

**UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL**

**Leadership development: Is this skill important for students at UKZN?**

**By**

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Master of Commerce**

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## DECLARATION

I, Shushentha Naidoo declare that

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## **DEDICATION**

This dissertation is dedicated to my mother. My deepest appreciation and thanks goes to you, mum, for your love, prayer, and guidance. You have encouraged and supported the academic roads that I have taken and shared your wisdom in instilling the importance and value of education. I love you mum.

## **ABSTRACT**

There are essential skills that contribute to the growth and development of individuals, and a large number of individual and collective bodies consider one of these skills to be that of leadership development. At tertiary level, the development of both students and their skills are considered critical, as tertiary institutions play a role in developing young individuals to become future leaders. Much benefit can be achieved from having students vested with leadership abilities, which would directly contribute, to the success of societies. However, minimal research has been done on this subject at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. This directed the research questions and the main objective of the study to the investigation of the importance of leadership development for students.

Literature has pointed out that there has been a shift in developing countries with the expansion and improvements of its higher education, with this addressing student services that create for empowerment, growth, and emotional development. Research has shown that leadership is one activity that can influence, develop and groom individuals that employers' seek and which societies desire.

The research topic allowed for both an exploratory and descriptive investigation. The research questions were rooted from the qualitative design of the study and further directed the sample design that was used for this investigation. The sample design had taken on a non-probability technique and respondents were selected purposively. This investigation made use of a questionnaire as its primary data collection instrument. Using a cross-sectional approach, the questionnaire was administered to 45 respondents. Data was analysed in two parts, firstly the demographics of the respondents and thereafter closed-ended questions and open-ended questions were analysed with reference to the research aims of the study. Statistical software and content analysis was used to analyse the data.

Significant findings pointed to students being aware of the importance of student leadership, and their perceptions reflected the need for student leadership development at the university. Findings showed that the university does cater for leadership development however; the respondents revealed that more should be done for this skill development.

Key words: skills development, higher education, student leadership, next generation leaders

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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS**

NYC	National Youth Commission
NYDA	National Youth Development Agency
NYP	National Youth Policy
School of MIG	School of Management, Information Technology and Governance
SCM	Social Change Model
SLDS	Student Leadership Development Series
SRC	Student Representative Councils
Student LPI	Student Leadership Practices Inventory
UCT	University of Cape Town
UFY	Umsobomvu Youth Fund
UKZN	University of KwaZulu-Natal
UNISA	University of South Africa
UP	University of Pretoria

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION, BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR THE STUDY

### 1.1. Introduction

Leadership development has become an extensive exercise, practiced by many. This activity has come into the spotlight, since it is considered an exercise that influences the success of organisations and societies (Mehrabani & Mohamad, 2015:822). In a face-paced world, with political, environmental, socio-cultural, and technological changes, grooming individuals as leaders has now become necessary. However, this practice of leadership development is insufficiently addressed, thus leading to the cause of a skill shortage (Bell & Steyn, 2016:42).

Many challenges arise from there being a shortage of skills. Unemployment can be identified as one of these challenges. In order to address this, assistance from tertiary institutions have been sought after. Janse, Herman, Matentjie, Morake, Pillay, Schoole and Weber (2007:174) have stated that tertiary institutions are valued sources of improving the skills shortage faced by societies as they prepare individuals for the workforce. Using such institutions, provide for an opportune space to strengthen the skills of students as it creates a bridge between tertiary and business environments (Kiersch & Peters, 2017:148).

Tertiary institutions are known as gateways to knowledge and skill development for students. Thus, using this research, an investigation into the importance of leadership development for students is made. This study seeks to evaluate the need of such skill development and examines support structures that are practiced for the growth of students. Given that students are said to become the leaders of the future, priority should be directed towards their development (Posner, 2004:443; Hamzah & Suandi, 2009:18; Booysen, 2016:1). Through this study's investigation, a deeper understanding is acquired of leadership development experiences and opportunities, which students seek. Thus, with a closer look into student leadership development, significant contributions can be made for the enhancement of this skill.

## 1.2. Background of the study

There are over 55.7 million people living in South Africa (Statistics South Africa, 2016). Of this, 36.2% are youth (Statistics South Africa, 2016). A large number of these individuals are students of higher education institutions (Centre for Higher Education Trust, 2012). Once graduated these young individuals are faced with the somewhat daunting task of entering the workplace. However, these pools of individuals are faced with limited opportunities to enter the workforce. The reason for this is that organisations find it difficult to absorb a large portion of these individuals into their institutions (Jobson, 2011:6). Thus, resulting in a number of graduated students left unemployed.

Also, studies have shown that employers are seeking individuals with skills that go far beyond those gained from basic training (Luescher-Mamashela, Moja & Schreiber 2013:viii). They want individuals who have groomed their intellectual abilities, who have grown personally, and who can be immersed fully in societal engagements (Luescher-Mamashela *et al.*, 2013:viii). Consequently, it is then vital to develop skills that will ready young individuals for employment. A holistic developmental approach is thus required to meet the growth needs of these individuals. A key skill that would cater for this is that of leadership development. Day, Fleenor, Atwater, Sturm and McKee (2014:64) states that leadership development is a collective activity of skill development. It is known for its interconnected process that leads to both organisational and individual growth (Schyns, Tymon, Kiefer & Kerschreiter, 2012:3). Therefore, by utilising this activity, opportunities to ready students for employment will be present.

For students, an important area where this development can take place is at their tertiary institution of study. As many learning activities are practiced at tertiary institutions, it sets an ideal stage for development. This arena further forms an intermediate space for the student, as it is known to lead a student into industry. With this being said, Hoppers (2002:15), has identified tertiary institutions as places where programmes of education, skill development, work experience, as well as psychosocial growth are delivered to students, however, what is important is that students actively participate in these programmes to maximise on their development and learning.

As students benefit from their engagement with these programmes leadership skills are grown. This is important as it leads to the empowerment of young individuals, which literature indicates is necessary as it has direct implications for the growth of countries (Ramela, 2011). Hence, developing leadership abilities is critical for both societal and individual success.

### **1.3. The need for the study**

Many have pointed out the salient reasons for leadership development. Astin (as cited in Posner, 2004:443) argued that developing individuals for future leadership is a fundamental activity. Supporting Astin's ideologies of the importance of leadership development is Melanie Veness, who is the Chief Executive Officer of the Pietermaritzburg Chamber of Commerce. She speaks of the need for "strong leadership" and the positive impact it can have on South Africa, like that of "economic growth that will result in a reduction of unemployment" (Kunene, 2016:2). Rufai, Bakar and Rashid (2015:42) in their journal titled: *Developing a sustainable practical model of graduate employability for higher education*, also alluded to the substantial value that leadership development brings to all sectors of industry.

With the above, the importance of leadership development is significantly highlighted hence, opportunities to develop this skill is largely sought after. Nzimande (2010:5) has pointed out that the key provider for such opportunities lies in tertiary institutions, as these places are expected to grow both "student and institutional leadership" (Nzimande, 2010:5).

The views mentioned above had been considered and from these standpoints the rationale for this study was created, which was to examine and understand the importance of student leadership and equally explore the mechanisms that influence student leadership as well as to attain a better understanding of the leadership challenges that students encountered at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN). Gaining key information from this study is critical, as it will contribute to the large body of existing literature on student leadership. With more knowledge, a deeper understanding of the social dispositions like that of student leadership development is achieved.



#### **1.4. Problem statement of the study**

“South Africa’s concept of youth development is influenced by the historical conditions that have shaped the country and its demographic goals” (The Presidency: Republic of South Africa, 2015:4). Leading from this are central principles, and the significant need for the development of young individuals for the future (The Presidency: Republic of South Africa, 2015:4).

The development of student cohorts is largely present. The reason for this is that the student community of the youth population are attaining more formal learning and development at tertiary institutions as compared to others. These students groups of individuals, when compared to others are known to develop both in employability and as future change agents (Tredeau & Omu, 2017). Hence, nurturing and growing skills of students is considered necessary. Leading from this, is the research problem, which investigates the importance of leadership development for students at UKZN. The student population at UKZN is large, with its School of Management, Information Technology and Governance (School of MIG) being the largest of schools (University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2018). With a large student population, the importance of student leadership development escalates, as there is an increase in the number of students who desire development.

#### **1.5. Main research objective and specific aims**

##### **1.5.1. The main objective of the research**

To understand student leadership development at the University of KwaZulu-Natal

##### **1.5.2. Specific aims**

The specific aims of the research are:

- To understand the importance of leadership development for students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal
- To determine the need for leadership development activities for students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal
- To identify interventions that foster leadership development for students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal

- To identify the challenges that the University of KwaZulu-Natal students face when adopting a leadership role during their studies

### **1.6. Research questions**

- Why is leadership development important for students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal?
- Is there a need for leadership development activities for students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal?
- What interventions are implemented that foster leadership development for students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal?
- What challenges do the University of KwaZulu-Natal students face when they take on leadership roles during their studies?

