it is evident that connected and agile leadership, if implemented adequately within modern public service organisations, can bring employee and stakeholder morale that will generate effectiveness in service delivery. Public value, the new public administration theory, requires embracing connected and agile leadership to enhance the delivery of public value (Matshabaphala and Ringson, 2022). According to Hayward (2015), connected leadership marks a pronounced shift from the old hierarchical command and control to the new model of leading through influence. According to Matshabaphala and Ringson (2022), responsiveness and organisational agility are critical to maintaining public service leadership in good shape and sustainability.

3.2.8 Transcendental Leadership Theory

A much newer concept in leadership is the notion of transcendental leadership, which extends beyond the transactional and transformational theories of leadership. It argues that for leadership to find meaning, it must be value-based and spiritual. In

transcendental leadership, leadership is formed by mutual consent, and traditional leadership roles are replaced by co-ordinators (Oesterberg, 1993).

Liu (2007) opines that leadership can be portrayed as a spiritual relational process in the postmodern spiritual workplace (and transcendental leadership can be viewed as a field of inquiry within the broader context of workplace spirituality (Fry, 2003). Transcendental leadership uses values, attitudes, and behaviours (altruistic love, hope/faith, vision) to intrinsically motivate followers, thus increasing followers' senses of spiritual survival, i.e., calling (life has meaning, make a difference) and membership (interconnection, be understood, be appreciated), and the resulting positive organizational outcomes. In addition, transcendental leadership is a "visioning process", an "ethical process that reflects requirements for legitimacy for both leader influence and follower empowerment to facilitate value congruence "(Fry, 2003, 2005). Therefore, transcendental leadership is both followers centred and a leader-centred process.

The term transcendental leadership is used to describe transformational leadership that is also based on particular values and ethics, such as collaboration and service orientation. It is about leadership wisdom, the ability to know what is needed at the moment and to appropriately fulfil a worthwhile purpose (Verwey, 2006). The notion of transcendental leadership and its core elements and purpose resonates with Mbigi's (2005) view of African leadership. He asserts that the ultimate task of leadership in African organisations and communities is to develop intelligent cultural strategies rooted in African cultural belief systems and thought, to ensure sustainable development and transformation.

3.3 LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES THROUGH REVIEW OF TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP LITERATURE AND LEADERSHIP THEORIES

The previous chapter focused on leadership theories and styles underpinning leadership competencies of the SMS of the South African public service. Fotso (2021) identifies nine leadership competencies through the review of "traditional" leadership

literature:

- Adaptability refers to leaders adapting their behaviour and leadership style to their situation and to the people they are overseeing, who have different needs, feelings, experiences and expertise.
- Values refer to the way a leader anchors their behaviour and decisions. Leaders are expected to be results-driven, hardworking, to put trust at the centre of their relationship with followers, to value the well-being of others and work toward the greater good.
- Cognitive skills relate to a leader's intellectual, conceptual and visionary ability.
- Transformational ability is a leader's ability to achieve social change, to demonstrate charisma with a vision and mission and to represent a heroic figure. Transformational ability also includes the ability to inspire others by assigning meaningful tasks and offering an appealing vision to relate to.
- Self-awareness is associated with the leader having an understanding of their own needs, wants, expectations and drive. They are expected to show self-confidence, be tolerant of stress and fully aware of the purpose they seek. leadership competencies.
- Social skills are the ability of the leader to connect and feel at ease when interacting with others by showing interpersonal skills and being close to people.
- Communication skills are described as excellent oral communication and strong listening skills.
- Human orientation refers to the extent to which leaders pay attention to people, how much they show consideration and focus on the development of individuals through coaching and feedback.
- Organizational skills refer to the ability of leaders to organize work by distributing roles, providing planning and structure, conducting follow-up, setting objectives and direction.

To better respond to the requirements of the twenty-first century, the following eight competencies are identified by Fotso (2021) during the review of the “traditional leadership theories” literature review should incorporate additional abilities as here

shown: (1) Human orientation – Leaders should pay much greater attention to people than before by showing more empathy and making people's well-being, even more, a priority, (2) Organizational skills – The leader should still be able to keep providing structure but doing so through new media and information technologies and more in a team setting, (3) Adaptability and flexibility – In addition to adaptability, flexibility is now also considered a key skill for leaders to be able to quickly change the course of action in the current fast-changing environment, (4) Values – Leaders are expected to demonstrate a number of key values in modern times, such as curiosity, authenticity, optimism and moral virtue, (5) Cognitive skills – In today's world more cognitive abilities are needed. Leaders should be able to analyse and synthesize a large amount of information and to formulate sustainable strategies. Creativity, innovation and the ability to think and act with an entrepreneurial mindset are also required, (6) Self-awareness – As the world becomes more complex and uncertain, leaders need to show more self-confidence, tolerance to high stress and be fully aware of their purpose and motivation.

They are expected to now show self-reflection, as the ability to entertain a critical analysis of oneself and one's actions and be willing to change, Self-regulation, being aware of their own emotions and behaviours and be positive, (7) Transformational ability – Leaders are increasingly expected to bring change, which entails both initiating and implementing change and (8) Communication skills – Leaders are required to be able to communicate through new media technologies and social networks. For a member of the SMS to be effective and efficient in the performance of the delegated duties, he/she needs to possess the following competencies, inter alia, self-awareness, transformational leadership, cognitive skills and values. Values may include the basic values of public administration including accountability and integrity.

3.4 TRANSACTIONAL-TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP PARADIGM

One of the most established sets of leadership research is the transactional-transformational leadership paradigm, which, according to Gerson (2020) is a proven universal phenomenon in all cultures. At its most basic, leaders and followers enter into an exchange through a process of negotiation. Leaders then reward or punish

followers depending on the level and quality of their achievements. This is transactional leadership. In contrast, transformational leadership recognises the role of intrinsic motivation in the leader-follower relationship. “Authentic transformational leaders motivate followers to work for transcendental goals that go beyond immediate self-interests. Bass (in Gerson, 2020) identifies the following components of transformational leadership:

- Idealised influence (charisma): leaders display conviction; emphasise trust; take stands on difficult issues; present their most important values; and emphasise the importance of purpose, commitment, and the ethical consequences of decisions.
- Inspirational motivation: leaders articulate an appealing vision of the future, challenge followers with high standards, talk optimistically with enthusiasm, and provide encouragement and meaning for what needs to be done.
- Intellectual stimulation: leaders question old assumptions, traditions, and beliefs; stimulate in others new perspectives and ways of doing things; and encourage the expression of ideas and reasons.
- Individualised consideration: leaders deal with others as individuals; consider their individual needs, abilities, and aspirations; listen attentively; further their development; advise; teach; and coach.

Transformational leadership is when leaders and followers increase their motivation and performance while inspiring organizational change through awareness and vision; this leadership style promotes organizational change and more committed employees. Transformational leadership is characterized in four dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Idealized influence involves charisma and gaining the follower's trust to get the followers to identify with the leader. Inspirational motivation is the degree to which leaders articulate their vision to followers; intellectual stimulation is when leaders challenge the status quo and promulgate followers' ideas. Individualized consideration is the degree to which leaders appeal to follower's needs (Piccolo & Colquitt, 2006).

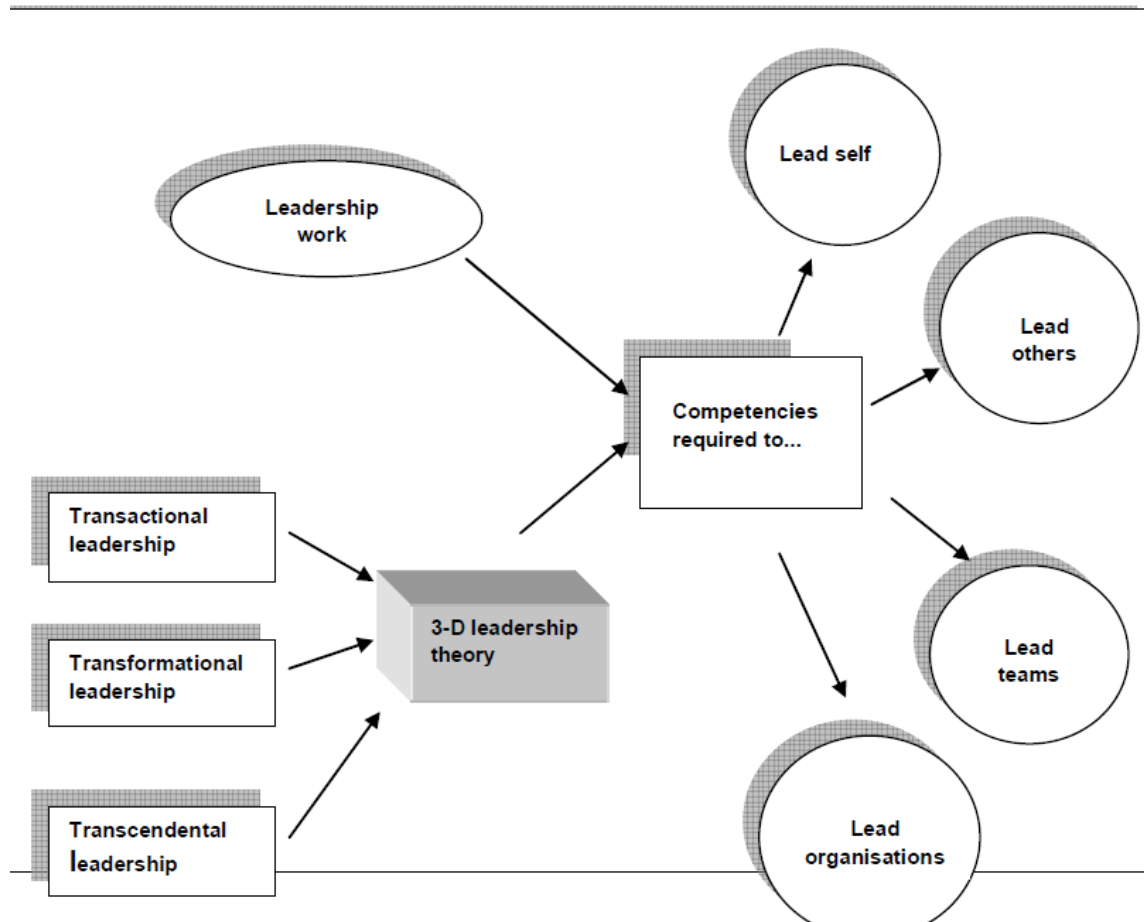
The concept of leadership, in this thesis, refers to the way senior civil servants work towards governance objectives through/with others. This implies two basic dimensions. First, leadership is about achieving objectives which change and improve upon the status quo, implying some kind of change, innovation and/or transformation. Second, leaders don't achieve objectives alone. Leadership is an interpersonal phenomenon, and so leadership is about the relationship between individuals or groups (Gerson, 2020).

3.5 THE THREE (3) DIMENSIONAL LEADERSHIP CONCEPTS

The three (3) dimensional leadership competency model, which derives its insights and ideas from the transactional, transformational and transcendental approaches to leadership discussed earlier, is the outcome of the evolution of theoretical approaches to leadership that has unfolded over the years. This approach to effective leadership is informed by the realisation that successful leaders tend to be eclectic leaders, with the ability for flexibility and adaptation to time and circumstances (Havenga, Mehana & Visagie, 2011).

A generic framework for leadership competencies that integrates the views of transactional, transformational and transcendental leadership theories into a three (3) dimensional theoretical framework that defines competencies that lead to the management of self, others, teams and the organisation is suggested by Verwey (2006). According to Verwey (2006), transactional, transformational and transcendental leadership must be viewed from a three (3) dimensional perspective that defines the work of leadership. Whatever the perspective, for leadership to be effective, certain competencies are required of the leader. The framework proposed by Verwey (2006) is illustrated diagrammatically as Figure 1.

Figure 1. Abilities of leaders



Source: Verwey (2006)

Havenga, Mehana and Visagie (2011) are of the opinion that these central tenets of the “3-Dimensional leadership concept” make it a particularly attractive model because any relevant learning programme to develop leadership skills must consider the context within which leadership is practiced, since the specific social, cultural and political variables govern interactions between individuals. It is from understanding the rules that govern these interactions that strategies and processes of effective leadership can be designed for implementation.

In view of the historical and unique political context under which the public service system has evolved in South Africa, the “Three dimensional (3) leadership concept” is likely to be suitable for developing the new kind of leadership skills required for a transparent and effective public service, because it can capacitate leaders (i) to manage change while equally managing transactions for sustainable and quality service delivery and (ii) to address the tensions that sometimes occur between the

elected and administrative leaders in in the public service (Havenga, Mehana & Visagie, 2011).

3.6 LEADERSHIP STYLES UNDERPINNING LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES

This section focuses on the leadership styles underpinning public service leadership competencies. Scott (2016) defines a leadership style as a “leader’s ability to direct, manage, motivate and guide groups of people”. It refers to the way in which the functions of leadership are carried out and the way in which the manager behaves towards members of a group.

According to Havenga, Mehana and Visagie (2011), leadership competencies have been associated with leadership styles. The competencies of leaders were a function of personal style. Two different roles exist in organisations. One is the leadership role that is about doing the right thing and is associated with giving vision and direction. The other is the managing role, which is doing things right.

Robertson (2015) defines leadership style as being shaped after the behaviour of the leader, which is considered in the “behaviourist theory”. Robertson (c. 2015) argues that “within this category, different patterns of leadership behaviour are observed and then categorized as leadership styles” and that “practicing managers tend to be the most interested in researching this particular theory because with its leaders have the ability to alter their style based on the beliefs, values, preferences and culture of the organization they work for”. An organisation that is, for example, interested in how decisions are made may define leaders as either “autocratic or democratic” whilst another organisation that may have more interest in how leaders handle situations define leaders as being “charismatic, participative, situational, transactional, transformational, quiet or servant-like” (Robertson, 2015).

Schwella (2008: 39) agrees that leadership styles are differentiated according to “whether leaders are task oriented or people-oriented”. Task-oriented leaders focus on the job at hand and have an autocratic leadership style, whilst people-oriented (or relationship-oriented) leaders focus on motivating their teams for improvement and therefore have transformational leadership styles. As mentioned, the qualities of a leader will determine their leadership style. The next section will cover styles of leadership, each one is explained briefly.

Research suggests that creating the appropriate climate within a team can account for approximately 30% of the variation in its performance and that the leader has a critical influence on this climate. About 70% of an organisational climate is influenced by the styles (or consistent patterns of behaviour) a leader deploys in relating to others within the team (PIU Research Study, 2005).

3.6.1 Transformational Leadership styles

Transformational leadership style: The “transformational leader” influences people “to look beyond their self-interest” and “to embrace change”, and commits people to greatness (Scott, 2016). Transformational leadership style concentrates on the development of followers as well as their needs. Managers with transformational leadership style concentrate on the growth and development of value system of employees, their inspirational level and moralities with the preamble of their abilities. The aim of transformational leadership would be to „transform“ people and organizations inside a literal sense - to alter them in the mind and heart, insight and understanding clarify reasons make behaviour congruent with values, concepts and brings about changes which are permanent, self-perpetuating and momentum building (Nanjundeswaraswamy & Swamy, 2014).

According to Bruce and Timonhy (1995), transformational leaders are able to define and articulate a vision for their organizations and their leadership style can influence or “transform” individual-level variables such as increasing motivation and organization-level variables, such as mediating conflict among groups or teams. DuBrin (2010) argues that the “transformational leader” influences people “to look beyond their self-interest”, “to embrace change” and commits people to greatness.