### **1.7. Research methodology and data analysis**

The design of this research was both exploratory and descriptive. The use of both these research blueprints suited the purpose of the research, which was to examine the importance of leadership development for students at UKZN.

Exploratory design provided for the understanding of the importance of student leadership development, as it allowed for an increased amount of awareness that was required to further investigate this topic. To gain insight into the window of the development of this skill required a descriptive approach. Accompanying the exploratory design, the descriptive approach allowed the researcher to understand student perceptions on leadership development. The attainment of these views was considered critical, as it was necessary in order to fulfil the objectives of this research.

Developing an understanding and gaining insight from the views of students', required a qualitative methodological framework. A qualitative method allows the researcher to search out answers to the research questions by exploring and attaining inferred reasoning to phenomena (Rossman & Rallis; Denzin & Lincoln as cited in Mayer, 2015:56).

An early understanding of qualitative research is founded on the principles of investigating phenomena in a setting of the real world and studying events and occurrences naturally, as they unfold (Patton as cited in Golafshani, 2003:600).

Understanding the social phenomena of student leadership development required the collection of data, of which was gathered with the use of a data collection instrument. Questionnaires fitted the constructs of a qualitative research, as it was used to collect data in the form of open-ended questions. The use of such questions; led respondents to state and convey their thoughts on student leadership, which resulted in meaningful responses to questions. As this research had taken on both an exploratory and descriptive design, data was gathered using primary and secondary methods of collection. The questionnaire was used as the primary means of which the researcher gathered data during the investigation. Additionally, it was deemed a suitable tool for the collection of qualitative data. As a primary data collection tool, data that was gathered was precisely for the purpose of this study and therefore was a direct utility in providing research specific value (Myers, 2011). Secondary data is data that had been collected from already published literature (Myers, 2011). Here the researcher collected data from internet sites, textbooks, journals, and newspaper articles.

The institution under study was UKZN and the target population was honours students from the School of MIG. A subset of the population was extracted for the study. With the use of non-probability sampling, the respondents were purposefully chosen. This deliberate selection of the sample was chosen for their knowledge of leadership, as their contributions aided in answering the research questions. Forty-five respondents participated voluntarily in this study.

Once questionnaires were collected with the views of the respondents, the process of data analysis began. It is here that the researcher aimed at making a “valid inference” from the data that was collected (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:332). Respondents’ demographics and open-ended and closed-ended questions in reference to the aims of the study were examined. Both statistical software and content analysis was used for the analysis of the data. Thereafter, this analysed data was documented as research findings and was presented using graphic illustrations.

## **1.8. Plan of the study**

### **Chapter one: Introduction**

The first chapter provides an introduction and reports an overview of the study. This chapter discusses the background and need of the study. It presents the problem statement and goes on to provide the research aims and questions. Thereafter, this chapter concludes by giving an overview of the research methodology that was used in this study.

### **Chapter two: Leadership development and philosophies**

The literature gathered from secondary research, is presented, and sub-divided into three chapters, as each chapter speaks of different topics that lead to student leadership development. The literature review provided for the exploratory research of this study, as it brought improved understandings and more awareness of student leadership development. Chapter 2 is the first chapter that examines literature and philosophies related to leadership.

### **Chapter three: Factors influencing leadership development**

The second chapter of the literature review provides more discussion on the factors that influence leadership development and further goes on to provide a review of gender and generational differences. Additionally, this chapter discusses the evolution in leadership development.

### **Chapter four: Student leadership development**

Chapter 4 concludes the review of literature. It brings together various themes that speak of student leadership development. It addresses interventions for leadership development, the benefits, and challenges of student leadership, and provides discussion on the theoretical frameworks of the study, which was the social change model of leadership development and the Chickering's theory of identity development. Chapter 4 is the last chapter of literature review, it evaluates youth and leadership development policies and programmes that are currently in practice in South Africa.

### **Chapter five: Research Methodology**

In this chapter, discussions of the research philosophy, design, study population, and sampling techniques were made. This section also outlined specifics of the primary data collection instrument, research quality control, and the analysis of data.

## **Chapter six: Findings**

In Chapter 6, presentations of the findings collected from the study are provided for the reader. It portrays the results of the research with the use of graphical illustrations and themes from respondents' perceptions.

## **Chapter seven: Discussion of research findings**

Chapter 7 forms part of the descriptive approach that was applied in this study, as deep insights were gained from the topic of investigation. Chapter 7 dealt with the discussion of the findings from the study that was presented in Chapter 6, in accordance to the aims of the study. The empirical knowledge that was obtained was also linked to the existing literature on leadership development as discussed in the literature review chapters.

## **Chapter eight: Conclusion and Recommendations**

Chapter 8 is the last chapter of this study. In this chapter, a conclusion to the research was made and from the findings of the study, recommendations were presented.

### **1.9. Summary**

For the development of our youth as future successors, they need to be proactively involved in leadership roles and responsibilities (Hamzah & Suandi, 2009:19). It is noted that the growth of leadership skills is crucial and that this development is fundamental for the sustainability of societies at large. In light of this, the current study aimed at digging deeper into the importance of leadership development by investigating and examining the views that students', the young individuals, citizens of many communities have.

Chapter 1 has provided a brief overview of this research, by providing the background and need for the study, problem statement, research objectives, of which the main purpose was to investigate student leadership development at the UKZN and lastly this chapter provided a plan of the study. The following chapter presents and discusses literature on the research topic and forms the secondary data of this study.

## CHAPTER 2

### LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND PHILOSOPHIES

#### 2.1. Introduction

Student, leadership, and development form the central themes for this research. These factors and the discussion of them provide for the foundation of the literature review for this study.

Literature has shown that leadership is an important skill that should be grown as positive outcomes are derived from this development (Rothwell, 2001:16). However, in order to extract benefits from leadership, one needs to understand firstly factors and philosophies of leadership and its development. There are vast numbers of approaches that can be used for leadership development, some of which are succession planning, the implementation of sustainable leadership practices, the use of coaches and mentors, as well as that of talent management. Utilising these approaches helps in the fostering of leadership abilities.

Guiding these and other developmental exercises are that of leadership ideologies. These are influences affecting the practice and delivery of leadership. To name but a few, these philosophies of leadership range from transactional leadership, transformational leadership, servant leadership, and to that of authentic leadership. It is significant to understand the contributions that these philosophies have, as the results from them influence the effectiveness of leadership and that of leadership development. Hence, this chapter provides insight into the founding themes of leadership development, firstly providing definitions to leadership and leadership development and thereafter exploring its importance. This is considered necessary as it forms the foundation in understanding the concept of leadership.

#### 2.2. Definitions of leadership and leadership development

Leadership can be defined as “the use of noncoercive influence to direct and coordinate the activities of a group toward accomplishing a goal” (Werner & DeSimone, 2006:44). Hilliard (2010:93) defines leadership as “the art of motivating a group or team of people to work toward a common goal based on the needs of the organisation or university”.

Spendlove (2007:408) stated that leadership is a leader tool used to pursue the attainment of desired needs. These definitions of leadership emphasise developing individuals and having, and achieving common goals for the betterment of organisations. Moreover, these definitions suggest that by collaboration and human contributions, an organisation is able to remain sustainable. Advocated by many, is this principle of collaborative leadership (Bennis; Heifetz as cited in Astin and Astin, 2000:4). Scharmer (as cited in Jobson, 2011:15) explains his definition of leadership as a community ability of developing for its own future. Here the ideology of leadership is individuals grouping together for a common purpose. With this, working together and developing leadership skills for future leaders is primary.

On the other hand, development can be defined as a word used to illustrate progress or continuous growth. Ketter (2006:78) describes development as the process of acquiring knowledge and of which prepares individuals to contribute effectively to organisations. Development is a long-term investment in developing individual skills. It provides an abstract idea of readying individuals to tackle future challenges and boosts their potential and strengths (Hatsumi, 2010:74).

Combining leadership and development, creates the concept of leadership development. Leadership development can span across individual, group and organisational levels (O'Conner as cited in Hamilton & Bean, 2005:340). O'Toole (as cited in Dalakoura, 2010:433) characterised the development of leadership as the act of identifying and grooming individual qualities that are required by organisations.