According to Bass and Avolio, transformational leaders display behaviours associated with five transformational styles:

Table 8: Transformational Leadership Styles and Behaviours

Transformational Style	Leader Behaviour
1) Idealized Behaviours: living one's ideals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk about their most important values and beliefs, • Specify the importance of having a strong sense of purpose, • Consider the moral and ethical consequences of decisions, • Champion exciting new possibilities • • Talk about the importance of trusting each other
2) Inspirational Motivation: inspiring others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Talk optimistically about the future, • Talk enthusiastically about what needs to be accomplished, • Articulate a compelling vision of the future, • Express confidence that goals will be achieved, • Provide an exciting image of what is essential to consider, • • Take a stand on controversial issues
3) Intellectual Stimulation: stimulating others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-examine critical assumptions to question whether they are appropriate, • Seek differing perspectives when solving problems, • Get others to look at problems from many different angles, • Suggest new ways of looking at how to complete assignments, • Encourage non-traditional thinking to deal with traditional problems, • Encourage rethinking those ideas which have never been questioned before
4) Individualized Consideration: coaching and development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spend time teaching and coaching, • Treat others as individuals rather than just as members of the group • Consider individuals as having different needs, abilities, and aspirations from others, • Help others to develop their strengths, • Listen attentively to others' concerns, • •Promote self-development
5) Idealized Attributes: Respect, trust, and faith	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instil pride in others for being associated with them, • Go beyond their self-interests for the good of the group, • Act in ways that build others' respect, • Display a sense of power and competence,

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • Make personal sacrifices for others' benefit • Reassure others that obstacles will be overcome
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Source: Bass and Avolio (1994)

Transformational leadership links with positive outcomes on individual as well as organizational levels. Transformational leaders embolden followers to attain higher-order needs like self-actualization, self-esteem, and are influential in surging followers' motivation in the direction of self-sacrifice and achievement of institutional goals over personal interests. Leaders with Idealized Influence demonstrate heightened concerns and cognizance of followers' needs and generate a sense of shared risk-taking. Inspirational Motivation affords a cradle of encouragement and challenges followers to achieve the set goals, whereas Intellectual Stimulation inspires followers to be more creative and innovative in their problem-solving skills. Transformational leaders grade their relationships with followers very high in priority and demonstrate individualized consideration in meeting their needs for empowerment, achievement, enhanced self-efficacy and personal growth (Khan, Nawaz, Khan & Khan, 2016). Transformational leadership style is essential for the development of public service leadership competency in that it encourages leaders to inspire or motivate their followers to achieve institutional goals ethically and professionally.

3.6.2 Transactional Leadership style

The transactional leader “transacts” (or negotiates) with the follower by exchanging reward for task completion (Scott, 2016). Three components comprise transactional leadership style. These are: contingent reward, management-by-exception (active) and management-by-exception (passive). A transactional leader follows the scheme of contingent rewards to explain performance expectation to the followers and appreciates good performance. Transactional leaders believe in contractual agreements as principal motivators and use extrinsic rewards toward enhancing followers' motivation. The literature revealed that the “transactional style retards creativity and can adversely influence employees job satisfaction. Management-by-exception explains leaders' behaviour with regards apt detection of deviations from expected followers' behaviour. The application of both styles varies from situation to situation and context to context. The situations entailing high degree of precision, technical expertise, time-constraints, particularly in technological intensive

environment, we shall prefer transactional leadership whereas, in human-intensive environment, where focus is on influencing the followers through motivation and respecting their emotions on the basis of common goals, beliefs and values, preferable option is transformational leadership style (Khan, Nawaz, Khan & Khan, 2016).

Transactional leadership depends on contingent reinforcement, either positive contingent reward or the more negative active or passive forms of management-by-exception. Transactional leaders motivate followers through exchange; for example, accomplishing work in exchange for rewards or preferences. Kahai, Sosik and Avolio (1997) found group efficacy was higher under the transactional leadership condition. According to Burns¹¹, transactional leader tends to focus on task completion and employee compliance and these leaders rely quite heavily on organizational rewards and punishments to influence employee performance (Nanjundeswaraswamy & Swamy, 2014). Members of the SMS must understand their individual subordinate employees that some are capable of exercising self-control and others need to be forced to comply with legislative.

3.6.3 Situational leadership style

The “situational leader” makes their behaviour “contingent on situational forces” (e.g., member characteristics, internal and external environments, changes, organisational culture) (Scott, 2016). DuBrin (2010) states that the “situational leader” makes their behaviour “contingent on situational forces” (member characteristics, internal and external environments, changes, organisational culture, etc.). Scott (2016) identifies additional styles of leadership practiced by public service leaders or members of the SMS as follows:

- Autocratic style: Relationship focused. The “autocratic leader retains almost all the power” and their leadership style is the complete opposite of the “participative leadership” style,
- Democratic style: The “democratic leader confers final authority on the group” and simply collects the group opinion and “takes a vote before making a decision”,
- Charismatic style: The “charismatic leader” has the charm and charisma “to convince” people “to follow” them and exerts the power to influence people to reach goals,

- Participative style: “Participative leadership” refers to a leadership style according to which “decision-making is shared” between the leader and the group members and they “work together to reach goals”,
- Consensus style: The “consensus leader” encourages the group to discuss issues and base the final decision on “general agreement” which the group members will support.

3.7 CONCLUDING REMARKS

This chapter focused leadership theories and styles that underpin leadership competencies in the public service, leadership competencies through review of traditional leadership literature and leadership theories, transactional and transformational leadership paradigm. Leadership styles that underpin leadership competencies include transformational leadership style, transactional leadership style and situational leadership.

The next chapter focuses on the evolution of leadership competency framework in the South African public service and also around the world.

CHAPTER 4

LEADERSHIP COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN PUBLIC SERVICE

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter focused on leadership competencies through a review of traditional leadership literature and leadership theories. Leadership competency models are ubiquitous in both the private and public sectors. HRM professionals have championed them as a means of making better talent management decisions: from identifying and selecting suitable employees to designing and delivering training and development programs, to rewarding individuals for superior job performance. If created and used appropriately, leadership competency models have unmistakable advantages (Mau, 2017).

For Conger and Ready (2004), the benefits are clarity, consistency and connectivity: by adopting competency models, “organizations [can] set clear expectations about the types of behaviours, capabilities, mind-sets, and values that are important to those in leadership roles”. They connect a number of interrelated human resources practices such as performance management, compensation, recruitment and succession planning. For individual employees, the benefit of having a clearer and fairer selection and assessment process is evident.

This section focuses on the significance of leadership competencies in the South African public service, approaches to developing competencies and competency frameworks, the development of competency frameworks and strengths and weaknesses of competency frameworks, the evolution of CFs in the South African public service, reasons for South African CFs' failure to deliver and the comparative analysis of CFs around the world.

4.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES FOR THE SOUTH AFRICAN PUBLIC SERVICE

Political office bearers and public servants alike are the champions of change who shape government of the future. Public service departments that are led with foresight embrace innovation and manage risk as antidotes to shortcomings in continuity and capacity. The external environment is so uncertain that steering the reform process without competent leadership at the helm is almost unthinkable (Wilkins, 2014). Mintzberg (2007) reinforces the point that good leaders are needed in all spheres of government and management: "It's time we recognize that management and leadership are two sides of the same coin. Nobody wants a manager who is not a leader, but nobody should want a leader who is not a manager. This idea that you can sit up on high and do the big stuff and everybody runs around doing the grunt work is very destructive. Instead, we need to build communities".

The onus is on the public leaders to find ways to increase the capacity to manage change and improve public service delivery. The pressure to enhance productivity and performance prompts governments to embark upon ambitious reform programmes. The process is complex and requires specialized knowledge, experience and strategic skills to maintain change. Senior public servants are well educated, with many having post-graduate degrees. What is less clear is whether they are getting the right training. It is generally assumed that the business case for leadership development has been made. The Association of Professional Executives of the Public Service of Canada (Fyfe, 2013), for example, advocates training, networking, mentoring, and partnering strategies to increase capacity. However, resource constraints and unpredictable budgets still inhibit proper investment in public service competencies.

The competencies that appear in the SMS Leadership and Management Competency Framework are in no order of importance to the role of senior managers in the public service. All the following competencies are viewed as being critical for high performance in the senior manager's role. These competencies are grouped under the *Core Generic Leadership and Management Competencies* that describe thought processes that influence *behaviours* and the *functional characteristics* that represent what needs to be done by SMS members in demonstration of their leadership and

managerial roles. *Process Competencies* exhibits the most useful externally observed set of *behaviours* that determine **how** leaders make successful or poor decisions.

The process competencies influence the success of the core competencies for example if the standard of the process competencies is low, a manager may not effectively achieve the core competency, and the opposite is true. The achievement therefore depends on connection between the process and the core competency to yield the required outcome. *Personal Attributes/Personal Values* cut across both the process and core competencies and complement the Public Service values.

4.3 LEVELS IN COMPETENCIES

Shet, Patil and Chandawarkar (2017) argue that competencies are context specific: some competencies are more crucial and necessary than others for a given job position. Accordingly, there are varied levels of skills or abilities for any choice of behavioural descriptors involved in a competency framework. According to Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1980), there are various levels of competence-novice, knowledgeable practitioner, expert, virtuoso, experienced beginner, practitioner, and maestro.

Table 9: Classification/categorisation of competencies

Authors	Classification and categorisation of competencies
Spencer and Spencer (1993)	Threshold competencies and differentiating competencies
Kuijpers, Schyns, and Scheerens (2006)	Functional. Learning and career competencies
Abraham et al., (2001)	Problem skills, result focused, leadership, customer oriented, flexible, team worker, quality oriented, dependable, communication and interpersonal skills
Rothwell (2002)	Foundational and intermediate competencies
Jacobs (1989)	Hard and soft competencies
Prahlad and Hamel (1990)	Core competencies

Thomas and Sireno (1980)	Control, leadership and communication competencies
Raven and Stephenson (2001)	Meaning, relation, learning and change competence
Hunt and Wallace (1997)	Leadership, strategic management, administrative. Problem solving, decision-making, networking and political skills
Boyatzis (1982)	Leadership, HRM and goal and action management
Le Deist and Winterton (2005)	Functional competencies with underpinning behavioural competencies

Source: Shet, Patil & Chandawarkar (2017)

From the above Table, it can be noted that various competencies exist for various purposes as determined by a particular association or sector as well as the circumstances in which they are developed. It is therefore essential for the South African public service to identify and develop the competencies which suit their environment.

4.4 APPROACHES TO DEVELOP COMPETENCIES AND COMPETENCY FRAMEWORKS

Sedibe (2012) argues that competency frameworks are developed through trial and error and, 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:

- 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,
- Testing for behavioural changes after training and experience, as a way to test the validity of the findings from criterion sampling,
- Publication of the mechanism to improve the tested characteristics as a basis to facilitate genuine development,

- 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,
- 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
- Sampling "operant thought patterns" to increase the generalisability of different outcomes, as a substitute for inferences about the underlying thought patterns.

McClelland (1973)'s approach was condensed into a three-step process by Joyce and Adams (2010). The first step is to research typical job demands from existing and former officials; the second is a study of current officials 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 (Sedibe, 2021) 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.

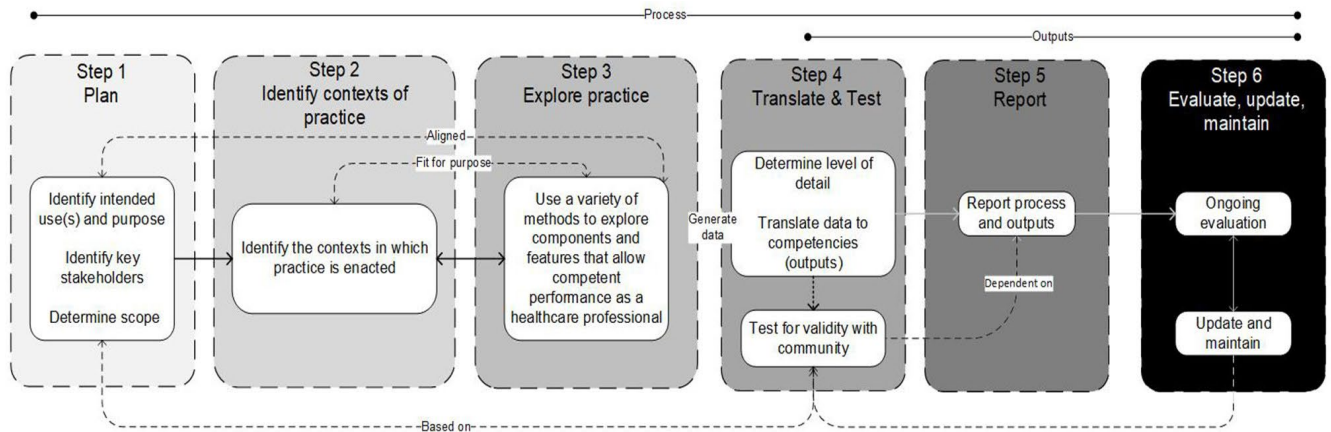
Since approaches to develop well-articulated competency frameworks are time consuming and costly, Intagliata *et al.*, (2000:6) and Joyce and Adams (2010:883) note that sometimes organisations take short cuts by simply adopting a publicly available framework, or use focus groups to generate competency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

4.5 DEVELOPING COMPETENCY FRAMEWORKS

The development of leadership competencies is essential for effective and efficient leadership in the public service. Experienced and competent officials or rather practitioners are needed to develop competency frameworks in the public service. Some authors or researchers offer guidelines to follow in developing leadership competency models or frameworks. Leadership competency practitioners

can adopt and adapt the guidelines provided to suit their own situations. A six-step model for developing competency frameworks for any purpose has been developed by Batt, Williams, Rich and Tavares (2021). The model is depicted in a schematic representation below.

Figure 2: A Schematic of the Six-step Model



Source: Batt, Williams, Rich and Tavares (2021)

It is basically a framework where a leader focuses on establishing a vision, communicating that vision clearly, building a strong team, empowering team members, monitoring progress and adapting and adjusting strategies as needed, essentially encompassing the stages of setting a direction, engaging the team, executing the plan, and evaluating results (Clawson, 2008).

4.6 COMPETENCIES AND COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN PUBLIC SERVICE

Since improving public organisations' performance is the overall goal of governments, the senior public servants are therefore expected to provide leadership and management to that effort. Such senior officers can be a useful bridge between policy making and implementation. Drawing on their knowledge of government laws, procedures and resources, senior public servants can present information to ministers in a way that helps them make policy choices. They can advise on what is implementable within the country's financial situation and available human resources. Experience of government organisations' functioning, and their managerial perspective enables the senior officers to shape and guide implementation strategies (Kauzya, 2017).

Since the public sectors in Africa critically need effective leadership, from this perspective there is a need for individuals who can look at the “big picture” and lead others to overcome the challenges countries are facing. Countries want top public officials with vision who can bring together resources and people to address their common concerns. Citizens are looking for inspiration, integrity, and purpose in their government officials. In fact, as pointed out by Becker (2007), visioning is the first of the most critical strategic-leader competences because without a clear vision of where an organisation is going there can be no road map or strategic plan to get it there. And while the current strategic environment makes it difficult to develop a perfect road map for the future, a good vision will develop the image of “what ought to be” so the organisation can position itself for future success. Hence, visionary leadership is perhaps the most powerful attribute a strategic leader brings to the organisation.

Based on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Leadership Competency Development Model (2008), the U.S Office of Personnel Management (OPM), other reviewed literature particularly from the OECD countries; the study by the Crown Agents (2004) on the leadership and management needs for top and senior public sector managers in Uganda plus a similar study done in Uganda by Adam Smith International (2010) together with the Draper (2003) observations, Kauzya, (2017) propose the following leadership competences which senior public sector officials need to have and demonstrate:

- **Accountability:** Top public sector officials must ensure that effective controls are both developed and maintained to ensure the integrity of the organisation. They should hold themselves and others accountable for rules and responsibilities and be relied upon to ensure that projects within their area of responsibility are completed in a timely manner and within budget.
- **Decisiveness:** Top officers should exercise good judgment by making sound and well-informed decisions; perceive the impact and implications of decisions; make effective and timely decisions, even when data are limited, or solutions produce unpleasant consequences; and proactive and achievement oriented.
- **Developing Others:** Top officers should be able to develop the ability of others to perform and contribute to the organisation by providing ongoing feedback and by providing opportunities for them to learn through formal and informal methods.

- **Influencing and Negotiating:** They should be able to persuade others; build consensus through give and take; gain cooperation from others to obtain information and accomplish goals; facilitate “win-win” situations; maximise use of resources within applicable regulatory limits.
- **Political Savvy:** They should identify the internal and external politics that impact the work of the organisation, approach each problem situation with a clear perception of organisational and political reality and recognise the impact of alternative courses of action.
- **Strategic Thinking:** Top leaders should possess the ability to formulate effective strategies consistent with the mission, vision, and priorities of the service in a global environment. They need to examine policy issues and strategic planning with long-term perspective. Determine objectives and set priorities while anticipating potential threats or opportunities.
- **Vision:** The leaders should take a long-term view and act as a catalyst for organisational change, create a shared vision with others and influence others to translate that vision into action.
- **Environmental Sensitivity:** Leaders must be aware of both their internal and external environments. They should also be clear about the implications of environmental changes for the future of the organisation.
- **Constant Interrogation of the status quo and conventional wisdom:** They should have the capacity and be prepared to question the prevailing assumptions, and to create the organisational space to facilitate dialogue about norms and the status quo.
- **Human/People-Focus:** Leaders must create the environment that allows people to explore new possibilities, and to develop their potential. They must value and support people. This must include recognising, rewarding and celebrating the accomplishments of others.
- **Partnership/ Coalition Building:** Leaders need to foster the involvement of people who have the resources, the knowledge and the political clout to make things happen.
- **Performance and Results-Oriented:** Leaders must ensure an alignment of performance with vision. They must demonstrate a performance orientation.

- Accommodation and Tolerance of Diversity and Dissent: Leaders must demonstrate styles which are inclusive, and which utilise the skills, knowledge and ideas of all. They must be able to integrate different cultures, points of view, styles, sectors and disciplines.
- Team building: Leaders must build support teams, be willing to select the best talent and support the work of teams.
- Continuous Learning: Leaders must be learners. They must be receptive to information from outside the current framework, and to be open to feedback.
- Globalisation: Leaders must be able to appreciate the organisational global interdependence and how to work within the globalised environment and its impact on the organisations which they lead.
- Entrepreneurship and Risk-Taking: Transformation and change have become major leadership themes given the turbulence of the environment. Leaders must therefore be willing to experiment and take risks to foster an environment within which others embrace new ways of doing things. Leaders must also demonstrate the emotional strength to manage their anxiety and the anxiety of the stakeholders caused by change.

There are numerous activities or ways public sector officers can utilize to provide opportunities to develop the above-mentioned competencies. This paper however emphasises the development programmes through which the identified competencies can be improved for better service delivery

4.6.1 Evolution of Competency Frameworks in South African Public Service

The post-1994 South African public sector faced many challenges. This included the challenge to transform the public sector as a whole to deliver on the State's developmental goals and to create a "more competent public administration" (Trevor Manuel in McLennan and Orkin 2009:1028). The government believed it was paramount to transform the public sector into one that was responsive to citizens' needs. Former Minister of Public Service and Administration, Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi, summed up the leadership challenge that the South African Public Service faced as follows: "The talent search for contributing leaders who can distribute their primal leadership throughout the Public Service demands a steady supply of

experienced knowledge workers with competencies" (DPSA: Leadership Development Strategic Management Framework (LDSMF) 2005: Foreword). The May 2000 Baskin Report focused primarily on the state of Public Service senior managers and the ensuing debates around the challenges that the senior echelons of the Public Service face. This resulted in the establishment of the Senior Management Service (SMS). Some of the key findings of the report and related discussions centred on the following issues (Jarbandhan, 2011):

- A high turnover rate of professionals and managers.
- Poor levels of performance and skills among senior staff, resulted in poor service delivery.
- Under-developed performance assessment systems, despite introducing performance agreements.
- Lack of training and development programmes.
- The need for a competency-based employment framework was required for senior managers.
- A sustainable pool of future managers was needed.
- A large concentration of managers (approximately 60%) was located at the national level of Government.

The functionality of the SMS was based on eleven performance criteria (competencies), which included:

- Strategic capability and leadership.
- Performance and project management.
- Financial management.
- Change management.
- Knowledge management.
- Service delivery innovation.
- Problem-solving and analysis.
- People management and empowerment.
- Client orientation and customer focus.
- Communication.
- Honesty and integrity (DPSA: SMS 2003).

The current world of the public sector senior manager/leader is complex. The rapid pace of globalisation, democratisation, change, and public sector modernisation has forced many public sector organisations to develop competency frameworks for their senior managers/leaders to promote effective governance. Many countries, especially those in the Western world, have favoured a move towards developing a senior management competency framework for the public sector, which was linked to a performance management framework. A competency approach to understanding leadership must move from an outmoded thinking of public sector leadership as a compliance-driven environment, to one that promotes a call for a vision, the ability to identify and seize opportunities, anticipate crises, and cope with environmental constraints (Jarbandhan, 2011).

To shape leaders of today and tomorrow in public service, the South African government, through the Department of Public Service and Administration, introduced several initiatives such as the Public Service Charter, National Batho Pele Excellence Awards, and the National School of Government (Insight, undated: on-line). These initiatives are in line with the National Development Plan's (NDP) vision 2030 (National Planning Commission, 2011), which aims for the government to have experienced staff at all levels of service, who are also competent to carry out their jobs effectively to build a capable and developmental state (Insight, undated: on-line) (Mofolo, 2018).

South African competencies are benchmarked against those of other public services, such as in the United States of America and the United Kingdom, something that can be problematic because, as will become clear later in this article, competencies do not exist in a vacuum, and independently of specific public services (De Clercq, 2023). In the past, public service departments in SA were known for the many variations in their job descriptions for officials who occupied similar jobs and ranks. The job descriptions together with qualifications were the major tools used by HR for performance assessment and management.

By the end of the 1990s, a New Public Management (NPM) reform emerged, more in some departments than others, as the government attempted to counter the red tape aspects of the rule-bound public administration. The introduction of CFs fits well with the NPM, which aims to contribute to a shift by the PS toward performance outcomes (Cameron, 2009). It is therefore not surprising to find the mention of CFs in many

public service documents such as the White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (also known as the Batho Pele White Paper) (Republic of South Africa, 1995), and the 1999 Public Finance Management Act (Act 1) (Republic of South Africa, 1999). There have been consultations and talks since 2003 about establishing a competency-based framework for leaders and senior managers or those occupying the ranks from Director to Director-General². The cabinet eventually decided to make competency assessments compulsory for Senior Management Service (SMS) members by December 2008 to strengthen the recruitment and development of these senior managers (De Clercq, 2023).

The objectives of the revised competency framework are (New Leadership and Management Competency Framework for SMS, Undated):

- Streamline the management competencies provide the users with a thorough understanding of the leadership function and identify the skills and attributes needed to be a successful leader.
- Understand the issues and challenges of anticipating, analyzing, managing, and implementing change processes.
- Understand the issues and challenges of enhancing performance at the individual, team, and organization levels.
- Understand how to develop new policies and plan and lead the implementation of these within the organization.
- Review the essential skill sets leaders require to foster positive cooperation and coordination in their organization.

The following steps were taken in terms of the review process:

- A review of the 2001 competency Framework and the assessment battery were undertaken with existing users to understand whether they are still relevant to the managerial work of the SMS members. This review was also used to identify areas of change in management since the establishment of the SMS initiative in 2001.
- The SMS Competency Framework has emerged from an exhaustive process of interviews, desktop studies, surveys, focus group sessions, and analysis. The data-gathering exercise spanned across the SMS and culminated in a

wealth of raw data on behaviors. In the process, a wide range of stakeholders, subject matter experts, and senior managers were consulted.

- These competencies will have to be reviewed in the future to ensure currency and ongoing relevance within the public service.
- A mapping exercise was undertaken to identify whether the leadership and management competency Framework and the battery are relevant in the sectors in which they operate and how SMS members describe their roles. The learner needs analysis was also conducted by the South African Management Development Institute (SAMDI).
- The 2001 competency Framework was benchmarked against other, more recent. Types of managerial competencies from both the private and public services sector to identify gaps in coverage. This exercise also made use of international benchmarks to try and ensure that the new management and leadership standards were world-class.
- A functional mapping exercise was undertaken which asked individual managers and employers at all levels to identify the functions that managers undertake in the workplace. This led to streamlining the competencies into 5 core competencies which each have three dimensions and 5 process competencies; the development of the different performer levels with the addition of the 6th; the proficiency levels that underpin the difference between low and effective performance within a performer level and the alignment with Middle Management Competency Framework.
- Within each function, areas of competence were identified that would eventually become the units of competence for SMS. Consultants working on behalf of the DPSA worked closely with individual managers, employers, and other stakeholders to identify the best practices relating to each function and these were used to produce the Framework.
- This Framework was subject to a wide consultation during August and September 2007. The feedback from this exercise was used to make amendments. Process competencies were reorganized as it was realized that they were cutting across the core competencies.

- The MMS and SMS Competency Frameworks have been merged, as the separation of the competency Frameworks made it difficult to create a successful leadership pipeline.
- The competency Framework now clearly describes the relationship between leadership and management and the balance required of both.
- The Cognitive Process Profiler (CPP) has been added to the suite of competency assessment battery in recognition of the fact that leadership and cognitive personality soft skills that managers bring to their role are important. (New Leadership and Management Competency Framework for SMS, Undated).

4.6.2 Why are South African Competency Frameworks Not Delivering?

The research findings point to the fact that, while CFs are supposed to help develop the human resource value chain, what is happening in reality is something different. The reason for this lies partly in the frameworks themselves but also more importantly in the context and environment in which they are supposed to be implemented. Ultimately, the CFs will not achieve their intended purpose if there is a lack of departmental ownership of them and if they are not located in an enabling and conducive environment. This article notes that the existing institutional arrangements and context of the state administration restrict the use and potential of CFs. It concludes with the argument that, with specific enabling and conducive arrangements and environments, slightly differently formulated, CFs could contribute to their intended purpose (De Clercq, 2023).

A significant problem with leadership and management competencies is that the 'knowledge' dimension is never correctly conceptualised nor rooted in any specialised body of knowledge. However, if leaders and managers in a department do not have some grounding in a specialised body of knowledge related to their sector, they are unlikely to excel in their roles. Knowledge is embodied in humans as the capacity to understand, explain, and negotiate concepts, actions, and intentions (Zins, 2007).

The word "knowledge" is best used to refer to what someone knows, which is, in effect, what they believe, including the belief that some of the beliefs of others should not be believed. By extension the word "knowledge" is used more loosely for (1) what social

groups know collectively; and (2) what is in principle knowable because it has been recorded somehow and could be recovered even though, at any given time, no individual knows (or remembers) it (Michael Buckland, 1991). The omission of what 'knowledge' entails in each sector limits the advantages of individual competencies and CFs in improving public service delivery.

A second concern is that if CFs should be used for human resource (HR) functions and the HR value chain, individual competencies should be easy to assess, measure, and apply. The research shows that CFs are mainly used for competency assessments aimed at development, training, and performance management (even if little management occurs after such interventions). However, CFs are meant for selection and recruitment processes. CFs are often treated as yet another exercise in bureaucratic compliance; subsequently, there is a lack of ownership of the process (PSETA & WITS Centre For Researching Education & Labour, 2023).

While in many departments, the CFs may not lead to the identification of appropriate and effective training courses or an effective performance management process, some departments are more proactive in developing CFs to strengthen their HR functions. Thus, CFs are aligned only to a limited degree with competency requirements for public service leadership in a developmental state (PSETA & WITS Centre For Researching Education & Labour, 2023).

Thirdly, what emerges very strongly from the research is limited space for individuals to show what they can and cannot do despite their organisational arrangements. Individuals may be able to perform, but their work environment constrains their capability. This is because current work organisations, organisational structures, culture, political stability, and leadership are often inadequate and mitigate against an individual performing well.

Mafunisa (2000) states that culture encompasses all values (religious, societal, educational, and economic), ideas, and other symbolic meaningful systems which shape human behaviour, meticulously observed from generation to generation in a particular society. This is also because many senior and middle managers are reluctant to adopt managerial structures and processes that decentralise decision-making by giving greater authority and responsibility to units, divisions, or departments. Instead, many senior managers prefer to operate in the safe rule-bound

bureaucratic mould. This does not call on their critical thinking or their subordinates' problem-solving skills to make decisions that affect change. Some exceptions exist for leaders and managers who act decisively and proactively despite their constraining organisational environment (PSETA & WITS Centre For Researching Education & Labour, 2023).

Emerging out of the research process, this report argues that the ways CFs are defined and implemented have severe limitations in dealing with the relatively poor performance of the public service. The report highlights that CFs are often not being implemented as intended whilst there are problems in the CF frameworks themselves. In addition, what emerges is often a lack of departmental ownership towards them, when they are used for the human resources functions of recruitment, selection, developing, and managing the performance of human capital. Human capital is the stock of skills that the labour force possesses (Goldin, 2024). Organisational conditions also limit the potential of individual competencies and their CFs. It is argued that the existing institutional arrangements and context of the state administration restrict the use and potential of CFs. It is only with certain enabling and conducive arrangements and environments that slightly differently formulated CFs could contribute to their intended purpose (PSETA & WITS Centre For Researching Education & Labour, 2023).

Central to CFs is a clear definition of individual competencies, which refer to a mix of knowledge, skills, and personal aptitudes, measured by a long list of behavioural indicators. Yet many departments do not define these terms tightly and often use them interchangeably, leading to a poor distinction between knowledge and skills. The leadership and management CFs in the public service use a combination of core/generic competencies whereas the Financial Management CF and to a certain extent the Monitoring and Evaluation CF rely also on technical competencies. Technical competencies such as knowledge, skills, and abilities are the requirement to fulfil job tasks, duties, and responsibilities, which lead to acceptable performance levels at work (Ismail & Hassan, 2019).

It is argued that it is more difficult to assess core/generic competencies, especially when these are decontextualised and content-free, than technical competencies. Technical skills and competencies are sometimes mentioned in public service

documents but are broadly defined and not attached to a body of specialized knowledge. The little reference to technical skills and competencies suggests that these are lacking in public service and too often must be outsourced to professional and technical services.

Another major problem with leadership and management competencies is that it appears to reduce knowledge to the knowledge of policies, legislation, and regulations (such as the Public Administration Management Act (South Africa 2014) and Batho Pele White Paper), but not to the 'knowledge' of the technical field of practice in the sector that they manage. Yet, it is argued, that if leaders and managers in a department do not have some grounding in a specialised body of knowledge related to their sector, they are unlikely to effectively assume their roles. This omission of what 'knowledge' entails limits the advantages of individual competencies and CFs in improving public service delivery, explaining why the design of competencies and CFs are not empowering HR tools to improve the performance of leaders and managers.

The literature links CFs with various HR functions and the HR value chain. This is why individual competencies must be easy to assess, measure, and apply but in reality, they are not. CFs are mainly used, as mentioned by the National Framework for the Professionalisation of the Public Service (NSG, 2022), for competency assessment aimed, not at selection and recruitment or performance management but, for development and training interventions which are not always appropriate. There is a lack of full ownership of these CFs among many departments which treat them as yet another exercise in bureaucratic compliance. Bureaucratic control is the constraint that a superior imposes on subordinate agencies' discretion through guidelines (Xiao & Zhu, 2022). Some departments interviewed, such as the National Treasury, appear more proactive than others in developing more detailed and specific CFs to strengthen their HR functions while, in other departments, the CFs do not seem to lead to the identification of appropriate and effective training courses nor an effective performance management process. In that sense, CFs contribute only to a limited degree to a more developmental and effective PSS.

The SMS CF (DPSA, 2003) limits itself to individual competencies that are behavioural (how to do the work) and do not incorporate occupational competencies (what has to be done). It refers mainly to core/generic and process competencies with behavioural

indicators and proficiency levels. Core/generic competencies refer to the idea behind the competency: “[they] succinctly define what the idea means and propose behavioural indicators to illustrate the competencies”. Examples of core competencies for the SMS are: Strategic Capability and Leadership, People Management and Empowerment, Programme and Project management, Financial Management, and Change Management. Process competencies refer to "how the function is performed by employing certain competency techniques". Examples in the SMS CF are:

- Knowledge Management.
- Service Delivery Innovation.
- Problem Solving and Analysis.
- Orientation and Customer Focus.
- Communication.

Behavioural indicators are attached to these competencies and are used by assessors to rate and score the level of proficiency. The 2003 SMS CF document does not foreground or clarify the meaning of knowledge underpinning these management competencies which appear to exist out of context, making it difficult to assess them effectively and objectively.