Roberts (2015:59) explains leadership development as the growth of an organisation's ability in gaining knowledge and adapting to change. Leadership development is a concept that develops and supports an individual, in their leadership capabilities (Brungardt as cited in Eich, 2008:179-180). However, both leader and leadership development is necessary to achieve effective leadership within an organisation (Day as cited in Dalakoura, 2010:433). With the mixture of old and new theories, this concept of leadership development has come to the forefront and a topic of discussion. As Eacott and Asuga (2014:919) say that attention for the creation and continuous development of individuals for leadership matter and is important.

### **2.3. The importance of leadership development**

The central question to this research leads to the investigation of the importance of leadership. The reason for this question is that many individuals have argued with whether leadership is it a necessary skill to develop or needless activity (Bolden, 2005:3).

Literature has indicated that some oppose the thought of leadership development as a required activity, with others arguing its importance (Bolden, 2005:3). Scholars who have written in recent time have pointed out the much needed presence and implementation of leadership development by highlighting its significant contributions. Many have also discussed the very need for leadership development and it is seen that organisations and institutions of industry have recognised the importance of leadership creation (Flores, Matkin, Burbach, Quinn & Harding, 2012:4). Echoed is the importance of this development in a number of organisational policy frameworks (Harun & Mom, 2014:66).

Having a favourable organisational position in an economy lies within a number of factors. One of these factors is the effectiveness of leadership and the contribution it has to organisational success (Salahuddin, 2010:1). Sharing this view are Mehrabani and Mohamad (2015:822) who state that, “organisational success is influenced by good leadership”.

#### **2.3.1. Developing next generation leaders**

The focus of leadership development is not only directed to corporate organisations but also to the education sector of the economy where student learning and development is primary. Advancing the level of capabilities of these individuals thereby provides for better workplace opportunities and employment. The development of these individuals as future leaders is noticeably clear, with many realising its importance.

In a recent write up by Welch (2016:70), it has been found that there needs to be an increased degree of priority for organisations in developing leadership abilities. Practising this is additionally imperative within the South African context. In a survey carried out using South African organisational managers, results alluded to the limited contribution made towards developing future leaders and that more needed to be done (Bell & Steyn, 2016:42).



This report went on to suggest, that South African organisations should provide for the activity of leadership development and prepare and ready the next generation for leadership to ensure the sustainability and competitiveness of organisations (Bell & Steyn, 2016:42).

As there is a shortage of skill development within the context of leadership for the next generation, addressing this importance is needed to reduce any critical challenge that may come if it is not addressed. It is therefore with this study that the need to develop the next generation of leaders is brought to the forefront. In order to address such development, the seeds to its importance must be planted, and this can be achieved using a number of developmental approaches.

## **2.4. Approaches to leadership development**

Developing leadership abilities can be achieved by using a number of methods, but what is important is to identify effective methods in growing future leaders. In the context of this study, significant approaches have been identified. These are the trait approach to leadership development, the behaviour approach to leadership development, the situational approach to leadership development, succession planning, sustainable leadership, coaching and mentoring, and talent management. While, there are other exercises that also grow and encourage leadership, these approaches are considered important in understanding leadership. It further aids in the study of student leadership development.

### **2.4.1. The trait approach**

The trait approach to leadership development is said to be one of the earliest approaches that focused on an individual's personality and its influence on leadership (Fleenor, 2011:830). Within this approach is a view that personality characteristics determine the level of one's leadership. This approach speaks of personality traits such as those of self-awareness, confidence and all factors that make up one's frame of reference thus referring to born traits, which are intrinsic in nature (Wagner, 1996:9).

Modern theory has also provided insight into personality characteristics like that of the *Big Five model of personality* (O'Boyle, Murray & Cummins 2015:24). This model comprises of individual's personality traits like that of "neuroticis (emotional stability), extraversion, agreeableness, openness to experience and conscientiousness" (O'Boyle *et al.*, 2015:25).

Although, this approach has been found to influence the development and practice of leadership, it houses limitations, as its focus is largely on one's personality. As many variables affect leadership, the trait approach to leadership development is criticised for its shortfalls. Due to this, the behaviour approach had been created (Derue, Nahrgang, Wellman & Humphrey, 2011:8).

#### **2.4.2. The behaviour approach**

As the trait approach faded away, came in the behavioural approach. This approach looks into the behaviour of leaders. The principles of this theory are founded on the notion that leadership abilities are groomed rather than born. It is an approach of leadership, which has influenced many other styles of leadership such as transformational and transactional (Derue *et al.*, 2011:8). Research by many has shown that leadership is considered a complex process; however, much of this approach has a linear view to leadership rather than having a multilayered approach, thus also leading to limitations (Day *et al.*, 2014:64; & Derue *et al.*, 2011:8).

#### **2.4.3. The situational approach**

The situational approach to leadership looks into situational factors, like completing tasks, relationships with others, level of motivation, providing tasks for followers and others that affect leadership (Wrench & Punyanunt-Carter, 2012:286). As there are many insights into this approach, theories like *Fred Fiedler's Contingency Theory* and *Paul Hersey and Kenneth Blanchard's Situational Leadership Theory*, provides for an understanding into the various situational factors that influence leadership (Wrench & Punyanunt-Carter, 2012:286).

Fiedler's Contingency Theory analyses situational factors that are favourable for effective leadership. These factors are, "leader-follower relations, task structure and position power" (Wrench & Punyanunt-Carter, 2012:287). Similar to Fiedler's Contingency Theory, is the Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership Theory, which supports the thoughts that tasks and relationships influence leadership (Wrench & Punyanunt-Carter, 2012:288-289).

However, it further proposes that different leadership styles, such as mentoring, adds to more effective measures to leadership, as it can be used to cater to the different needs that individuals' may have (May, 2017). As this approach states that it is the responsibility of the leader to make the situation favourable for the follower and by adjusting one's leadership style, this can be achieved (Anthony, 2017). Adding up all factors and creating a combination of traits and the situations in which the leader is placed in, leads to leadership success and allows for the improved understanding of leadership development (Fleenor, 2011:832). There are other approaches that, further address the dynamics of leadership and that provide for creation of a holistic development of leadership. All of this creates for the evaluation of leadership, as what is important is to find and use most effective practices that lead to positive outcomes.

#### **2.4.4. Succession planning**

One method of preparing next generation leaders is through the process of succession planning. Succession planning can be defined "as identifying and developing employees for current and future leadership roles" (Staff, 2015:13). It is a calculated activity within an organisation as it is considered as the deliberate preparation of individuals for developmental opportunities (Rothwell, 2010:51).

A key attribute of such an approach is that it provides for much leadership developmental opportunities (Bush, 2011:789). As the background of this study mentioned the prerequisites that organisations seek in their future employees, succession planning is an efficient means of preparing individuals for such conditions (Rothwell, 2001:51).

#### **2.4.5. Sustainable leadership**

Young individuals constantly seek opportunities to grow their leadership abilities (DTTL Global Brand and Communications, 2014:9). However, trying to address this non-stop desire can become a challenge if not managed appropriately. An approach that can be utilised is sustainable development.

This approach allows for the continuous provision of leadership developmental opportunities (Ferdig, 2007:31). It is considered a leadership approach that allows for the practice of shared responsibilities as well as it creates a supportive environment for learning and development (Hargreaves & Fink, 2003:3). Implementing such practices is crucial, for the reasons that are stipulated in government policies and for those that are desired by individuals (Department of Higher Education and Training, 2012). Based on this, sustainable leadership is an effective means that foster leadership.

It is particularly useful in developing leadership at tertiary institutions, as it has the ability to formulate an all-inclusive approach to leadership development, as many principles facilitate the delivery of such a developmental exercise. Central factors to this, is that it provides leadership opportunities for all, it draws in community involvement and what is largely necessary is that it provides mentorship and coaching for future leaders (Davies as cited in Cook, 2014; Harun & Mom, 2014:70).

#### **2.4.6. Coaching and mentoring**

As it has been stated earlier, with there being different methods to develop leadership, finding ones that are most useful is important. With leadership development primarily being tagged as a social experience to development, it is key that human involvement is present. This leads to leadership developmental approaches that make use of coaching and mentoring.

Coaching is an activity that “provides day to day skills” and is a continuous process, whereas mentoring: provides a “medium to long term skills development” and its duration is limited (Meyer & Fourie, 2004:50). Coaching provides an opportunity for individuals to improve their performances and expertise (Joubert, 2007:60).

Coaching provides for timely development. As it is utilised to provide support and guidance for requirements that are specific to daily objectives (Meyer & Fourie, 2004:48). Day to day learning, targets more goal-oriented learning and objectives (Meyer & Fourie, 2004:50).