Research by DPSA (2023) indicates that 92% of both national and provincial departments are unable to implement the Competency Framework, which indicates that indeed the instrument is not effective. Based on the data retrieved from the panel service providers on the assessment conducted and the implementation reports received from departments, there are challenges in the implementation of the Framework:

- The Directive is not aligned with Regulation 86 of the Public Service Regulations, 2016.
- Assessments are done just to comply with the recruitment process.
- The assessment results are not considered when deciding the selection for an appointment.
- Departments do not prioritize addressing the identified competency gaps through targeted training.

- Personal Development Plans of SMS members are not informed by actual training needs.
- The directive is to be reviewed to address the identified challenge to ensure that it is aligned with the Professionalisation Framework.

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4.7 COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF COMPETENCY FRAMEWORKS AROUND THE WORLD

In this section, a comparison of public service leadership competency models in various countries will be made. These countries are Australia, the United States of America, Canada, the United Kingdom, South Africa, New Zealand, and the Netherlands.

Table 8 below provides for the public service leadership competency models in the above-mentioned countries.

Table 10: Public sector leadership competency models

AUSTRALIA	UNITED STATES	CANADA	UNITED KINGDOM	SOUTH AFRICA	SMS NEW ZEALAND	NETHERLANDS	
Senior Executive Leadership Capability Framework (2001) & Integrated Leadership System (2004)	Executive Core Qualifications (2006)	Key Leadership Competencies Model (2004)	Civil Service Competency Framework (2012)	Competency Framework (2011)	Chief Executive Competency Profile (2009)	Competencies for Senior Managers (2000)	
Shapes Strategic Thinking (Inspires a Sense of Purpose & Direction; Focuses Strategically; Harnesses Information & Opportunities; Shows	Leading Change (Creativity & Innovation; External Awareness; Flexibility. Resilience; Strategic Thinking; Vision) Fundamental Competencies	Strategic Thinking (Innovating through analysis and ideas)	Setting Direction (Strategic Cluster) (Seeing the big picture; Changing and improving; Making effective decisions)	Core Competencies (Strategic capability and leadership; empowerment; Programme and project management; management)	People and project Change	Strategic Leadership (Develop long-range strategies and plans)	Coherent Governance (Vision on the future; Target orientation; Network skills; Binding leadership)

Judgment;

Intelligence &

Common Sense

Cultivates

Building

Engagement

Engaging

Process

Personal and

Interpersonal

Productive

Coalitions

(Mobilizing

People (People

Competencies

Interpersonal

Behaviour

Working

(Partnering;

people,

Cluster)

(Knowledge

Skills

(Listening;

Relationships

Political Savvy;

organizations,

(Leading and

management;

Service

(Highly

Interpersonal

(Nurtures Internal

Influencing/

and partners)

communicating;

delivery

innovation;

developed

sensitivity; Flexible

& External

Negotiating)

Collaborating

Problem solving and

personal and

behaviour;

Relationships;

and partnering;

analysis;

Client

interpersonal

Development of

Facilitates

Fundamental

Building

orientation and customer

skills)

collaborators)

Cooperation &

Competencies

capability for all)

focus; Communication)

Partnerships;

Values Individual

Differences &

Diversity;

Guides, Mentors

& Develops

People)

Achieves

Results Driven

Management

Delivering

Operating

Operational

Results (Builds

(Accountability;

Excellence

Results

Skills

Effectiveness

Organizational

Customer

(Delivering

(Performance

(Initiative; Control;

Capacity &

Service;

through action

Cluster)

Responsiveness; Marshals Professional Expertise; Steers & Implements Change & Deals with Uncertainty; Ensures Closure & Delivers on Intended Results)	Decisiveness; Entrepreneurship; Problem-Solving; Technical Credibility) Fundamental Competencies	management, people management, and financial management)	(Achieving commercial outcomes; Delivering value for money; Managing a quality service; Delivering at pace)	(Create focus and get things done)	Delegation; interplay)	Fast
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Table 10: Continued

AUSTRALIA				UNITED KINGDOM	SOUTH AFRICA	NEW ZEALAND	NETHERLANDS
Senior Executive Leadership Capability Framework (2001) & Integrated Leadership System (2004)	UNITED STATES Executive Core Qualifications (2006)	CANADA Leadership Competencies Model (2004)	Key	Civil Service Competency Framework (2012)	SMS Competency Framework (2011)	Chief Executive Competency Profile (2009)	Competencies for Senior Managers (2000)
						Energy and Drive (Demonstrate energy and drive for better results)	Resilience (Energy; Stress resistance; Performance motivation; Learning capacity)
5 core capability clusters with 22 overall competencies	5 ECQs with 28 overall competencies, 6 of which are deemed to be fundamental (interpersonal	4 competencies		3 clusters with 10 overall competencies, with values underpinning all competencies	5 core competencies with 5 distinct process competencies, all of which are applied against	7 competencies	7 clusters with 4 competencies for each cluster (28 overall competencies)

skills, oral
communication,
integrity/honesty,
written
communication,
continual
learning, and
public service
motivation)

**each of the core
competencies**

Source: Mau (2017)

From the above Table, it is interesting to note that most competencies are universal. These core competencies include people management, strategic planning, public financial management, and communication. It is therefore essential to ensure that these competencies are instilled in the South African SMS.

4.8 CONCLUDING REMARKS

This section focused on the significance of leadership competencies in the South African public service, approaches to developing competencies and competency frameworks, the development of competency frameworks, strengths, and weaknesses of competency frameworks, the evolution of CFs in the South African public service, reasons for South African CFs' failure to deliver and the comparative analysis of CFs around the world.

The next chapter will focus on the mechanisms for enhancing public service competencies for the South African SMS.

CHAPTER 5

MECHANISMS FOR ENHANCING PUBLIC SERVICE COMPETENCIES FOR THE SOUTH AFRICAN SMS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter focused on the leadership competence Framework in the South African public service. Franks (2015) points out that the voluntary severance packages (VSPs) robbed the public service of highly experienced personnel, while the notion of 'potential' was a favoured loophole for comrades to find preference over more competent public servants. More than a decade after democracy, the then Minister of Public Service and Administration, Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi, acknowledged that cadre deployment based on party loyalty had come with some unintended consequences (Fraser-Moleketi, 2006). Prior to this acknowledgment, particular challenges surrounding the government's transformation agenda were identified, including the need for management development in the public service. The dawn of the new millennium saw the introduction of the SMS. A handbook was compiled to support the development of senior managers by promoting 10 core competencies (DPSA 2003).

With the above assertion in mind, the South African public service needs to develop competency frameworks to counter the challenges confronting public service leadership. This will go a long way in ensuring that the SMS acquires the skills and competencies for coping with the demands of the New Public Service. This Chapter focuses on the mechanisms to enhance public service competencies. The mechanisms include induction, identifying the required competencies for top officers, leadership development through education and training, the role of performance management in enhancing effective performance and succession planning, secondment and exchange, regional workshops and establishment of a public sector senior leadership development forum.

5.2 STRATEGIES FOR ENHANCING PUBLIC SERVICE COMPETENCIES FOR THE SMS

Currently, within the public service, various interventions seek to manage performance. Competency frameworks (CFs), which are in place in the PSS, are key mechanisms for assessing competency. A CF is effectively a model that describes performance excellence within an organisation. Such a framework usually includes several competencies applied to multiple occupational roles within the organisation, mainly management roles. Each framework sets out and defines individual competencies an organisation requires to meet performance standards. (PSETA & WITS Centre For Researching Education & Labour, 2023)

The four CFs — SMS, middle management services, monitoring and evaluation services, and financial management - are performance tools to assess individuals, and guidelines for recruitment, selection, developing and managing human capital. CFs are supposed to help develop the human resource value chain, but this research revealed that CFs are not optimally used. The reason for this lies partly in the frameworks themselves but, more importantly, in the context and environment in which they are supposed to be implemented. Ultimately, if a CF is not located in an enabling and conducive environment, the framework on its own will not achieve its intended purpose. In other words, building and exercising competencies in a space where people are not encouraged to learn and make mistakes is challenging. This is compounded by some incompetent and corrupt officials who create a culture and climate of chaos and dysregulation (PSETA & WITS Centre For Researching Education & Labour, 2023).

Weinzimmer and Esken (2017) suggest that learning from mistakes may be particularly important for understanding the relationship between organizational learning and performance given its focus on organizational experiences involving exploration. That is, organizations explore when tactics are unsuccessful and result in mistakes. These mistakes motivate organizations to pursue more effective tactics, which result in more useful organizational knowledge.

PSETA & WITS Centre For Researching Education & Labour (2023) proposes the following activities to improve the functioning and impact of CFs:

First: All CFs should include two kinds of competencies: the core ones, which consist of competencies specific to an occupational field of knowledge, that the specific department manages (as found in the Financial Management CF).

Second: An enabling environment is required in which newly defined CFs could contribute to better performing. Such an environment would entail the non-politicisation of appointments to avoid the “play it safe” culture. Leaders and managers must have a strong professional knowledge base beyond a ‘management toolbox’ to exercise their agency to lead, plan and manage sectoral issues. An ideological and cultural mind shift, coupled with new ways of working, is necessary. This, in turn, will require changes in organisational arrangements, structures, cultures, leadership (PSETA & WITS Centre For Researching Education & Labour, 2023), and

Third: The CFs should include intra-organisational arrangements (that are characterised by interdependence, flexibility and continuous learning (van der Meer-Kooistra and Scapensand, 2008) that transcend the intra organisational and sectoral boundaries by embracing group dynamics, institutional dynamics, social regulation structures and feedback mechanisms across different departments and organisations. Greater collaboration, networks and partnerships between various Public Service departments and organs of civil society are also required to implement the developmental objectives of the state. CFs should move away from static competencies into dynamic competencies with an effective form of collective leadership capable and committed to continuously learning and renewing itself (PSETA & WITS Centre For Researching Education & Labour, 2023).

Fourth: Some departments (such as the National Treasury) may be more equipped than others to work towards this new PSS model. Such departments and their leadership should be given more space, authority, and power at many levels to exercise professional agency while rigorous and independent monitoring and research will identify the lessons learnt from such new practices in three short and medium term (PSETA & WITS Centre For Researching Education & Labour, 2023)

5.2.1 Induction

A clear distinction was made between "induction" and "orientation", which is consistent with the interpretations reflected in available literature, local and international experience and the views reflected in the surveys and focus groups.¹⁸ Whereas "orientation" reflects the initial welcoming and familiarisation with the workplace, "induction" is the longer process that conveys the core values, objectives and ethos of an organisation. Both, however, are linked to "socialisation", which is a longer process that over time adjusts the newcomer to the responsibilities, values and norms of the group and the organisation (Potgieter, 2015). Socialisation is the process of learning and adopting the social norms and values of society (Drew, 2023).

One of the tools for creating a professional South African public service, committed to the values, principles and ethics of government, is a compulsory, government-wide and generic induction programme. The Public Administration, Leadership and Management Academy (PALAMA)—now the National School of Government (NSG)—was tasked with the development and rollout of such a programme. Due to the size of the South African Public Service, geographic realities, the limitations of traditional induction programmes and the value of workplace learning, finding an innovative approach to learning and the development of new entrants was essential. The result was that conventional contact tuition evolved into a blended learning approach, enabling participants to tap into the benefits of eLearning (Potgieter, 2015). Blended Learning is learning systems that “combine face-to-face instruction with computer mediated instruction” (Graham, 2006).

In life, first impressions count. This probably also applies to the workplace, as induction, and therefore induction and on-boarding processes, for new employees are an important beginning to a career path. These processes are specifically important in the public service to acquaint new entrants with the values, principles and ethics of the workplace, as well as their responsibilities in the organisation and to the citizens whom they will be serving. Induction training in the South African Public Service must ideally take place within the context of a democratic, developmental state (Potgieter, 2015).

While new employees may have requisite academic qualifications, they often lack necessary familiarity with specific circumstances and skills of the new job (National School of Government, 2015; Underwood, 2002). It is paramount that each and every

new public service employee is orientated so that he or she may be familiarised with the new work environment including all the technicalities required. It is therefore a prerequisite for all new employees to be oriented (Public Service Commission, 2014). The performance of an employee who has not been oriented is likely to be affected in that the employee does not have a clear picture of the organisational objectives and his or her part in a bigger puzzle. It is critical that an employee understands or be oriented to the bigger picture in the organisation so that he or she may be able to link his or her performance targets with the organisational annual plan, strategic plan, vision and mission and the National Development Plan (NDP) in the case of government in its entirety (Munzhedzi, 2017).

In the meantime, PALAMA was tasked by a Ministerial Directive (November 2012) to develop and implement a new compulsory induction programme (government-wide and generic) with the aim of promoting the professionalisation of the South African Public Service. The primary intention of this programme was to "induct new recruits into the values and principles of the public service; instil the calling of the public service as a profession that thrives on ethical behaviour in the delivery of public goods, services and works to the citizens, and the protection of the financial resources and assets of the State." The intention was to move away from typical short interventions to distributed practice in order to promote the retention of learning and the implementation of new knowledge, skills and values in the workplace (Potgieter, 2015). Ethical behaviour, therefore, is acting in ways that are consistent with one's personal values and commonly held values of the organisation and society (Nwakaego, 2012).

5.2.1.1 Overview of the National School of Government Compulsory Induction Programme

Section 11(2) of the Public Administration Management Act (South Africa 2014) mandates the NSG to "promote the progressive realisation of the values and principles governing public administration and enhance the quality, extent and impact of the development of human resource capacity in institutions". In addition, in terms of Clause 4 of the Public Service Co-ordinating Bargaining Council Resolution 1/2012, the qualifying period for new entrants into the public service for pay progression is extended from 12 to 24 months. The aim of this extension period is to ensure the

development and professionalisation of public officials. This section provides a snapshot of the design and implementation of a compulsory induction programme (for appointment levels one to twelve) piloted by the National School of Government in 2012 and 2013. This brief overview of the induction programme is followed by a discussion of the potential role of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) to support participation in an extended induction programme for public officials who are geographically dispersed (Potgieter, 2015).

The Public Administration Leadership and Management Academy, formerly known as the South African Management and Development Institute. The latter was established as a Schedule 1 Department in 1999 in terms of the Public Service Act, 1994 and in terms of section 197(1) of the Constitution, 1996. It is a centralised institution responsible for the provision of quality customised training and development for the entire South African Public Service. The objectives of the South African Management and Development Institute since its establishment in August 2008 are as follows: (South African Management and Development Institute, 2004).

To develop management and leadership skills across the public service.

- To improve the provision of management and administration systems in the public service.
- To enhance project and financial management competencies through increased focus on and understanding of customer services and the design and implementation of systems that fully develop and utilize human resources in the public service.
- To engender behaviour based, service delivery improvements, such as change management, into the performance culture of the public sector.
- To offer training that extends the impact of the South African Management and Development Institute across the African continent in support of Government's New Partnership for Africa's Development priorities, one of which is the development of effective and efficient public services.
- To transform and change management; to develop people; and to develop organisational structures and research.

Behaviour based service delivery improvement, transformation and change management and organisational development are objectives which relate to human resource development. Transforming and changing mindsets of public officials is even more crucial for innovative and service-oriented state departments. A sense of indebtedness and urgency need to be infused into the through training of officials at all levels within the public service.

5.2.2 Identifying the Required Competencies for Top Public Officers

Since improving public organisations' performance is the overall goal of governments, the senior public servants are therefore expected to provide leadership and management to that effort. Such senior officers can be a useful bridge between policy making and implementation. Drawing on their knowledge of government laws, procedures and resources, senior public servants can present information to ministers in a way that helps them make policy choices. They can advise on what is implementable within the country's financial situation and available human resources. Experience of government organisations' functioning and their managerial perspective enables the senior officers to shape and guide implementation strategies (Kauzya, 2017).

Since the public sectors in South Africa critically need effective leadership, from this perspective there is a need for individuals who can look at the "big picture" and lead others to overcome the challenges countries are facing. Countries want top public officials with vision who can bring together resources and people to address their common concerns. Citizens are looking for inspiration, integrity, and purpose in their government officials. As pointed out by Becker (2007), visioning is the first of the most critical strategic-leader competences because without a clear vision of where an organisation is going, there can be no road map or strategic plan to get it there. And while the current strategic environment makes it difficult to develop a perfect road map for the future, a good vision will develop the image of "what ought to be" so the organisation can position itself for future success. Hence, visionary leadership is perhaps the most powerful attribute a strategic leader brings to the organisation.

Based on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Leadership Competency Development Model (2008), the U.S Office of Personnel Management (OPM), other reviewed literature particularly from the OECD countries; the study by the Crown

Agents (2004) on the leadership and management needs for top and senior public sector managers in Uganda plus a similar study done in Uganda by Adam Smith International (2010) together with the Draper (2003) observations, Kauzya, (2017) propose the following leadership competencies which senior public sector officials need to have and demonstrate:

- **Accountability:** Top public sector officials must ensure that effective controls are both developed and maintained to ensure the integrity of the organisation. They should hold themselves and others accountable for rules and responsibilities and be relied upon to ensure that projects within their area of responsibility are completed promptly and within budget.
- **Decisiveness:** Top officers should exercise good judgment by making sound and well-informed decisions; perceive the impact and implications of decisions; make effective and timely decisions, even when data are limited, or solutions produce unpleasant consequences; and be proactive and achievement oriented.
- **Developing Others:** Top officers should be able to develop the ability of others to perform and contribute to the organisation by providing ongoing feedback and by providing opportunities for them to learn through formal and informal methods.
- **Influencing and Negotiating:** They should be able to persuade others; build consensus through give and take; gain cooperation from others to obtain information and accomplish goals; facilitate "win-win" situations; maximise the use of resources within applicable regulatory limits.
- **Political Savvy:** They should identify the internal and external politics that impact the work of the organisation, approach each problem situation with a clear perception of organisational and political reality and recognise the impact of alternative courses of action.
- **Strategic Thinking:** Top leaders should possess the ability to formulate effective strategies consistent with the mission, vision, and priorities of the service in a global environment. They need to examine policy issues and strategic planning with a long-term perspective. Determine objectives and set priorities while anticipating potential threats or opportunities.

- Vision: The leaders should take a long-term view and act as a catalyst for organisational change, create a shared vision with others, and influence others to translate that vision into action.
- Environmental Sensitivity: Leaders must be aware of both their internal and external environments. They should also be clear about the implications of environmental changes for the future of the organisation.
- Constant Interrogation of the status quo and conventional wisdom: They should have the capacity and be prepared to question the prevailing assumptions, and to create the organisational space to facilitate dialogue about norms and the status quo.
- Human/People-Focus: Leaders must create the environment that allows people to explore new possibilities, and to develop their potential. They must value and support people. This must include recognizing, rewarding, and celebrating the accomplishments of others.
- Partnership/ Coalition Building: Leaders need to foster the involvement of people who have the resources, the knowledge, and the political clout to make things happen.
- Performance and Results-Oriented: Leaders must ensure an alignment of performance with vision. They must demonstrate a performance orientation.
- Accommodation and Tolerance of Diversity and Dissent: Leaders must demonstrate styles that are inclusive, and which utilise the skills, knowledge, and ideas of all. They must be able to integrate different cultures, points of view, styles, sectors, and disciplines.
- Team building: Leaders must build support teams, be willing to select the best talent and support the work of teams.
- Continuous Learning: Leaders must be learners. They must be receptive to information from outside the current framework, and to be open to feedback.
- Globalisation: Leaders must be able to appreciate the organisational global interdependence and how to work within the globalised environment and its impact on the organisations which they lead.
- Entrepreneurship and Risk-Taking: Transformation and change have become major leadership themes given the turbulence of the environment. Leaders must therefore be willing to experiment and take risks to foster an environment

within which others embrace new ways of doing things. Leaders must also demonstrate the emotional strength to manage their anxiety and the anxiety of the stakeholders caused by change.

There are numerous activities or ways public sector officers can utilize to provide opportunities to develop the above-mentioned competencies. This paper however emphasises the development programmes through which the identified competencies can be improved for better service delivery. The Public Service Commission (2021a) has further demonstrated that, for example, to build the required skill and capability within professions/occupations would entail, amongst others, the following:

- (a) Specifying the scope of work/ competency areas of the occupation. This should be done regarding both the contents of work and the level of work.
- (b) Specifying the career mobility implications of the occupation. (From where to where does a public servant in a specific occupation move in their career?)
- (c) Specifying the areas of specialization of the occupation
- (d) Determine the entry requirements for the occupation.
- (e) Determine the promotion requirements.
- (f) Determine the continuous professional development requirements. These may include—
 - Post (after) entry qualifications
 - Systematic exposure to experience in all the areas of the scope of work
 - Secondments to other bodies
 - Short courses, workshops, conferences
 - Mentoring and coaching
- (g) Develop proposals on testing or certifying that a candidate is proficient in all the areas of the scope of work.
- (h) Develop proposals on registration with a professional body.
- (i) Develop proposals on the institutional arrangements for managing the affairs of the occupation

5.2.3 Competence-based Training and Development

McCauley and Douglas (1998) define leadership development as expanding the collective capacity of organizational members to engage effectively in leadership roles and processes. Leadership roles refer to those that come with and without formal authority, whereas management development focuses on performance in formal managerial roles. Leadership processes are those that generally enable groups of people to work together in meaningful ways, whereas management processes are considered to be position- and organization-specific (Keys & Wolfe, 1988). Leadership development involves building the capacity for groups of people to learn their way out of problems that could not have been predicted, or that arise from the disintegration of traditional organizational structures and the associated loss of sensemaking. In this sense, capacity is thought to be similar to the notion of cognitive and behavioural complexity in that expanded capacity provides for better individual and collective adaptability across a wide range of situations. A leadership development approach is oriented toward building capacity in anticipation of unforeseen challenges (i.e., development) (Day, 2001).

The ways to build competence include training and tuition reimbursement programmes (Bruce & Blackburn, 1992). Some departments in the public service have computer and learning centres. The most personal strategy for building competence, and therefore, one of the most powerful, is coaching. It is the one sure way in which senior public servants can establish what the junior public servants do not know and how they have to perform their jobs. Kinlaw (1993) argues that coaching is also a way to provide support and reassurance to junior public servants who are taking on new responsibilities. Coaching facilitates learning because it is timely and focuses on exactly what the individual public servant needs to know concerning the job.

Ledwaba (2022) argues that competencies are developed at the senior management level from those existing at junior and middle management levels to meet the complex challenges the senior managers encounter as they progress in their careers. This view is in line with the implementation of the DPSA Leadership Development Programmes (LDP) that target Junior, Middle, Senior, and Executive managers to address the challenge of developing managers into leaders (DPSA, 2008). Furthermore, research reveals that all leaders require an ability to analyse the environment, critical thinking,

continuous learning, decision-making, and effective communication as basic leadership competencies.

To enhance such competencies, Ledwaba (2022) thinks that at the senior management level, senior managers acquire those that are experiential in context to their leadership roles at a given moment. Depending on individual interests in accelerating their development, SMS members will acquire those competencies that are salient in junior and middle management that incorporate resource and personal management; envisioning the future and leading change; and political competence to enhance their negotiation, consensus building, and frame of reference development skills (Kem, 2004: viii). Based on this view, leadership development by individuals at this level is vital for aligning the competencies with the demands of the environment, thereby preventing a one-size-fits-all solution, destined to fail.

Thornhill and Hanekom (1995) argue that public servants will be better suited to perform their functions successfully if they have suitable abilities. Suitable training can contribute towards public servants acquiring knowledge and skills that will enable them to perform their functions with a greater measure of competence. Public servant competence contributes to the development of a positive work ethic in that public servants who are diligent in work, trained, and skilled, perform their jobs effectively and efficiently. It can therefore be argued that public servants should be provided with the necessary training to enable them to perform their duties effectively and efficiently.

An immediate distinction must be made, however, between leadership development and management development. Literature between the two areas is parallel and overlaps, but there are several key differences. Just as leadership and management are different (but interrelated) concepts, their respective development has unique emphases. Management development primarily includes managerial education and training with an emphasis on acquiring specific types of knowledge, skills, and abilities to enhance task performance in management roles. Another characteristic feature of management development is the application of proven solutions to known problems, which gives it mainly a training orientation (Day, 2001).

Sonko (2017) The programme should include the provision of taught modules in the competencies as identified by the Leadership Competence Framework. The basic tools and techniques of, for example, influencing and negotiating, political savvy,

strategic thinking, and environmental sensitivity would make a highly practical module. The other benefits of classroom training include: (i) the sharing of ideas (ii) networking opportunities among senior managers, and (iii) creating common standards across management of the public service. The national Management Development Institutes (MDIs) should play a leading role in developing the modules in consultation with the ministries responsible for staff development.

5.2.4 Role of Performance Management in Competency Development

According to Sonko (2017), senior public sector officers like other public servants should be subjected to a performance management regime, which takes into account performance against output objectives and behavioural characteristics and includes a personal development plan, with an agreed plan of action to address identified performance gaps. Individuals should receive regular feedback from those to whom they are accountable on progress and performance.

The Performance Management and Development System (PDMS) for the South African Public Service was introduced in 2001 and driven by the transformative agenda to achieve both acceptable levels of service delivery and measurable results. Accordingly, there has been a shift from bureaucratic rules-driven approaches in public service management to a results-oriented approach to government performance (Penceliah, 2012).

Linn (2003) describes four uses of performance standards: exhortation, exemplification of goals, accountability, and the certification of student achievement. Performance standards and associated cut scores are essential only for the fourth use. Although reporting results in terms of performance standards is often done to exhort teachers and students to exert greater effort standard-based reporting is not essential to that use. Nor are performance standards essential for exemplifying goals. One of the purposes of introducing performance standards is to provide a means of reporting results in a way that is more meaningful than a scale score.

One of the key proposals approved by Cabinet on 23 August 2000 was the introduction of competency-based assessments as a part of a range of initiatives to improve the State's ability to recruit, retain and develop competent managers. Only a few departments (+- 1000 SMS members assessed by the end of 2006) participated in the voluntary implementation of competency assessments as approved by Cabinet in

February 2005. In October 2006 Cabinet resolved to make competency assessments compulsory for entry into SMS members which was implemented in December 2008 to strengthen recruitment and development. The first directive on implementation of competency-based assessment was issued in 2011 & revised in 2015. The development part has been neglected in the rollout (DPSA, 2023).

There are several role players in the process of managing performance in the public service. These role players include the Public Service Commission, the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA), NSG, trade unions, and employees. These role players are discussed in detail below.

5.2.4.1 Public Service Commission

The Public Service Commission (PSC) was established in terms of section 196 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 to promote the basic values and principles set out in section 195, throughout the public service. Some functions of the Commission are to propose measures to ensure effective and efficient performance within the public service. The Commission also has a watchdog role to play in that it investigates, monitors, and evaluates human resource practices of the public services (Erasmus et al., 2005; Mello, 2013; PSC, 2014). The performance agreements of provincial heads of department and national directors general are coordinated by the Office of the PSC. The implementation of human resource policies is monitored and evaluated at the PSC.

Upon completion of its processes of investigations, inspections, monitoring, and evaluations, the Commission publishes its findings as public reports. Some of the reports published include a report on the payment of performance incentives (bonuses or pay progression) to heads of departments without annual performance evaluations conducted in 2008 and a report on the analysis of Performance Agreements as an effective performance management tool conducted in 2009. A PSC has a further responsibility to advise national and provincial organs of state regarding personnel practices relating to recruitment, appointment, transfer, discharge, and career management. It is the responsibility of the PSC to ensure that policies such as the PMS are properly implemented in the public service and advise where necessary (Munzhedzi, 2017).

5.2.4.2 National School of Government

NSG seeks to contribute towards establishing a capable, professional, and responsive public service that is committed to and has institutionalised the values and policies of a Developmental State (National School of Government, 2015). The NSG was officially launched in 2013, which was a replacement to the Public Administration Leadership and Management Academy (PALAMA) and this was established in 2008 as a replacement for the South African Management Development Institute with the mandate of facilitating training provision to public servants (Kroukamp, 2011). NSG is constituted as a Schedule 1 department by the Public Service Act, 1994 (Proclamation 103 of 1994) as amended by the Public Service Act, 1999 (Act 5 of 1999).

NSG is headed by a Director-General who reports to the Minister of Public Service and Administration. NSG, as the public sector training academy, has a central role to play in building the capacity of the public service to perform effectively and efficiently (PALAMA, 2010). PALAMA trains and develops public service employees to enable them to improve their performances, which will then contribute to the improvement of public service delivery. However, there are major challenges facing NSG in the fulfilment of its mandate of contributing to the development of a high-performing public service by capacitating public servants (PALAMA 2010).

Munzhedzi (2017) argues that one of the challenges includes the uncoordinated way in which public service training is conducted. PALAMA aims to ensure that public servants have all the necessary skills including technical, leadership, and financial. According to the Public Service Amendment Act, 2007 (Act 30 of 2007), there shall be a training institution listed as a national department, which shall provide training or cause such training to be provided (Republic of South Africa, 2007). Lack of understanding of a PMS in the public service should be addressed by NSG through relevant training programmes.

5.2.4.3 Department of Public Service and Administration

According to the White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service of 1997, the DPSA focuses on terms of human resources solely on the public service. The key responsibilities of the DPSA include developing human resource policies, getting support for such policies from organised labour at the national level, ensuring practicality of application for the policies, and ensuring that human resource policies

are aligned with other transformation initiatives (Department of Public Service and Administration, 1997; Erasmus et al., 2005).

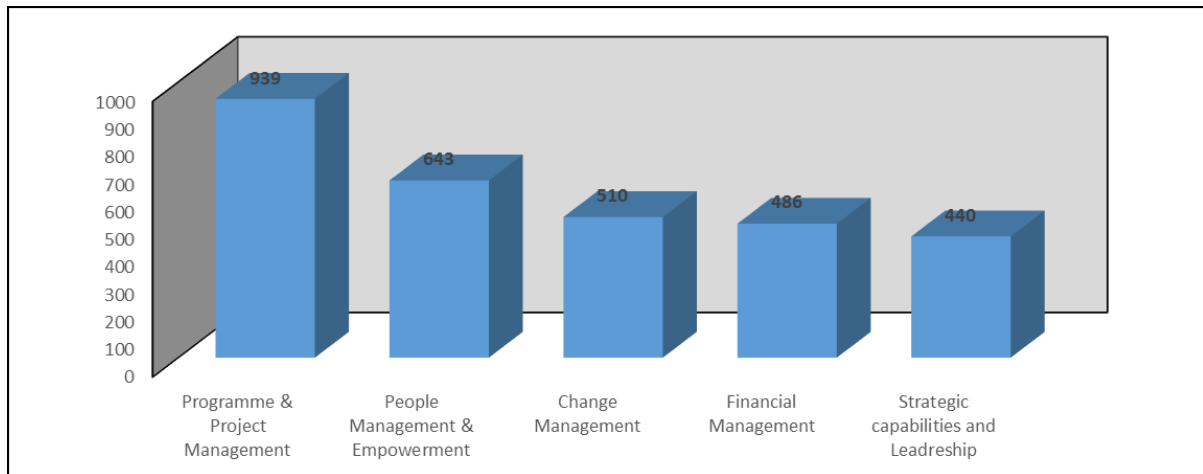
The Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) is regarded as the human resource branch of the South African government and its strategic vision is to be a "professional, productive and responsive public service and administration" (DPSA 2019). One of how the DPSA intends to realise this vision is by promoting an ethical public service through programmes, systems, frameworks, and structures that detect, prevent, and combat corruption (Baloyi, 2020).

Munzhedzi (2017) argues that the DPSA also has to give support service to national departments and provincial administration regarding the implementation of human resource policies and the development of the capacity to implement the developed policies and programmes. Even the first PMS policy framework was initiated by the DPSA in 1999 to serve as a guide to national and provincial departments in developing their departmental policies. All public service institutions have to align their policies with DPSA's framework. Individual performance targets have to be aligned with the departmental goals and objectives to enhance the overall performance of the department. However, the policy of a specific department must be in line with the DPSA's policy framework on a PMS and each department's policy must be relevant to its own needs and circumstances.