Mentoring on the other hand is a flexible exercise between individuals or teams (McCauley & Douglas as cited in Amagoh, 2009:992). This is where relationships are built which allows for the facilitation of learning and development (Comensa as cited in Meyer, 2007). This relationship forms a practical method to grow in particular student leadership skills (Zachary as cited in Komives, Dugan, Owen, Slack, Wagner & Associates, 2011).

This creates a steady partnership that supports continuous learning, which is essential, as it is through a collaborate domain that leadership exists. This continuous provision of learning can be discussed in relation to sustainable leadership as they share similar philosophies. Mentoring is a significant development approach as it has a direct relation to building critical skills needed for the workforce. As Meyer (2007) states that mentoring provides learning to happen in real working situations, thus it provides for practical and relevant learning to occur. This leadership developmental approach is considered to be largely structured, and can focus more on learner-centred relationships, which is key when focusing on student leadership development (Marcus as cited in Leskiw & Singh, 2007:455). With the above discussion, both coaching and mentoring can be used as pivotal approaches to student leadership development, as they have the ability to nurture the career growths of individuals by facilitating their knowledge and learning.

#### **2.4.6.1. Differences between coaching and mentoring**

Drawing from literature reviewed, differences between coaching and mentoring has been found. Table 2.1 below illustrates these distinguishing characteristics.

**Table: 2.1. Differences between coaching and mentoring**

Coaching	Mentoring
Improves performances and skills that are necessary	Provides guidance and support mechanisms for development
Coaches are in control of the learning process	Individuals are in control of their own learning
Focuses on addressing immediate challenges	Focuses on developing long-term learning
Direct communication	Indirect communication through modelling desired behaviour and providing guidance
Is an informal organisational activity	Is a formal organisational activity
Utilised to encourage individual capabilities	Utilised for various reasons: developing individual abilities, improving organisational learning, aids the succession of a workforce

(Harvard Business School, 2004; Meyer & Fourie, 2004:50)

#### **2.4.7. Talent management**

Business exercises, challenging climates, globalisation, and others are among the many daily undertakings of an organisation. To work through these, a connection between the organisation's leadership strategies and its objectives need to be formed (Leskiw & Singh, 2007:444-445). The contribution of success made by individuals is essential as well their degree of commitment and development within an organisation. It is therefore important that organisations acknowledge individual successes, their value, and the contribution they will make to achieve organisational goals as future leaders (Amagoh, 2009:990).

Initially the process of talent management, groomed individuals who were considered to be high potential individuals, otherwise known as talented individuals (Leskiw & Singh, 2007:450). Now writers like Hatum (2010:35) state that exceptional capabilities lie within all individuals. With this change of thought, talent management now becomes a relevant approach for student leadership development.

Formulating talent management as a strategic organisational activity in higher educational institutions does hold some difficulties, which can strain its growth (Hatun, 2010:4; Ready & Conger, 2007:1). However, given that these institutions form the medium that prepares individuals to attain their future employment goals, challenges need to be overcome, and talent management should thus be practiced (Immerwahr & Foleno as cited in Wu, Nurhadi & Zahro, 2016:147).

In such institutions, talent management can be applied by coalescing practises of employment and education, as this will help students to develop careers and be successful in demanding and challenging working environments. This activity is also important as it influences the sustainability of higher education institutions as it has been found that talent management is an effective mechanism to identify talent that contributes to the future growth of higher education institutions (Utter-field as cited in Wu *et al.*, 2016:148). If these institutions strategise this activity, much benefit can be gained. In students, skills are diverse and cannot be duplicated; once used within the institution, a competitive edge becomes more visible, thus making students a valuable asset (Mehrabani & Mohamad, 2015:823).

## **2.5. Leadership philosophies**

There are a number of leadership theories that can be used to guide an organisation in improving its leadership development, namely transactional leadership, transformational leadership, servant leadership, and authentic leadership. There are however other precepts to leadership. It is argued that it is necessary to discuss forms of both effective and ineffective practices of leadership, in order to attain a better understanding of leadership. The following sub-sections delve into the leadership philosophies that are relevant to this study.

### **2.5.1. Transactional leadership**

Ardichvili and Manderscheid (2008:622) define transactional leadership as leadership that individuals follow, based on rewards provided by the leader for positive behaviour or actions or punishment for poor behaviour.

Transactional leadership influences individual behaviour, which leads to the creation of skills required for organisational operations (van Dongen, 2014:6). The central term of transactional leadership is transaction. It is the main characteristic of this form of leadership. Transactional leadership lies in the practice of exchange (de Oliveira Rodrigues & Ferreira, 2015:495). This form of leadership is considered more traditional than others are and is said to have a short-term focus towards leadership delivery (Hargis, Watt & Piotrowski, 2011:53; de Oliveira Rodrigues & Ferreira, 2015:496). Current and day-to-day challenges and desirable outcomes are the immediate focus of transactional leadership.

With the above description of transactional leadership, it can be stated that this form of leadership is not suitable for the desired approach to leadership, which is more holistic in form. Consequently then, transactional leadership houses ineffective practices of leadership. The characteristics of such leadership, helps one to better understand positive influences to leadership which are explored next.

### **2.5.2. Transformational leadership**

Ardichvili and Manderscheid have also explained the term transformational leadership. They state that transformational leadership is an activity where a leader interacts with others and builds a relationship that fosters motivation, commitment, and morality in its interpersonal interactions between leader and follower (Ardichvili & Manderscheid, 2008:623). As constant change in environments, practices and other elements are eminent, being able to adapt strategically is significant. Tackling change is a key attribute of transformational leadership. It is transformational leaders, who inspire a vision and encourage change (Des Marais, Yang & Farzanehka, 2000:679).

Transformational leadership tends to do more than transactional leadership. As this form of leadership is able to go beyond immediate rewards and short-term needs, more effectiveness is achieved from its practices (de Oliveira Rodrigues & Ferreira, 2015). These can be viewed as part of the Kouzes and Posner's model in transformational leadership.



### **2.5.2.1. The Kouzes and Posner's model in transformational leadership**

The Kouzes and Posner's model in transformational leadership suggests that leadership is not merely a position one holds in an organisation but the application of both skills and abilities (Abu-Tineh., Khasawneh & Omary, 2009:268). There are significant components that are distinctive of transformational leaders. Kouzes and Posner have identified the following components in their work. Transformational leaders *challenge the process* (Abu-Tineh *et al.*, 2009:268). These leaders are willing to take on challenges. Leaders are not fearful to take on challenges as they acknowledge that new ideas and changes can develop into new business actions (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). Transformational leaders identify improved approaches for successful organisational growth by challenging traditional norms (Abu-Tineh *et al.*, 2009:268).

By believing in dreams for an optimistic future, leaders are able to inspire others in their vision (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). *Inspiring a shared vision* is anticipating new and innovative possibilities (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). However, a vision can be merely encouraged; it is the followers who need to accept it (Kouzes & Posner, 2007).

Transformational leaders encourage and support individual development. By creating an environment that strengthens individual abilities, transformational leaders *enable others to act*. This allows for the involvement and empowerment of others, providing them with possibilities to contribute to business activities (Abu-Tineh *et al.*, 2009:269). A team spirit and the presence of collaboration is therefore created. Transformational leaders engage positively with others, allowing them to complete their responsibilities effectively (Kouzes & Posner, 2007).

Leaders lead others. They are able to be an example and model behaviour that is desired (Abu-Tineh *et al.*, 2009:269). Leaders need to practice this desired behaviour in order to attain commitment from others, so they will need to *model the way* (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). This creates the transformational leader's credibility (Abu-Tineh *et al.*, 2009:269). As the leader holds the interests of the organisation, at large, common goals and ideas can be created (Kouzes & Posner, 2007).

Leadership that leads in a positive direction encourages and supports the development of other individuals and teams. Transformational leaders provide this support and they celebrate success (Abu-Tineh *et al.*, 2009:270). This constitutes the act of *encouraging the heart*. There is a sincere sense of caring, appreciation, and encouragement, thereby fuelling the spirit of others (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). A number of individuals, in identifying and strengthening their leadership capabilities have exercised these five practices of *challenging the process*, *inspiring a shared vision*, *enabling others to act*, *modelling the way* and *encouraging the heart*. This is evident in recent research where training activities were designed, and workshops integrated the transformational model characteristics, participants used each of the five characteristics of the model to test and broaden their leadership abilities (Welch, 2016:71). The workshops provided an experience and opportunity to reflect on ones leadership behaviours (Welch, 2016:71).

As van Heerden (2015:14) has mentioned a young population is currently taking over the workplace. These individuals desire more than rewards but want guidance, acknowledgement, opportunities for development and other intangible benefits and support that the culture of the organisation can offer (van Heerden, 2015:14). Understanding different forms of leadership can assist in providing for this development and together support the desires of young individuals.

Appropriate forms of leadership that have the ability to groom students in particular are leadership styles like that of transformational leadership. This form can be argued as a positive leadership philosophy that would encourage students to apply skills and abilities during their development and learning. This is necessary to develop future leaders. Like transformational leadership, other leadership styles are also practiced, like that of servant leadership, authentic leadership and others.

### **2.5.3. Servant leadership**

In the context of this research nurturing and encouraging student growth is central. A form of leadership that can support such parenting of student development is servant leadership.

It is one that has the ability to empower and develop other individuals (Savage-Austin & Honeycutt, 2011:50). Servant leadership places importance on serving others. Serving others is considered more important than leading others (Greenleaf, 1977:13).

This is important for student leadership development, also because servant leadership encourages all individuals to participate, and that diversity of skills and abilities are valued (Robertson & Timperley, 2011:175). Furthermore, as Bass (as cited in Sendjaya & Sarros, 2002:57), states positive attributes of servant leaders such as supporting learning and development, endorsing empowerment and encouraging community cohesiveness, can positively contribute to developing future leaders. These attributes of servant leaders can be strategically directed to student development, since servant leaders dedicate themselves to the development of others.

Utilising practices of servant leadership can prepare students for their future, as they encourage positive behaviour; necessary skills and abilities can be grown and strengthened, thereby allowing students to become employee ready (Massey, Sulak & Sriram, 2013:13).

#### **2.5.4. Authentic leadership**

Authenticity is used to refer to individuals who are capable of taking ownership for their actions, thoughts, beliefs, values, and desires (Harter as cited in Avolio & Gardner, 2005:320). By being authentic, one is being true. Authentic leadership is defined as “a process that draws from both positive psychological capacities and a highly developed organisational context, which results in both greater self-awareness and self-regulated positive behaviours on the part of leaders and associates, fostering positive self-development” (Luthans & Avolio as cited in Azanza, Moriano & Molero, 2013:46). Authentic leadership encapsulates significant attributes of transformational and servant leadership as well as other forms of leadership (Avolio & Gardner, 2005:329). These attributes are grouped as honesty, reliability, trustworthiness, and supportiveness (Savage-Austin & Honeycutt, 2011:50).

Another key attribute is that individuals who practice authentic leadership have the capacity to learn from their achievements and failures and are able to relate them to others through practice and learning (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). This is where students can apply servant leadership practices, as it would allow them to collaborate with their fellow students in their learning.

Using such practices would allow them to support others but also learn from their own development. This creates positive synergy that would influence them to become more responsive and engaged, ultimately contributing to efficient workplace practices (Avolio & Gardner, 2005:326).

## **2.6. Summary**

This chapter of the literature was used to provide insight into the importance of leadership development, in particular leadership development for the next generation of leaders. Understanding the importance of such development is needed in order to prepare and cater for it. After one has understood the need for leadership development, different methods can be implemented to provide for this activity. This research acknowledged practices that were considered essential and relevant and which will lead to influences to student leadership development. These practices have been identified as succession planning, sustainable development, coaching and mentoring and talent management. During the examination of all these approaches, effective means to develop leadership have been found.

Coupled with this was the exploration of guiding principles / philosophies to leadership. An overview had been provided on both effective and ineffective means to leadership. This was considered necessary, as both affects the development of students, as negative practices will hinder student growth and those that are positive will facilitate student growth. It is important to consider all factors that affect leadership, as its influences have a direct impact on leadership practices and development.

Chapter 2 has provided the basis into understanding leadership and leadership development, from providing definitions to exploring key approaches and philosophies. The next chapter of the literature review will provide a discussion of the factors that influence leadership development. It will begin by exploring the evolution of leadership development, as it challenges the practices of leadership development, from past to new practices. It will further go on to discuss organisational culture and environment influences, intrinsic and extrinsic factors to leadership development, early developmental influences, and gender and generational differences and how they influence leadership. Lastly, a brief overview is provided on the concepts of youth and adult leadership.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **FACTORS INFLUENCING LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

#### **3.1. Introduction**

Factors that influence leadership development are vast and distinctive in their form and nature. They are factors that emerge from different sources. As leadership and its development are considered a way of expanding leadership abilities through social environments and interactions, an understanding of foundational influences is thus required.

This chapter begins by exploring the evolution in leadership development. This discussion was considered necessary as it outlines factors that would positively provide for leadership development. It points to three implementation methods that foster leadership development, with a progression from factors that limit leadership development to those that expand leadership development.

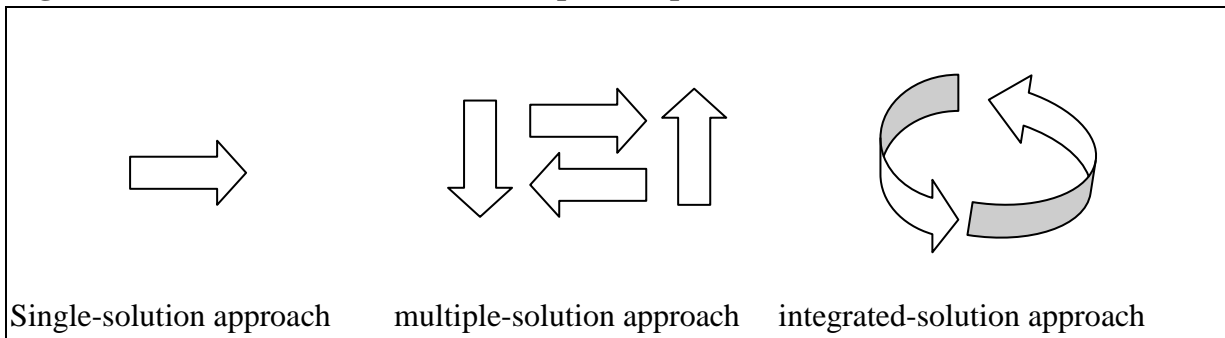
Organisational culture and environments are also discussed, as these do influence leadership development as well. For an improved understanding of how leaders are grown, it was considered important to explore early influences of development. This helped in framing ideologies of how individuals differ in their gender and generations, which the chapter went on to explain. These influencing factors all lead to the final section of this chapter, which discusses youth and adult leadership. Both youth and adult leadership differ in character and practice and therefore also affect leadership development.

#### **3.2. The evolution in leadership development**

In order to implement leadership development be it for students or other individuals, effective practices that influence such development need to be identified. The evolution in leadership development provides evidence as to how the process of leadership development changed over time making it become more effective.

The diagram that follows, Figure 3.1 shows, leadership development moving from a linear activity to that of a combined activity, which incorporates necessary factors that are needed for positive leadership development.

**Figure 3.1: The evolution in leadership development**



(Weiss & Molinaro, 2006:7)

The evolution in leadership development is the umbrella for three approaches that influence leadership development. The first approach is termed the single-solution approach. It is considered a widely utilised method of building leadership developmental skills (Weiss & Molinaro, 2006:4). This approach focuses on one implementation method, allowing for consistency and all individuals are exposed to the same learning patterns (Weiss & Molinaro, 2006:4). However, this approach displays limitations and does not provide for a holistic view of leadership development. Numerous contributing factors are vital for leadership development. As Knowles, Holton, Swanson and Merriam (as cited in Scott & Webber, 2008:765) have identified workplace exposure, developed knowledge, experiences, and employee relations as important contributors to leadership development. Therefore, this approach would restrict student leadership development.

The second approach, which leadership developed is influenced by, is termed the multiple-solution approach. This approach provides for new developmental techniques that organisations can implement to build their leadership (Weiss & Molinaro, 2006:5). However, it has been found that techniques such as assessments, coaching, learning and experience have not been implemented simultaneously but rather divided as units (Weiss & Molinaro, 2006:5).

Therefore, organisations faced challenges in maximising on this approach. For organisations to successfully implement effective leadership programmes and benefit from them, a third approach needed to be created. This is the integrated-solution approach. Research has shown that there are a number of factors required for student leadership development. These factors have been identified through the research frameworks, used in this study, which were the social change model of leadership development and the Chickering's theory of identity development, which are discussed, in the next chapter.

Maximising on the integrated-solution approach will therefore be beneficial, as it combines all relevant and necessary tools for leadership development (Weiss & Molinaro, 2006:6). Additionally, it can be deemed beneficial for students, as it allows for the continuous participation from stakeholders in developmental exercises (Weiss & Malinaro, 2006:6). This approach provides positive influences for 21<sup>st</sup> century organisations to implement a strategic approach when providing for leadership development.

### **3.3. Organisational culture and environment**

Some building blocks are key to leadership development, and have been identified as those of organisation's culture and its environment, factors of early childhood development, and gender and generational differences.