According to Munzhedzi (2017), performance management plays a pivotal role in the realization of many facets of public administration, including service delivery, good governance, and organisational productivity through the setting of performance targets and regular assessments of performance. In search of improved quality and productivity in the public service, the South African government introduced several legislative and policy interventions, including but not limited to the Public Service Act, 1994 (Proclamation 103 of 1994), Public Service Regulations of 2001, and the White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery of 1997.

The DPSA regularly conducts assessments to determine the effectiveness of the South African SMS Competency Framework. Between 1 October 2017 & 30 April 2022, 2802, assessments were conducted by the DPSA (2023). The graph below illustrates the competency gaps identified during the assessment period.

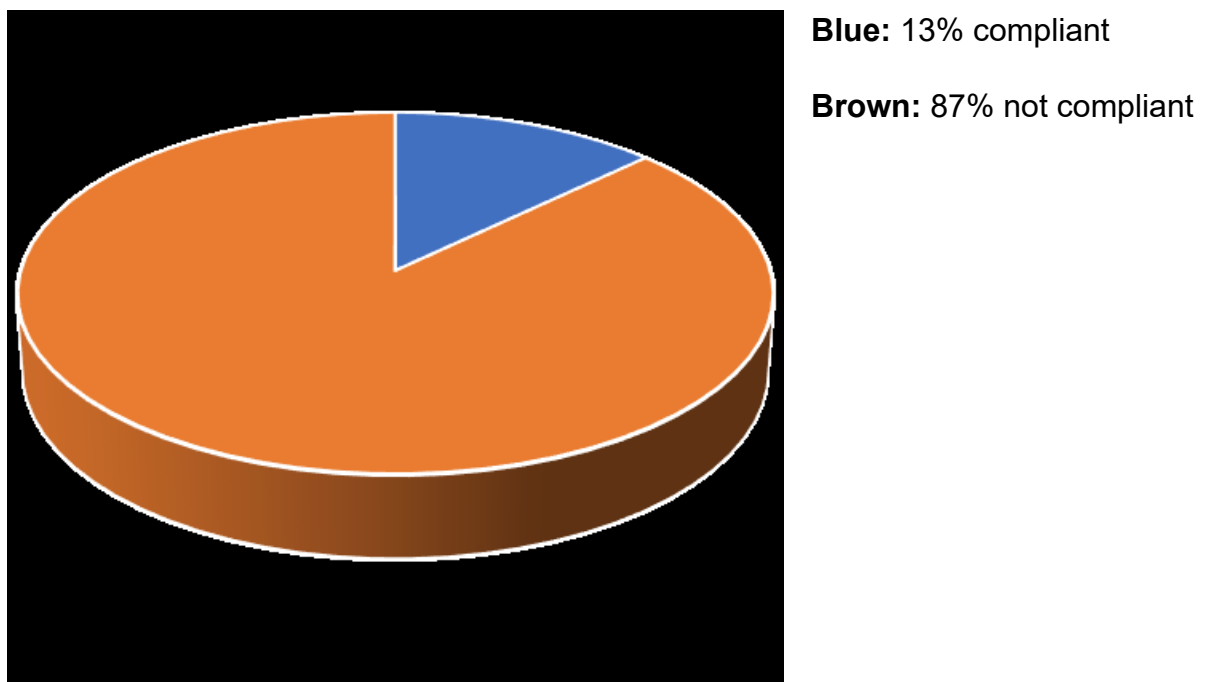
Figure 3: Assessment Gaps in the Public Service between 1 October 2017 and 30 April 2022



Source: DPSA (2023)

National departments compliance in terms of addressing the gaps identified through competency assessments:

Diagram 1: Level of Compliance in Addressing Gaps in National Department



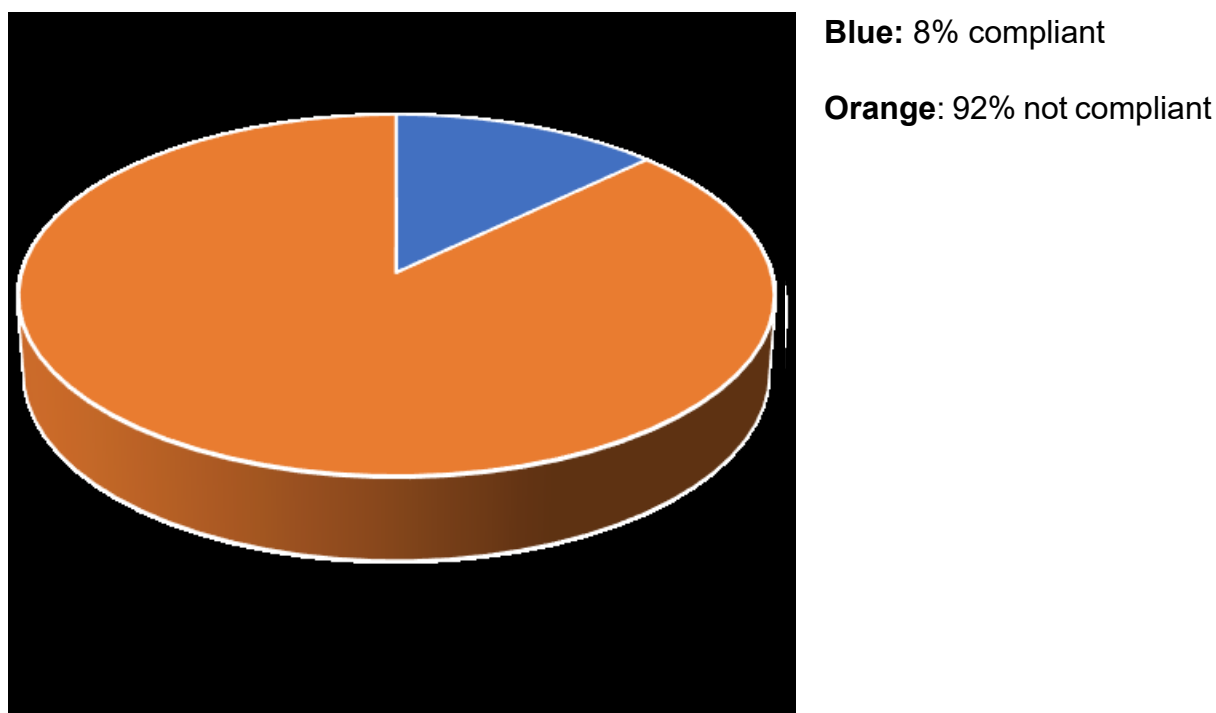
Source: DPDA (2023)

In terms of the reports received from departments and analysed for the financial year 2021/2022, only 13% of departments complied with the provisions of the Directive. These are the only departments that provided targeted training interventions to

address competency gaps that were identified during competency assessments. 87% of departments only appear to use the assessments to comply for purposes of employment. Some of the identified competency gaps were more than 12 months since the date of assessment.

Provincial department's compliance in terms of addressing the gaps identified through competency assessments:

Diagram 2: Level of Compliance in Addressing Gaps in Provincial Departments



Source: DPDA (2023)

From the above Diagram, it is clear that only 8% of departments complied with the provisions of the directive in terms of the reports received for the financial year 2021/2022 by providing targeted training interventions to address competency gaps identified during assessments. 92% of departments did not comply as they have not made provisions to address the competency gaps identified. As with a national, the Directive is only complied with for recruitment and appointment but not development.

The DPSA Report (2023) on the *Effectiveness of the Competency Framework & Capacity Measures for Senior Managers in the Public Service* has identified some challenges encountered during the implementation of CFs. These challenges and proposed solutions are identified in the Table Below.

Table 11: Challenges/Inhibitors and Proposed Solutions/Enablers

Challenges / Inhibitors	Proposed solution/ enablers
Training was not attended due to operational requirements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competency-related training courses should be given a high priority (may be made compulsory through Performance Agreements and PDPs). E-learning training interventions should be considered to ensure that SMS members attend on their own time.
Competency assessments result not made available to SMS members.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Competency assessment reports to be shared with both candidates sent for assessments (whether successful or not) PMDS units to evaluate whether performance agreements have incorporated the identified gaps into Personal Development Plans.
Lack of collaboration between HRM and HRD units	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developmental areas as identified in the Competency assessment reports to be submitted to HRD units to incorporate the training needs into the HRD plans(integration)
Assessment results not being a consideration when deciding on the appointment of a candidate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The directive to be reviewed and assessment results to be a consideration when making appointment decisions for SMS posts.
Financial Constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departments to partner with PSETA to solicit financial support for SMS training/development where appropriate. The budget specifically for competency-related training interventions. Introduce stringent measures to stop training budgets from being shifted to other needs.
Formalise Coaching and Mentorship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use lessons from ELIPS to formalise a policy position on coaching and mentorship. Departments to formalise senior management mentorship programme to address the identified competency gaps.
Training is not supported due to long duration and high costs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Departments to use online leadership programmes offered by the NSG and other training institutions.

Source: DPSA (2023)

5.2.5 Succession planning

According to Gerson (2020), succession planning, also called pipeline development is important to ensure that there is a potential pool of candidates with the abilities and motivation required to take up these positions, both internal and external. Succession planning should not only be used to bring in the best individuals but also to ensure a diversity of people and backgrounds in the senior civil service as a whole.

Chapter 4 of the *White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service* (1997), which deals with A New Framework for Human Resource Management, identifies the need for succession planning for strategic positions. Van der Molen and Schwella (2010) argue that most public service departments lack succession planning and, consequently succession planning plans. According to Armstrong (2001), the need for succession planning stems from vacancies arising from promotions, retirement, death, leaving, transfer, and restructuring.

Succession planning is essential in the public sector to ensure that there is a continuous supply of skills and knowledge, to ensure that institutional knowledge/memory is not lost when aging public servants retire and that the wheel of the public sector keeps on turning. Pietersen and Malatjie (2022) argue that the public sector requires a constant supply of skills for it to be a professional public institution with generational competence. Therefore, policies must be put in place to ensure that youth entering the public sector are capacitated and are being prepared to take up future leadership positions that will be vacated by seasoned public servants who will be retiring in a few years. According to Wintersteen (2015), for the public service to have successful succession planning, a proper legislative framework needs to be in place. The delay in implementing a succession policy in public service leads to mediocre performance and extends tenures of ineffective placements in acting positions (Harrel, 2016).

The results of the study by Manzini and Malatjie (2023) on *An Analysis of Succession Planning Strategies in Professionalising the Public Sector: A Case of the National School of Government* prove that succession planning is possible in the NSG and the public sector at large. Currently, there are no policies addressing succession planning in the public sector. Therefore, there should be a drive led by the DPSA to address the strategic priorities regarding succession planning and professionalisation, through a

shared mindset among HR managers and line managers to develop a formal policy for the public sector.

The DPISA together with the Presidency should develop an integrated talent management approach as the State's strategic priority for a transformed HRM and to address issues of succession. Therefore, the DPISA must come up with a national policy on succession planning to ensure that there is uniformity and buy-in by everyone in the public sector as to its implementation. As such, the national policy will be supplemented by internal departmental policies that are sector specific. Therefore, it is to be noted that a formal succession plan will encourage employees to stay and grow within the department, while at the same time the department, in this case, the NSG, will be able to preserve institutional culture and memory/knowledge, and experience continued organisational performance through these retention strategies.

There are inadequate HRM practices to address transformation and expected developmental roles addressing succession planning and professionalise the public service; these are influenced by social and global economic challenges. Currently, the NSG is experiencing high staff turnover due to the retirement and promotion of individuals. This creates anxiety among employees while they wait for vacant positions to be filled and puts pressure on the employer to find suitable candidates in the shortest time possible (Manzini & Malatjie, 2023).

5.2.6 Secondment and Exchange

Taught development programs should be balanced with experiential learning. Leaders gain new perspectives and competencies through working in different environments. There is a strong case for promoting secondments, exchanges, and other experience-broadening episodes among leaders. Broadening the experience of top leaders can help organisations to develop partnerships with other organisations across the public and private sectors. In best practice terms, secondments should be designed to address one or more identified leadership development needs, and the individual should have regular reviews and support (Sonko, 2017).

The Lead2Lead programme, managed by Lancaster University, uses the process of leadership exchange and reflection to help improve leadership awareness. It involves a process of careful pairing of participants, often from different organisations, sectors, and even countries. Once matched, participants are given training in observation and

reflection techniques, followed by a three-day exchange to each other's workplace (to shadow the other person), and a facilitated debriefing session (Bolden, Gosling, Marturano and Dennison, 2003). A secondment usually requires two documents: an amendment to the secondee's employment contract to allow him or her to be seconded, and a contract between the original employer and the new employer setting out the terms of the secondment.

5.2.7 Regional Workshops

Regional workshops of the top leadership held under the auspices of say the African Association of Public Administration and Management (AAPAM) would enable the exchange of views, experiences, and challenges amongst the participants who would come from the different countries of the region. It is likely that quite often countries within the same region have similar challenges which can best be solved when they meet as a region (Sonko, 2017). The PSC (2020) focus in the next five years will be on capacitating departments, inclusive of the employees, through advocacy sessions, strategic engagements, and workshops. In particular, the latter interventions will enhance employee skills and the overall capabilities of departments to actively address their operational and strategic challenges to facilitate service delivery.

Workshops can also be used in networking. As a way of breaking down barriers between functional areas, some organizations include development activities aimed at fostering broader individual networks. An important goal of networking initiatives is to develop leaders beyond merely knowing *what* and knowing *how*, to know *who* in terms of problem-solving resources. Networking is also about expanding one's definition of what and how through exposure to others' thinking, which can challenge basic assumptions about what we think we know. It is also a means of encouraging organization members to form commitments with others outside of their immediate work group. In this way, networking is about investing in and developing (Day, 2001).

5.2.8 Establishment of a Public Sector Senior Leadership Development Forum

This Forum should consist of all top public officials who should meet regularly to discuss topical issues derived from the approved Leadership Competence Framework or Model. To provide such a Forum with the deserved clout, it should preferably be anchored within the Office of the President. This Forum could take forward development and training by (Sonko, 2017):

- Facilitating networking and joint learning amongst ministries and departments and ensuring the sharing of best practices on leadership development programmes.
- Identifying “common elements” of public sector leadership to be included in leadership programmes across the public sector.

Facilitators in such fora should be experienced public practitioners and experienced trainers from national management development institutions and universities who have done adequate research on the relevant public sector leadership issues. Such a calibre of facilitators would help in dispelling the common imaginary thinking among some of the top public servants that "home" delivered developmental programmes are below their standards and requirements (Sonko, 2017).

5.2.9 Coaching and Mentorship

Mentoring and coaching are often distinguished from each other. Coaching is said to focus on enhancing knowledge or a specific skill, while mentoring is focused on the transfer of experience from a mature individual to a junior employee to develop and grow (Parsloe & Wray, 2000).

Ganesh, Bozas, Subban, and Munapo (2015) refer to coaching as a process of unlocking a person's potential to maximize their performance and helping them to learn rather than teaching only. Executive coaching involves practical, goal-focused forms of one-on-one learning and behavioural change. The objectives of coaching are focused on improving individual performance and personal satisfaction, and, consequently, enhancing organizational effectiveness. The term connotes an ongoing process rather than a discrete event. Coaching may be used to improve individual performance, enhance a career, or work through organizational issues such as culture change. It can be a relatively short-term activity aimed at improving specific leadership skills or solving specific problems, or a lengthy series of meetings over an extended period (Day, 2001).

Ganesh, Bozas, Subban, and Munapo (2015) describe a mentor as one who mediates expert knowledge for novices and helps that which is tacitly become more explicit. The two most common uses of the word mentoring are to (a) describe a professional development relationship in which a more experienced participant assists a less

experienced one in developing a career and (b) a guiding relationship between an adult and a young person focused on helping the youth realise his or her potential and perhaps overcome some barriers or challenges. In both cases it is the mentor who provides advice and support and may serve as a role model.