Dating back to more than six decades Kluckhohn (as cited in Ayman & Korabik, 2010:158), defines culture as, "an acquired and transmitted pattern of shared meaning, feeling, and behaviour that constitutes a distinctive human group". Fielding and du Plooy-Cilliers (2014:105), define culture as "a shared system of values, attitudes, beliefs, assumptions, expectations and symbols that a particular group of people share". Holding true to these definitions, is the definition of organisational culture by Draft (as cited in Yiing & Bin Ahmad, 2009:55), who explain it "as a set of key values, assumptions, understandings and norms that is shared by members of an organisation and taught to new members as correct". This process of acculturation allows individuals to accustom themselves to the culture of the organisation.



These definitions fit into that of leadership, having similar themes of values, behaviour, and grouping of people. The concept of leadership development as mentioned by authors such as Connerley and Perderson (as cited by Ayman & Korabik, 2010:158), can be influenced by culture, as it brings with it a number of worldviews. This constructs a mosaic of leadership development themes and topics of influences.

Linking the concept of leadership development to that of culture is the idea of organisations placing value on learning and an environment of which supports such learning. Learning is a process of acquiring knowledge and skills sets and developing an understanding of tasks and responsibilities (Livingstone, Mirchandani & Sawchuk, 2008:15). Adapting to new and changing situations, allowing for continuous learning and becoming learning organisations is fundamental (Manikutty, 2005:57). All of which is required for student development and their learning needs.

Recognising the need for continuous learning is important, and it should be carried out timeously (Griffin, 2011:842). This continuous activity of learning can provide for the development of student leadership. This is achievable since learning organisations encourage and promote opportunities for leadership development (Amagoh, 2009:990). Learning organisations such as those of higher education emphasise the concept of lifelong learning, which is the continuous practice of learning by individuals throughout their lives (Meyer, 2007). Although becoming a learning organisation is advantageous, organisations still need to create an active culture that acknowledges the importance of leadership development (Nanton, 2011:182).

A nurturing environment is thus also required to build on strengths and develop skills of students. As the environment is similar to that of an organisational climate, a positive one should be built. Amagoh (2009:994-995) states that a positive environment, is where leadership development is supported and encouraged proactively, and depending on this degree of encouragement, will leadership development thrive. However, Eich (2008:182) mentions that leadership development should take place in a “safe and encouraging” environment, thus taking into account all internal and external environmental factors.

Both organisational culture and environment can create positive influences where there is involvement from all parties' in student leadership development. A culture and environment that supports and nurtures students is vital for their development and learning.

### **3.4. Born or bred**

The above topics spoke of leadership approaches and philosophies that are practiced. They brought insight into the varied practices and theories of leadership. Further discussion of the changing form of leadership development was made together with the influences brought in by organisational culture and environments. However, the question that researchers and academics propose is whether leadership is skill that an individual is born with or is it bred (Bolden, 2005:3). This question was raised since there are contrasting thoughts of whether leaders are born or made.

In early studies, Astin and Astin (2000:23) stated that individuals who have taken on leadership roles are not born with leadership abilities but rather they developed their abilities by their discovery of new skills and knowledge. Astin and Astin's (2000:31) thoughts are that leadership is a skill that can be developed by becoming active participants in acquiring skills and knowledge and applying them when needed.

Together with Astin and Astin (2000), early research of Conger (as cited in Watt & Ziegler, 2009:30), points to leadership as a process that begins in the early development of an individual, where, influences are passed from one's family, peers, community and environments and later influences arise from one's experiences of gaining skills and knowledge which ultimately affects their leadership abilities. Murphy and Johnson (2011) have a similar stance on the topic. They looked at early leadership development of individuals and said that genetic factors, like personality can determine one's effectiveness in leadership practices; however, they also advocate that practice is essential, that timeously practicing a skill leads to improved capabilities (Murphy & Johnson, 2011:464).

Bolden (2005:3), argues this, and says there is an in-between space that lies both learnt leadership abilities and personal characteristics that contribute to one's leadership. Bolden (2005:3), states that although leadership skills can be developed and strengthened over time by practice, there are personal traits that are less likely to change such as one's self-awareness, which also influences one's leadership. Much of these views led to a debate of the development of one's leadership abilities.

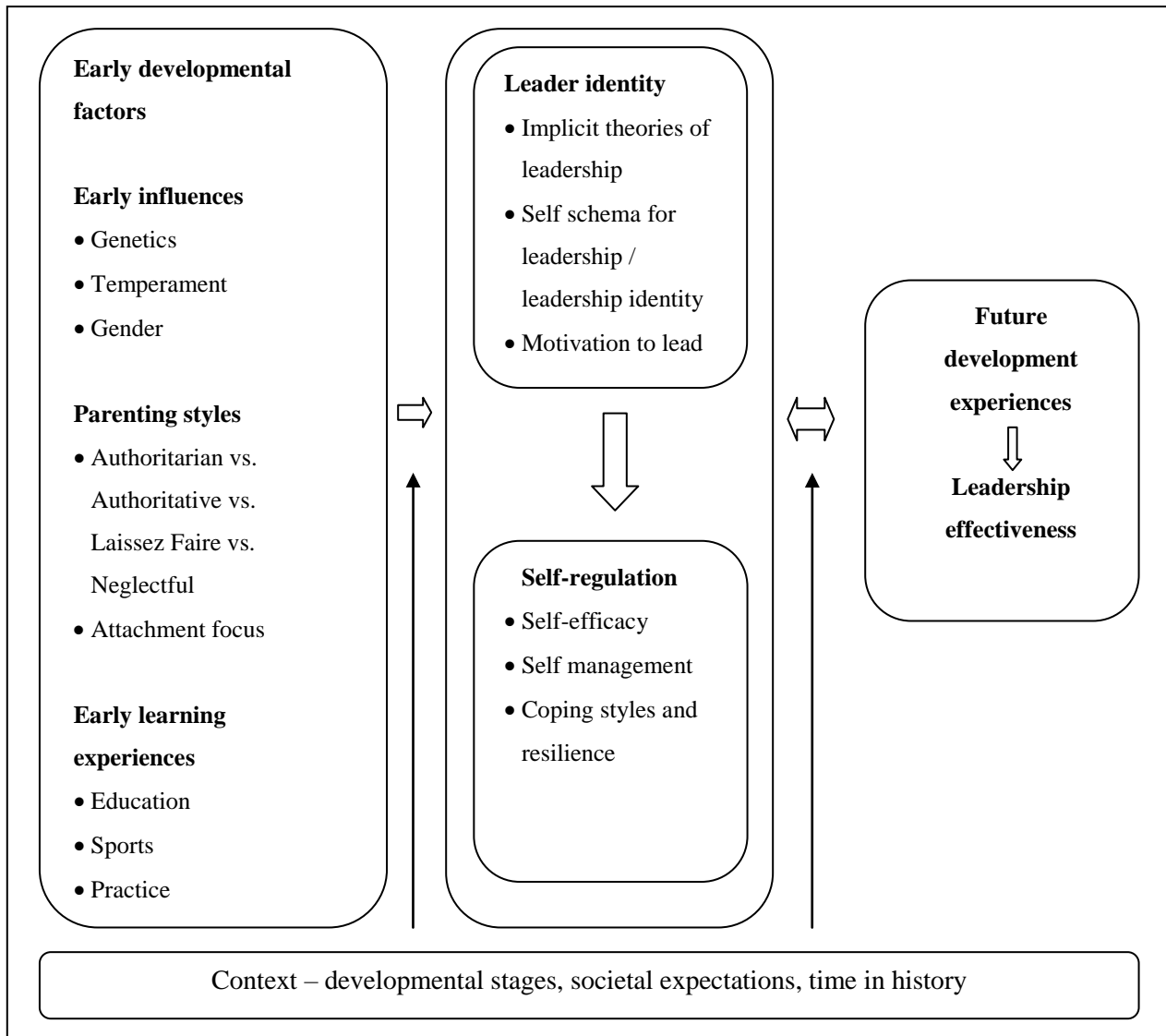
To obtain insight into the degree of influence that genetics has on leadership development a study was created by De Neve, Mikhaylov, Dawes, Christakis and Fowler (2013). This study was the first to look into specific genes that can have influences on an individual in occupying leadership positions (De Neve *et al.*, 2013:45). The results of this study found new contributing factors to the emergence of leadership and provided further information on personality influences to leadership development (De Neve *et al.*, 2013:46).