According to Day (2001), mentoring refers to formal developmental relationships are a venerable form of on-the-job experience used for leadership development. There are formal mentoring programs as well as informal processes. Formal, planned mentoring programs are assigned, maintained, and monitored by the organization. Informal, unplanned mentoring is usually encouraged by an organisation but not initiated or administered by it. Regardless of the formality of the mentoring relationship, effective developmental relationships come about from a mix of opportunity and intent. A challenge facing any organization is how to find the most appropriate combination of these ingredients. As typically implemented, mentoring programs are heavily skewed toward support, with some attention to challenge, but relatively little consideration of assessment. Ehrich and Hansford (2008) identify three main types of mentoring programmes operating in the public sector. These are mentoring programmes for new staff; mentoring programmes for existing and/or aspiring members of the SMS; and mentoring programmes used as an affirmative action strategy. In the case of the South African public service, the Employment Equity Act, of 1998 (Act 55 of 1998) plays a major role in ensuring that, as part of the transformation agenda, the designated groups are appointed and promoted within the public service. But those without relevant competencies must be capacitated. The purpose of the EEA is to achieve workplace equity. The Act provides two primary means for achieving this purpose:

- Eliminating unfair discrimination in the workplace, and
- Affirmative action measures to redress past discriminatory practices and ensure equitable representation in all categories and levels in the workplace.

Ganesh, Bozas, Subban, and Munapo (2015) opine that eight attributes of mentoring commonly appear. These include:

- An active relationship.
- A helping process.

- A teaching-learning process.
- Reflective practice.
- Career and personal development process.
- A formalised process.
- A role constructed by or for a mentor.

The Department of Public Service and Administration (2023) is of the opinion that national and provincial departments need to formalise senior management mentorship programmes to address the identified competency gaps.

5.3 CONCLUDING REMARKS

This Chapter focused on the mechanisms to enhance public service competencies. The mechanisms include induction, identifying the required competencies for top officers, leadership development through education and training, the role of performance management in enhancing effective performance and succession planning, secondment and exchange, regional workshops, and establishment of a public sector senior leadership development forum.

The next chapter focuses on the findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the study.

CHAPTER 6

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter summarizes non-empirical findings and makes significant conclusions based on the literature review. The conclusions are geared towards ascertaining the achievement of the research goal of this study, namely: exploring leadership competencies of senior management service of the South African public service. The researcher conducted a qualitative method study to achieve this goal and gain more insight into the problem. The public service leadership competence model has also been recommended as a contribution to the discipline.

6.2 THE OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1 dealt with the introduction and background of the study, problem statement, aim of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitation of the study, definition of operational concepts, and organization of the study. The chapter also focused on the research methodology used in non-empirical studies. This research adopts a qualitative research method using scholarly literature. These include critical scholarship review, conceptual analysis, philosophical analysis, theory-building and content analysis.

The study's objectives were as follows:

- Describe the challenges faced by the SMS of the South African public service in the performance of their duties,
- Describe the constitutional, legislative and policy frameworks underpinning leadership competencies in the South African public service,
- Determine the leadership theories and styles underpinning leadership competencies in the South African senior management service,
- Determine whether it is possible to align the agile leadership model or framework to the public service leadership competency model,
- Recommend the mechanisms for enhancing public service competencies for the South African senior management service.

The challenges confronting South African public service leadership and the constitutional, legislative and policy frameworks underpinning leadership competency in the public service were identified in Chapter 2. These challenges include the inability to pinpoint the higher purpose of public service leadership, sustainable development and poverty eradication, and freeing the South African people from poverty and hunger as a matter of urgency. The regulatory frameworks underpinning leadership competency development in the South African public service include the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 and the Skills Development Levies ACT, 1999

Chapter 3 dealt with leadership theories and styles that underpin leadership competencies in public service, leadership competencies through a review of traditional leadership literature and leadership theories, and transactional and transformational leadership paradigms. Leadership styles that underpin leadership competencies include transformational leadership style, transactional leadership style and situational leadership.

The significance of leadership competencies in the South African public service and approaches to developing competencies and competency frameworks were dealt with in Chapter 4. The Chapter also covered aspects such as the development of competency frameworks, strengths and weaknesses of competency frameworks, the evolution of CFs in the South African public service, reasons for South African CFs' failure to deliver, and the comparative analysis of CFs around the world.

Chapter 5 focused on the mechanisms to enhance public service competencies. The mechanisms include induction, identifying the required competencies for top officers, leadership development through education and training, the role of performance management in enhancing effective performance, and succession planning. The Chapter stated that several role players in the process of managing performance in the public service exist. These role players include the Public Service Commission, the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA), NSG, trade unions, and employees.

6.3. MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

This section presents the key findings of the study. These key findings were derived from the specific objectives of the research. The specific objectives of the study sought

to explore leadership competencies of senior management service of the South African public service, describe the challenges faced by the SMS of the South African public service in the performance of their duties, describe the constitutional, legislative, and policy frameworks underpinning leadership competencies in the South African public service, determine the leadership theories and styles underpinning leadership competencies in the South African senior management service, determine whether it is possible to align the agile leadership model or framework to public service leadership competency model and recommend the mechanisms for enhancing public service competencies for the South African senior management service.

6.3.1 Major findings on the challenges faced by the SMS of the South African public service in the performance of their duties

The first objective of this study was to describe the challenges faced by the SMS of the South African public service in the performance of their duties.

6.3.1.1. Challenges related to leadership roles of the SMS

The study revealed that the SMS of the South African public service is confronted by the following challenges:

- Pinpointing the higher purpose of South African public service leadership
- Ensuring sustainable development and poverty eradication and freeing the South African people from poverty and hunger as a matter of urgency.
- Creating and sustaining legitimate state institutions and boosting trust in government
- Developing and ensuring professionalism, integrity, ethics, and accountability to prevent corruption in the South African public service.
- Developing anti-corruption citizenry
- Developing service, transformation, and development-oriented leadership
- Leading in times of an information and technological revolution
- Managing and harnessing the potential of South Africa's diversity
- Ensuring orderly and effective succession in public service leadership.

It is therefore essential for the South African public service's SMS to develop competencies to cope effectively with the above challenges. In this regard, this study seeks to explore the leadership competencies of senior management service of the South African public service.

6.3.1.2 Challenges related to the implementation of competency frameworks.

In terms of challenges related to the implementation of competency frameworks, the study established that:

- The existing generic competency framework for senior managers in the South African public service is inadequate because it emphasizes individual generic competencies.
- The overarching problem is that the competencies identified in the SMS Competency Framework do not adequately prepare public servants to perform their duties effectively in the networked governance context.
- The ways CFs are defined and implemented have severe limitations in dealing with the relatively poor performance of the public service.
- CFs are often not being implemented as intended whilst there are problems in the CF frameworks themselves.
- There is a lack of departmental ownership towards CFs when they are used for the human resources functions of recruitment, selection, development, and managing the performance of human capital.
- Organisational conditions also limit the potential of individual competencies and their CFs.
- It is argued that the existing institutional arrangements and context of the state administration restrict the use and potential of CFs.
- Central to CFs is a clear definition of individual competencies, which refer to a mix of knowledge, skills, and personal aptitudes, measured by a long list of behavioural indicators. Yet many departments do not define these terms tightly and often use them interchangeably, leading to a poor distinction between knowledge and skills.
- It is more difficult to assess core/generic competencies, especially when these are decontextualised and content-free, than technical competencies.

- Technical skills and competencies are sometimes mentioned in public service documents but are broadly defined and not attached to a body of specialised knowledge.
- The little reference to technical skills and competencies suggests that these are lacking in the PSS and too often must be outsourced to professional and technical services.
- Another major problem with leadership and management competencies is that they appear to reduce knowledge to the knowledge of policies, legislation, and regulations, but not to the 'knowledge' of the technical field of practice in the sector that they manage. Yet, it is argued, that if leaders and managers in a department do not have some grounding in a specialised body of knowledge related to their sector, they are unlikely to effectively assume their roles.
- CFs are mainly used, as mentioned by the National Framework for the Professionalisation of the Public Service (NSG, 2022), for competency assessment aimed, not at selection and recruitment or performance management but, for development and training interventions which are not always appropriate.
- There is a lack of full ownership of these CFs among many departments which treat them as yet another exercise in bureaucratic compliance. Bureaucratic control is the constraint that a superior imposes on subordinate agencies' discretion through guidelines.
- Some departments interviewed, such as the National Treasury, appear more proactive than others in developing more detailed and specific CFs to strengthen their HR functions while, in other departments, the CFs do not seem to lead to the identification of appropriate and effective training courses nor an effective performance management process. In that sense, CFs contribute only to a limited degree to a more developmental and effective public service.
- The research findings point to the fact that, while CFs are supposed to help develop the human resource value chain, what is happening in reality is something different. The reason for this lies partly in the frameworks themselves but also more importantly in the context and environment in which they are supposed to be implemented.
- The training was not attended due to operational requirements.

- Competency assessments result not made available to SMS members.
- Assessment results not being a consideration when deciding on the appointment of a candidate.
- Training is not supported due to long duration and high costs.
- Lack of collaboration between HRM and HRD units.
- Financial Constraints.
- Coaching and Mentorship are not formalised.

6.3.2 Major findings on the constitutional, legislative, and policy frameworks underpinning leadership competencies in the South African public service.

The second objective of the study was to describe the constitutional, legislative, and policy frameworks underpinning leadership competencies in the South African public service, which was covered at large in Chapter 2. The following constitutional, legislative, and policy frameworks and other documents that govern the operations of the South African national and provincial departments, including the process of people management and employee development, were identified and described:

- Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996
- Skills Development Levies Act, 1999 (Act 9 of 1999)
- Skills Development Act, 1998 (Act 97 of 1998)
- White Paper on Affirmative Action in the Public Service, 1998
- Public Administration Management Act, 2014 (Act 11 of 2014)
- A National Implementation Framework Towards the Professionalisation of the Public Service, 2020
- National Qualifications Framework Act (NQF), 2008
- National Skills Development Strategy III, 2011 -2016
- White Paper on the Transformation of the Public Service, 1995
- Human Resource Development for the Public Service Strategic Framework Vision, 2015
- Public Service eLearning Policy Framework, 2015
- Senior Management Service Handbook, 2003
- White Paper on Human Resource Management in the Public Service, 2000
- Policy and Procedure: The Revolving Door Enablers, 2008

- Green Paper for Post-School Education and Training, 2012
- Human Resource Development Strategy for South Africa, undated
- White Paper on Public Service Training and Education, 1997

It can be indicated that the discussion on each of the above frameworks focused on relevant sections in legislation or policy or any document that applies to employee development. The discussion assisted in providing clarity and context for the study on exploring the leadership competencies of senior management service of the South African public service.

6.3.3 Major findings on the leadership theories and styles underpinning leadership competencies in the South African senior management service.

The third objective of the study was to determine the leadership theories and styles underpinning leadership competencies in the South African senior management service. According to Scott, (2016), leadership theory is a discipline that focuses on finding out what makes successful leaders excel in what they do.

The following public service leadership theories, which impact on the competencies of the SMS, were described:

- Traits leadership theory suggests that certain inborn qualities make someone a leader.
- Contingency theory is dependent on the internal and external situation.
- Situational leadership changes from situation to situation, a leader must adapt.
- Transformational leadership is about motivating others to achieve their goals.
- Transactional utilizes rewards and punishment to motivate and direct followers.
- New competency leadership theory (NCLT) identifies and develops skills and competencies and,
- Agile leadership empowers teams and provides clear vision and goals.

To better respond to the requirements of the twenty-first century, the following eight competencies are identified through the review of “traditional” leadership literature:

- Human orientation – Leaders should pay much greater attention to people than before by showing more empathy and making people's well-being, even more, of a priority,
- Organizational skills – The leader should still be able to keep providing structure but doing so through new media and information technologies and more in a team setting,
- Adaptability and flexibility – In addition to adaptability, flexibility is now also considered a key skill for leaders to be able to quickly change the course of action in the current fast-changing environment,
- Values – Leaders are expected to demonstrate several key values in modern times, such as curiosity, authenticity, optimism, and moral virtue,
- Cognitive skills – In today's world more cognitive abilities are needed. Leaders should be able to analyse and synthesize a large amount of information and formulate sustainable strategies. Creativity, innovation, and the ability to think and act with an entrepreneurial mindset are also required,
- Self-awareness – As the world becomes more complex and uncertain, leaders need to show more self-confidence, tolerance to high stress, and be fully aware of their purpose and motivation. They are expected to now show self-reflection, as the ability to entertain a critical analysis of oneself and one's actions and be willing to change, Self-regulation, being aware of their own emotions and behaviors and being positive,
- Transformational ability – Leaders are increasingly expected to bring change, which entails both initiating and implementing change and
- Communication skills – Leaders are required to be able to communicate through new media technologies and social networks.

For a member of the SMS to be effective and efficient in the performance of the delegated duties, he/she needs to possess the following competencies, inter alia, self-awareness, transformational leadership, cognitive skills, and values. Values may include the basic values of public administration including accountability and integrity. The leadership styles underpinning public service leadership competencies were identified and discussed. These are transformational leadership styles, transactional Leadership styles and situational leadership styles. It was argued that the situational

leader makes their behaviour “contingent on situational forces” (e.g. member characteristics, internal and external environments, and organisational culture).

6.3.4 Major findings on whether it is possible to align the agile leadership model or framework to the public service leadership competency model.

The fourth objective of the study was to determine whether it is possible to align the agile leadership model or framework to the public service leadership competency model. The study revealed that members of the SMS must show the following characteristics, which define agile leadership:

- Possess the ability to make judicious and effective decisions amidst complex, volatile and swiftly changing environments.
- Acquire the capacity to take intelligent and prudent actions under situations characterised by high uncertainty, complexity and rapid change.
- Possess the ability to learn new styles of leadership and flexibly switch the already mastered leadership styles to quickly respond to dynamic and changing circumstances.
- Embrace an adaptively flexible strategy based on external and internal changes and create a value-connected experience between all stakeholders by empowering organisational actors.

Research established that the workload of the South African public administrations is increasing because of the demands of citizens, crises, or short-term changes in legislation. In these times, in particular, public administrations can be overloaded and must have the ability to react to changes flexibly. This is where agile leadership comes into the picture.

6.3.5 Major findings on the mechanisms for enhancing public service competencies for the South African senior management service.

The fifth objective of the study sought to recommend the mechanisms for enhancing public service competencies for the South African SMS. Research revealed the following mechanisms to be used in enhancing South African public service leadership competencies:

- Inducting new employees to the public service to attain knowledge and skills: Induction is essential to ensure that the new members of the SMS adapt to the skills needed for their positions and the environment.
- Identifying the required competencies for top officers: The executing authority must ensure that SMS members have the skills to capacitate future SMS members.
- Leadership development through education and training: The NSG, DPSA and institutions of higher learning must capacitate SMS members with relevant competencies to ensure that they perform their duties effectively.
- Role of performance management in enhancing effective performance: Members of the SMS should be subjected to a performance management regime, which takes into account performance against output objectives and behavioural characteristics and includes a personal development plan, with an agreed plan of action to address identified performance gaps.
- Succession planning to develop employees to fill key roles or future vacancies: The DPSA in consultation with the Presidency: South Africa should develop an integrated talent management approach as the State's strategic priority for a transformed HRM and to address issues of succession.
- Secondment temporarily to another department and exchange for critical skills.
- Coaching and Mentorship: National and provincial departments need to formalise senior management mentorship programmes in order to address the identified competency gaps.

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

The following recommendations are made based on the findings of the study to explore leadership competencies of the senior management service of the South African public service. A Diagram depicting a Leadership model (public service leadership competence model) based on requisite Skills, Attitudes, Values, and the Business of government concluded the recommendations.

6.4.1 Recommendations on the challenges faced by the SMS of the South African public service in the performance of their duties

The study revealed that the existing generic competency framework for senior managers in the South African public service is inadequate because it emphasizes individual generic competencies, the overarching problem 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 ways CFs are defined and implemented have severe limitations in dealing with the relatively poor performance, CFs are often not being implemented as intended whilst there are problems in the CF frameworks themselves, there is a lack of departmental ownership towards competency frameworks when they are used for the human resources functions of recruitment, selection, developing and managing the performance of human capital, organisational conditions also limit the potential of individual competencies.

It is therefore recommended that:

- South African public service leadership CFs should include two kinds of competencies: the core ones, which consist of competencies specific to an occupational field of knowledge, that the specific department manages (as found in the Financial Management CF).
- An enabling environment is required in which newly defined CFs could contribute to better performance. Such an environment would entail the non-politicization of appointments to avoid the "play it safe" culture.
- The CFs should include intra-organisational arrangements (that are characterised by interdependence, flexibility and continuous learning that transcend the intra organisational and sectoral boundaries by embracing group

dynamics, institutional dynamics, social regulation structures, and feedback mechanisms across different departments and organisations.

- Greater collaboration, networks, and partnerships between various Public Service departments and organs of civil society are also required to implement the developmental objectives of the state.
- CFs should move away from static competencies into dynamic competencies with an effective form of collective leadership capable and committed to continuously learning and renewing itself.
- Some departments (such as the National Treasury) may be more equipped than others to work towards this new PSS model. Such departments and their leadership should be given more space, authority, and power at many levels to exercise professional agency while rigorous and independent monitoring and research will identify the lessons learned from such new practices in the short and medium term.
- Competency-related training courses should be given a high priority (may be made compulsory through Performance Agreements and PDPs).
- E-learning training interventions should be considered to ensure that SMS members attend on their own time.
- Competency assessment reports to be shared with both candidates sent for assessments (whether successful or not)
- PMDS units to evaluate whether performance agreements have incorporated the identified gaps into Personal Development Plans
- Developmental areas as identified in the competency assessment reports to be submitted to HRD units in order to incorporate the training needs into the HRD plans (integration)
- The directive to be reviewed and assessment results to be a consideration when making appointment decisions for SMS posts.
- Departments to partner with PSETA to solicit financial support for SMS training/development where appropriate.
- The budget is specifically for competency-related training interventions.
- Introduce stringent measures to stop training budgets from being shifted to other needs.
- Departments to formalise senior management mentorship programme to address the identified competency gaps.

- Departments to use online leadership programmes offered by the NSG and other training institutions.

6.4.2 Recommendations on the constitutional, legislative, and policy frameworks underpinning leadership competencies in the South African public service.

Since the study revealed numerous regulatory frameworks that government public service leadership frameworks in South Africa, it is recommended that all SMS must show an understanding of these frameworks on their appointment and promotion in and within the public service. Serving SMS members must be subjected to regular refresher courses for them to perform their duties within constitutional, legislative, and policy boundaries.

6.4.3 Recommendations on the leadership theories and styles underpinning leadership competencies in the South African senior management service.

The study established that leadership theory is a discipline that focuses on finding out what makes successful leaders excel in what they do. To better respond to the requirements of the twenty-first century, the SMS must be capacitated with the following eight competencies (which were identified through the review of “traditional” leadership literature):

- Human orientation – Members of the SMS should pay much greater attention to people than before by showing more empathy and making people's well-being, even more, of a priority,
- Organizational skills – The SMS member should still be able to keep providing structure but doing so through new media and information technologies and more in a team setting,
- Adaptability and flexibility – In addition to adaptability, i.e., agility, flexibility is now also considered a key skill for leaders to be able to quickly change the course of action in the current fast-changing environment,
- Values – Members of the SMS must demonstrate several key values in modern times, such as curiosity, authenticity, optimism, and moral virtue,

- Cognitive skills – In today's world more cognitive abilities are needed. SMS members should be able to analyse and synthesize a large amount of information and formulate sustainable strategies. Creativity, innovation, and the ability to think and act with an entrepreneurial mindset are also required,
- Self-awareness – As the world becomes more complex and uncertain, SMS members need to show more self-confidence, tolerance to high stress, and be fully aware of their purpose and motivation. They are expected to now show self-reflection, as the ability to entertain a critical analysis of oneself and one's actions and be willing to change, Self-regulation, being aware of their own emotions and behaviours and being positive,
- Transformational ability – Leaders are increasingly expected to bring change, which entails both initiating and implementing change and
- Communication skills – Members of the SMS must be able to communicate through new media technologies and social networks.

It is also recommended that a member of the SMS must act as a situational leader to make his/her behaviour "contingent on situational forces".

6.4.4 Recommendations on whether it is possible to align the agile leadership model or framework to the public service leadership competency model.

The study revealed the significance of members of the SMS in showing the characteristics that define agile leadership. It is therefore recommended that:

- Members of the SMS must possess the ability to make judicious and effective decisions amidst complex, volatile, and swiftly changing environments.
- SMS members must acquire the capacity to take intelligent and prudent actions under situations characterised by high uncertainty, complexity, and rapid change.
- Members of the SMS must possess the ability to learn new styles of leadership and flexibly switch the already mastered leadership styles to quickly respond to dynamic and changing circumstances.
- Members of the SMS should embrace an adaptively flexible strategy based on external and internal changes and create a value-connected

experience between all stakeholders by empowering organisational actors.

6.4.5 Recommendations on the mechanisms for enhancing public service competencies for the South African senior management service.

The study revealed the following mechanisms to be used in enhancing South African public service leadership competencies: induction, identifying the required competencies for top officers, leadership development through education and training, the role of performance management in enhancing effective performance succession planning, secondment and exchange, regional workshops and establishment of a public sector senior leadership development forum.

It is therefore recommended that:

- All new members of the SMS be introduced to the SMS Competency Frameworks during induction,
- Members of the SMS assist in identifying the required competencies for top officers through all the levels, including those that feed into the SMS,
- Leadership competency enhancement through education and training be prioritized,
- Secondment and exchange programs to enhance leadership competencies be introduced,
- Regional workshops to share best practices on leadership competencies be arranged regularly, and
- of an SMS forum to be utilized to exchange best practices on leadership competencies.

Based on the above and explained recommendations, the following public service leadership competence model is recommended to assist the South African public service SMS to be effective government business leaders. The Model looks at the Skills, Attitudes, and Values required (Personality Traits) and Strategic Thinking, Change Management, Harmonizing Diversity, Project Management, Conflict Management, and Culture as requisite attributes in (Government Business).

Personality Traits

Firstly, the SMS of the South African public service requires the following Skills:

Communication - public servants help people in different cultural and economic groups, and they need to be able to communicate in a way that reaches their audience well.

Interpersonal Skills -Good interaction with and amongst each other

Problem Solving -No problem should ever be too big to solve or resolve.

Emotional Intelligence - The ability to be self-aware, self-regulated, empathetic, and motivated.

Agility - the ability to think and do things quickly.

Secondly, the SMS of the South African public service requires the following attitude.

Idealism is a belief in the greater good.

Altruism - a desire to help others.

Pragmatism - a way of dealing with problems or situations that focuses on practical approaches.

Perseverance - ability to move forward regardless of challenges.

Resilience -the ability to recover from setbacks.

Thirdly, the SMS of the South African public service requires the following values:

Ethics -public servants should have integrity and moral standards.

Accountability-public servants should have public respect and also take responsibility.

Respect- public servants should be considerate and attentive.

Dignity - public servants must be worthy and respected.

Humility - public servants must have a positive attitude that, they are not better than others.

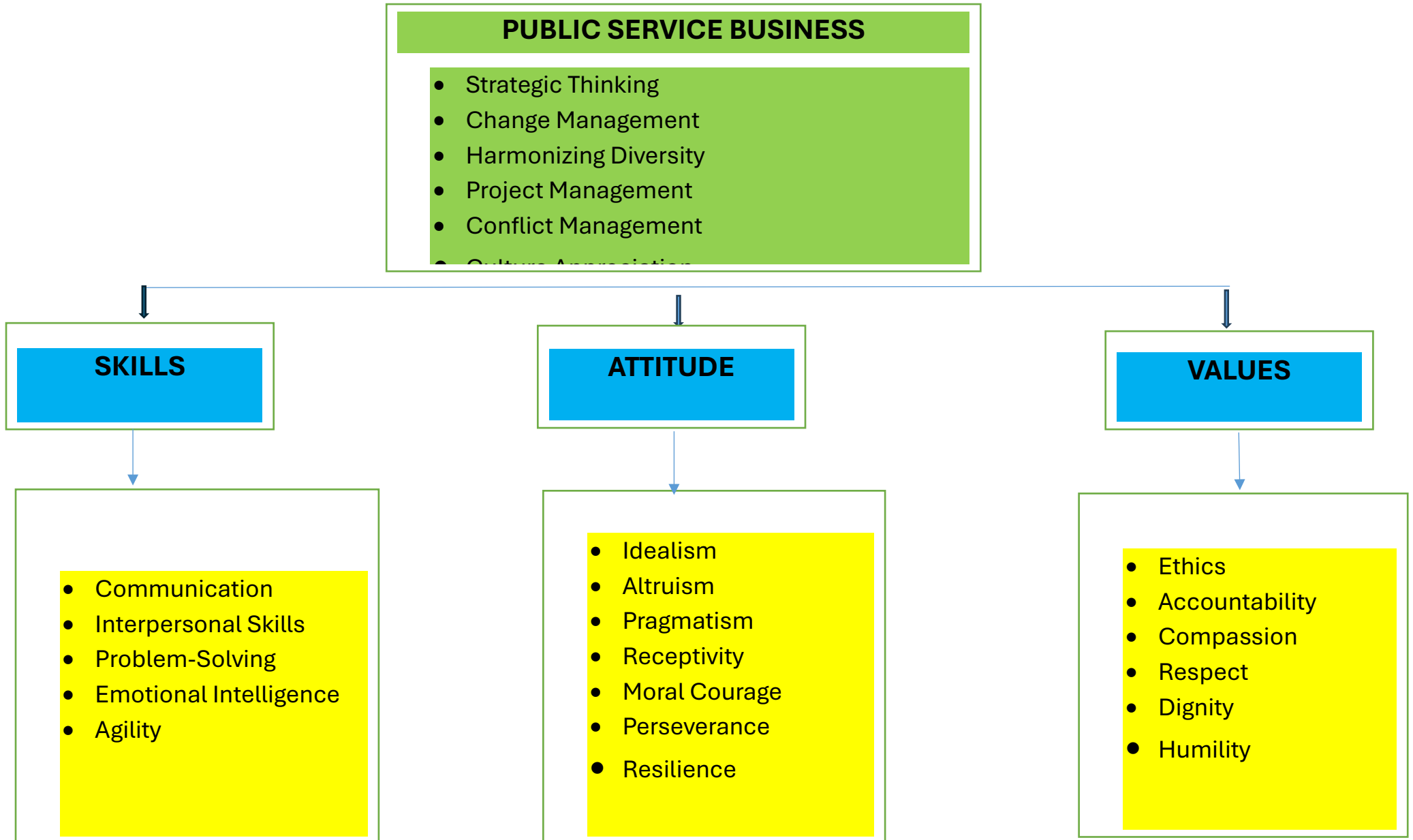
Government Business

The business side of government requires public servants who appreciate:

- Strategic Thinking
- Change Management
- Harmonizing Diversity
- Project Management
- Conflict Management
- Appreciative of Culture

The above personality traits attributed to skills, values, and attitudes aligned to how the public service should be conducted by the SMS of the South African public servants is finally recommended as a public service leadership competence model below:

PUBLIC SERVICE LEADERSHIP COMPETENCE MODEL



6.5 RECOMMENDATION FOR FUTURE RESEARCH STUDIES

The primary aim of this study was to explore the leadership competencies of senior management service of the South African public service. Based on the study's results, several recommendations for future research can be proposed. Further investigation is expected to be done about the effectiveness of the strategies that can promote leadership competencies in the public service. A further study can also be conducted concentrating on the challenges and drivers of competency frameworks in the South African public service. The failure of South African competency frameworks to deliver necessitates a further study on the effectiveness and challenges encountered in implementing competency frameworks.

6.6 CONCLUSION

The study explored the leadership competencies of the SMS of the South African public service. The research established that the South African SMS Competency Frameworks are not effective in developing the competencies of members of the SMS because of various challenges that the public service is encountering. The study recommended various mechanisms that must be used to develop those competencies. A recommendation for future research studies on public service leadership competencies was made.

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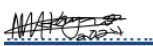

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ANNEXURE A: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT, COMMERCE & LAW						
RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE						
DOCTORATE ETHICAL CLEARANCE APPROVAL CERTIFICATE						
CATEGORY ONE						
<p>The table below lists PhD Student from the Department: Public Administration whose registered Research Project Report is in the Ethical Clearance Category One. The Research Report is straightforward without ethical problems (<i>No risk to humans, animals, or environment</i>).</p>						
#	STUDENT NAME	GENDER	STUDENT#	RESEARCH REPORT TITLE	ETHICAL CLEARANCE#	SUPERVISOR/S
1.	Maimela KK	M	11607060	EXPLORING LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES OF SENIOR MANAGEMENT SERVICE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN PUBLIC SERVICE	FMCL/24/PDN/36	Prof J Mafunisa Prof H Munzhedzi
<p>Approval Period: October 2024 – September 2025</p>						
<p>The Faculty Research Ethics Committee (FREC) of the Faculty of Management, Commerce & Law (FMCL) hereby approve the Research Projects and issue this Certificate as indicated above.</p>						
<p><u>General Conditions</u></p> <p>While this ethics approval is subject to all declarations, undertakings and agreements incorporated and signed in the application form, please note the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project leader (principal investigator) must report in the prescribed format to the REC: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Annually (or as otherwise requested) on the progress of the project, and upon completion of the project. – Within 48hrs in case of any adverse event (or any matter that interrupts sound ethical principles) during the project. – Annually, research projects may be randomly selected for auditing. • The approval applies strictly to the protocol as stipulated in the application form. Should a change to the protocol be deemed necessary during the project, the project leader must apply for approval of these changes before their implementation. Should there be a deviation from the study protocol, without the necessary approval for the change, the ethics approval is automatically forfeited? • The date of approval indicates the earliest date that the project may begin. Should the project have to continue after the expiry date; a new application must be made, and a new approval received before or on the expiry date. • In the interest of ethical responsibility, the FREC retains the right to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the project, – To ask further questions; Seek additional information; Require a further modification or monitor the conduct of your research or the informed consent process. – withdraw or postpone approval if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Any unethical principles or practices of the project are revealed or suspected. – It becomes apparent that relevant information was withheld from the REC or that information has been false or misrepresented. – The required annual report and reporting of adverse events was not done timely and accurately, – New institutional rules, national legislation or international conventions deem it necessary. 						
<p>ISSUED BY FMCL RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE ON THE 08/10/2024.</p>						
FREC CHAIRPERSON:		<u>Prof A Kadyamatimba</u> (Title, Initial, Surname)			 _____ (Signature)	
FMCL EXEC. DEAN:		<u>Prof M Kanyane</u> (Title, Initial, Surname)			 _____ (Signature)	
 <p>University of Venda PRIVATE BAG 35050, TLOKOHYANDLOU, 0950 LIMPOPO PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA TELEPHONE (015) 952 8706/7 *A quality driven financially sustainable, Comprehensive University*</p>						

ANNEXURE C: TURNITIN REPORT

EXPLORING LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES OF SENIOR MANAGEMENT SERVICE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN PUBLIC SERVICE

ORIGINALITY REPORT



PRIMARY SOURCES

1	John G Wacker. "A definition of theory: research guidelines for different theory-building research methods in operations management", Journal of Operations Management, 1998 <small>Publication</small>	1%
2	Melis Attar, Aleem Abdul-Kareem. "The Role of Agile Leadership in Organisational Agility", Emerald, 2020 <small>Publication</small>	1%
3	Denhardt, Janet V., and Robert B. Denhardt. "The New Public Service Revisited", Public Administration Review, 2015. <small>Publication</small>	1%
4	Submitted to Prince Sultan University <small>Student Paper</small>	1%
5	Nancy C. Roberts. "The Age of Direct Citizen Participation", Routledge, 2015 <small>Publication</small>	1%

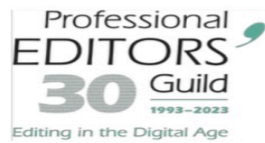
ANNEXURE H: EDITORIAL LETTER

23 February 2025

RE: LANGUAGE EDITING STATEMENT

I the undersigned, hereby confirm that I have edited research report titled: **EXPLORING LEADERSHIP COMPETENCIES OF SENIOR MANAGEMENT SERVICE OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN PUBLIC SERVICE** by Khuliso Kennedy Maimela (11607060) for Doctor of Administration.

Yours faithfully,



Ramatshekgisa Malebo Gratitude

Associate member

Membership number: RAM006

076 0288 485

gratitudemalebo@gmail.com