### **3.5. Early development**

Early involvement in leadership development is important and has been found to be beneficial. As Hilliard (2010:95) explains that having early, involvement in leadership development builds and strengthens skills and abilities, which individuals are able to use as they grow into maturity. Encouraging such early involvement can be argued as providing a foundation to prepare for instant students for their career readiness. By doing so, areas that require increase support and development can be identified and appropriate mechanisms can be implemented. Additionally cultivating the abilities of young individuals early will be influential to a community, as their role and position within such communities will be more active as they grow (Redmond & Dolan, 2016:261).

To understand the build up of what influences leadership development for young individuals, contributing factors need to be understood first, as Murphy and Johnson (2011:461), proposed in the model of leader development across the lifespan. The model of leader development across the lifespan (Figure 3.2) provides insight into the influences that affect early leadership development (Murphy & Johnson, 2011:460). This will help one to understand better the development of students. Thus, student leadership development can be catered for strategically.

**Figure 3.2: A life span approach to leader development**



(Murphy & Johnson, 2011:461)

Early developmental factors are grouped into three categories as seen in Figure 3.2, namely, early influences, parenting styles and early learning experiences. Early influences are contributing factors like an individual’s genetics, temperament, and gender. These are considered to be the seeds to which grow towards leadership development and are those external factors that are not in control of the holder (Murphy & Johnson, 2011:462). Parenting styles can differ, ranging from authoritative parenting styles, authoritative parenting styles, laissez faire parenting styles to neglectful and attachment focus parenting styles.

A combination of education, sport, and practice in leadership positions additionally affects the development of leadership. Practice is included in early development, since the more often a skill is practiced, the better one would become. As they say, *practice makes perfect*, which is key for attaining and strengthening one's ability for long-term.

Murphy and Johnson (2011:462) in their work identified leadership identity and self-regulatory as key factors to development. Leadership identity speaks of an individual's identity to leadership, it views one's duties and effectiveness as a leader; this links to the concept of one's self schema (Day, Harrison & Halpin; Lord & Hall; Lord, Hall & Halpin; Murphy as cited in Murphy & Johnson, 2011:461). One's level of motivation is also included in the leader identity box. A must have for pursuing leadership development is motivation, which at times is difficult to achieve. As it is known that, there are also factors that affect motivation.

Self-regulation can be viewed as how one defines themselves, including their level of responsibility and accountability. Joshi, Trauth, Kvasny and McPherson (2013:4) describe self-regulation as a process that "is grounded in the concept of self-definition". Self-regulation encompasses one's self-efficacy, self-management, and coping styles and resilience. Earlier studies have shown that self-regulation includes other activities such as setting goals, which are important also to one's level of motivation (Carver & Scheier; Manz as cited in Murphy & Johnson, 2011:465). Self-regulation can be influenced by parenting styles, as young individuals who are encouraged by their parents developed more positive self-regulation to those whose parents are overly attached (Manian, Papadakis, Strauman & Essex as cited in Murphy & Reichard, 2012).

A significant factor to take note of, is that all the influences of early leadership development is based on context, which has been identified as developmental stages, societal expectations and time in history (Murphy & Johnson, 2011:465). These factors are important since it can influence one's leadership identity and self-regulatory in good leadership behaviour and their willingness to continue with leadership development (Murphy & Johnson, 2011:462). As arrows link each category, emphasis is created in highlighting the importance of reinforcing this development (Murphy & Johnson, 2011:461).

As mentioned earlier, young individuals are of a malleable age, where their developmental stages are sensitive. Early introduction and developmental opportunities can lead young individuals to develop good leadership practices (Murphy & Reichard, 2012). With age comes experience, therefore depending on one's stage of development, will their leadership become more effective (Murphy & Johnson, 2011:462).

Adding to this is societal expectations and time in history. Societal ideologies of leadership emerge from the expectations that societies have on leadership development. These expectations filter through all demographics within a society. Understanding diversity is therefore key.

Ricketts and Rudd (2002:11) in their study have found for instance that there are many differences as well as similarities among individuals. Differences can arise from various individual attributes, of which some relate to gender and generational differences, which are further discussed in the next section. Within these differences, also lie societies' expectations for all citizens. Murphy and Johnson (2011:467) propose that as a society grows so too will its citizens and its expectations of leadership will change. Although societal views are present, it is influenced by the concept of time. As time changes, so too will the expectations of a society change. Consequently, this will lead to time influencing leadership development. This will ultimately affect the expectations and development of future leads.

The life span approach to leader development provides a looking glass into the factors that influence specifically leader and leadership development, as it explores early developmental influences. Murphy and Johnson (2011:460), state the creation of the model is based on, acknowledging and understanding the various early influences that contribute to leadership development. As it is said, reinforcement of the idea of development is created by the connection made from leader identity and self-regulation to future development experiences and leadership effectiveness. Together with early influences, our experiences over time will alter and vary, and based on these will we achieve effective leadership development or not.

### 3.6. Gender differences

Addressing leadership can cross a number of perspectives, be it different organisational, individual or cohort views. Building on the creation of varied views are those formed by gender. In early research, gender was described as an individual being either male or female (Unger as cited in Ayman & Korabik, 2010:158). However; Bern, Deaux and Major; Eagly (as cited in Ayman & Korabik, 2010:158) found that gender includes more than just male and female separations but takes in intrapsychic occurring from the mind, gender interactions as well as social roles that men and women have in a society.

Finding from a study carried out by Schuh, Hernandez Bark, Van Quaquebeka, Hossiep, Frieg and Van Dick (2014:377) suggest that gender differences lead to an unequal distribution to leadership. Similarly, findings from the study of Murray and Chua (2014:192), also pointed out, that the role of gender differences do contribute to leadership however, say this area of study and its importance still needs to be understood. Bosak and Sczesny (as cited in Schuh *et al.*, 2014:365) argue this as they say much research has delved into the vast differences among gender roles.

A speculated idea of the existence of a gender gap in leadership has been created. This postulated belief holds some truth. Using the survey results from Bell and Steyn (2016:42) female participants reported largely on the limited leadership development opportunities they have as opposed to males. With the existence of a gender gap in leadership can create many ethical challenges within a society (Schuh *et al.*, 2014:363). Similar finding have been found with Schuh *et al.* (2014:363) and Paustian-Underdahl, Walker and Woehr (2014:1), as their studies have argued the under representation of females in leadership.

It is known that males and females have taken on varied societal roles and have accustomed themselves to these roles according to many worldviews. Due to this, it was noticed that certain attributes of a gender ascribe more to archetypal representations of leadership than the other. Gender roles however, are significant as they subscribe to one's frame of reference about oneself and others (Eagly & Karau; Kidder & Parks; Eagly, Wood & Diekman as cited in Joshi *et al.*, 2013:3). Furthermore, gender role differences can explain if any, whether these differences influence the gender gap, and whether contributions to the equal distribution of leadership among genders are created by these differences (Schuh *et al.*, 2014).

Be it a gender gap or not, one should not isolate factors as they change over time. A change in times leads us to the creation of generations. Together with genders, generational cohorts can help explain the varied perspectives to leadership.

### **3.7. Generational differences**

Strauss and Howe (as cited in Murray & Chua, 2014:195), put forward the concept of the generational theory, and explained it as a theory that pertains to the recurrences of distinctive makeup that are found among generations across time. Generation as defined by Mannheim (as cited in Sessa, Kabacoff, Deal & Brown, 2007:49) “is a group of people of the same age in a similar social location experiencing similar social events”. At present there are five different generations, these are the Traditionalists or the Silent Generation, Baby boomers, Generation X, Millennials and lastly Gen Z. These generation types are also tagged by other names.

#### **3.7.1. Generational cohorts**

Warner and Sandberg (2010:2) have defined four of the five types of generations. Traditionalist or the Silent Generation, are individuals who were born before the World War II era, Baby boomers, are those individuals who were born after World War II, Generation X, are individuals who are born between the 1960’s and 1970’s and Millennials also referred to Generation Y, are those that are born during the 1980’s and 1990’s (Warner & Sandberg 2010:4-7). In a South African context, post 1994 Generation Y are the born frees of the country, a nickname given to those who were born at the time of South Africa becoming a democratic country. Other researchers have grouped these generations differently. As Murray (2011:55) has categorised Generation Y / Millennials as those individuals who are born in the early years of the 1980’s to early 2000. Lastly, there are those individuals who form part of Generation Z, who are postmillennial; these individuals were born after Generation Y.



Although there maybe change in the ranges of each generation, each generation represents individuals born at the same time. As Crumpacker and Crumpacker say (as cited in Shaw & Fairhurst, 2008:366) a “generation begins with a birth rate increase and ends when it declines and it represents a group who have a similar world view grounded in defining social or historical events that have occurred during that generation’s development years”.

Some of these generations have now retired and some yet to enter the business market. Baby boomers are those that are retiring from many leadership roles, thus leaving these roles vacant and in order to fulfil the operational needs of the organisation, new leaders need to fill this gap (Morris, 2012:33). This is where the development of students comes into play. With this, societies are encouraging organisations to address generational differences particularly as this new generation is now entering the workforce and this further means that different generations can lead to the changes in leadership positions and functions (Sessa *et al.*, 2007:47).

### **3.7.2. Generational characteristics**

With a melting pot of different generations, it has been witnessed that today’s businesses face more change from those previously. The reason for this is based on that, today’s businesses experience the workings of all these individuals, who are working together and along each other (Warner & Sandberg, 2010:1). Additionally, as the development of individuals have spanned across time, there is a possibility, due to varied influences that their work practices, views of leadership, skill sets, knowledge, values and beliefs and other attributes differ. This generational mix, if not managed can become difficult, therefore organisations need to address generational diversity (Warner & Sandberg, 2010:1).

Sessa *et al.* (2007:69) has pointed out the following: that there are both similarities and differences in character attributes among generations, which leads to diversity of leadership behaviours and style. The reason for this is that each generation has difference preferences (Ahn & Ettner, 2014:978). These differences are present because of a change in leadership styles (Merrill Associates as cited in Dempster & Lizzio, 2007:281).

Generational differences should be valued and the advantage of having differences in leader roles and leadership should be extracted for the organisation's betterment (Sessa *et al.*, 2007:70). As challenges and difficulties can be contested, generational differences can be embraced.

### **3.7.3. Generational desires**

For reasons of this specific study, Generation Y and Generation Z are of interest. These two generations are made up of individuals who are students in higher education institutions and those of which are entering organisations or who are in early years of employment. In the 2014 survey by Deloitte, perceptions of Generation Y was that organisations are not providing sufficient leadership development opportunities and as this generation values leadership and skill development, they suggest that the development of future leaders should be addressed (DTTL Global Brand and Communications, 2014:8). This is also pointed out by Myers and Sadaghiani (2010:234); as Generation Y places high importance on leadership development and opportunities and they proactively search for this. Growth in knowledge and skill together with the lifelong learning are significant to Generation Y (Terjesen, Vinnicombe & Freeman as cited in Shaw & Fairhurst, 2008:367).

An article titled: *How your millennial and Gen Z employees are changing your workplace*, which featured on Forbes explained the results of a survey which was carried out to identify how Millennials / Generation Y and Generation Z differ (Strauss, 2016). The results of the survey discovered that both Generation Y and Z desire to be leaders, with 84% and 79% sharing this view respectively (Strauss, 2016). Although this desire is evident in such study, there is insufficient support. As Schawbel (2016) points out, results from a Harvard Business Review, that only 7% of organisations have assisted individuals in their leadership development. Organisations should realise that leadership development is not only essential for individual growth but also for itself. Goings (2016:6) acknowledges this importance and mentions that "a pathway for future leaders" should be created. This will provide opportunity for generations to grow and develop with the objective of adding value to organisations and communities. As both Generation Y and Z are important for the context of this study, it is central to understand the shared views that they have for their wants and needs.

### **3.8. Youth and adult leadership**

Youth development is defined as “an intentional comprehensive approach that provides space, opportunities and support for young people to maximize their individual and collective creative energies for personal development as well as development of the broader society of which they are an integral part” (South African Government, 2017:1). Redmond and Dolan (2016) also bring meaning to the concept of youth leadership development with their explanation. They explain youth leadership development as a process of “which leadership can be explored, taught, or experienced by young people” (Redmond & Dolan, 2016:262).

Youth leadership development is different to that of adult leadership development. As the approach of youth leadership development has, a specific focus on the leadership developmental needs of young individuals. Youth leadership development is directed more towards the learning of leadership whereas adult leadership development has more to do with the abilities of an individual in their leadership practices. Factors of adult leadership can be results of the power and influence, where adults have a higher degree of having power and influence than the youth (Mortensen, Licty, Foster-Fishman, Harst, Hockin, Warsinske & Abdullah, 2014:452).

Much concern has been created in respect to the developments of young individuals (Fraser-Thomas, Côté & Deakin, 2005:19). As it is with the focus of this study, which is largely directed to the young individuals of Generation Y, and Generation Z. The reason behind this, resides on the view that the youth face a number of challenges and that supportive structures need to be in place to assist these individuals to overcome their obstacles (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003:97 & Fraser-Thomas *et al.*, 2005:19-20). Further to this, is that the practice of developing leaders for the future is needed. Thus, developing skills, abilities, and knowledge for these individuals is essential.

As Murphy and Johnson (2011:460), stated young individuals are of a malleable age, where their development is adopted and applied more easily. Hence, providing for student leadership development can be made easier as an opportunity arises to develop them while they are in their developmental stages (Berg as cited in Ingleton, 2013:220).

Carrying out developmental practices will allow these individuals, “to lead a healthy, satisfying, and productive life as youth and later as adults, because they gain the competence to earn a living, to engage in civic activities, to nurture others, and to participate in social relations and culture activities” (Hamilton, Hamilton & Pittman as cited in Fraser-Thomas *et al.*, 2005:20). All of this is a direct reflection to the requirements that are needed to develop students as future leaders.

### **3.9. Summary**

Chapter 3 spoke of the evolution of leadership development and has also shown, that there are key factors that affect the leadership development of an individual. Over time this activity has shifted, and has become a practice where synergy is at the centre. This takes in all factors to ensure a comprehensive understanding and effective creation of leadership development practices. Research as shown that organisational cultures and environment also contributed to such development, it had been said that a learning environment is key as it encourages and provides opportunities for growth and development.

Some argue that leadership is a born skill while others say it is bred. This stance is deemed as linear, as Bolden (2005:3), states there is intermediate space between both born skills and those that are learnt. This view led to the influences drawn from one’s early development. Gender and generational differences have resulted in different ideologies and practices of leadership and leadership development. The views that males and females have on leadership is different and somewhat stereotyped, and lastly generations have their own views on leadership of which is grouped into each of their cohorts. Generations differ in their values, beliefs, practices, experiences, and others and it further creates a distinction between that of youth and adult leadership.

Combining many fragments, those from the concepts of leadership and the importance of it from Chapter 2, to those of influencing factors to leadership development in Chapter 3, have created for the construction of the literature that follows in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4 is the concluding chapter of the literature review section. This chapter concentrates on student leadership development. It brings in discussion on student leadership benefits and challenges and reviews the social change model of leadership, which has been considered a significant model of student leadership development and that of Chickering's theory of identity development, which forms the theoretical frameworks of this study. Thereafter, the roles of higher education institutions are discussed together with interventions to leadership development and policies.

## CHAPTER 4

### STUDENT LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

*“I start with the premise that the function of leadership is to produce leaders, not more followers” – Ralph Nader*

#### 4.1. Introduction

Drawing from the discussion in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 it is noted that leadership development is an important activity. With global research, it has been found that leadership development of individuals has become priority (Hackett & McIntyre as cited in Brown, 2001:2). This is found in both past and present writings. Having read the Human Resource Development Strategy for South Africa (HRD-SA), a policy that is used to address citizen development, places much emphasis on the importance of growth and development of the citizens of the country (South African Government, 2016:7). Reinforcing this are many academics, like those of Eich (2008:176-178), who stated the pivotal significance of leadership development, with a particular focus on students. This understanding and awareness has been raised from the cry of young individuals who place much value on their leadership development. It is with this backdrop that Chapter 4 has been constructed.

The centre of this study is students and their development of leadership skill and abilities. This chapter starts by introducing student leadership and the factors that encompass this form of leadership. In order to understand this phenomenon better, the social change model of leadership development and the Chickering’s theory of identity development had been used.

The discussion of this chapter goes on to analyse benefits of student leadership and its challenges. It briefly explains the role of higher education institutions to student leadership and the practices from such institutions that lead to student development. Closing this chapter is a final exploration of policies that structure and guide development.

## **4.2. Student leadership**

Mulenga, Brouze and Lubbe (2016:141) have stated that “student leadership at universities are an integral part of both leadership and skills development for students”. Student leadership is said to be an important developmental exercise for students. As it has been used to develop and foster student needed skills and abilities (Eich, 2008:177). Furthermore, by developing student leadership, the focus is on the future, where students can effectively contribute to the growth of organisations and communities as they take on leadership roles (Hilliard, 2010:95). Although many positives have been found in the development of student leaders, one significant contribution is that it creates a prime opportunity to bridge the gap between learning environments to that of corporate (Kiersch & Peters, 2017:148). The reason for this being that, students are given the opportunity to develop their leadership capabilities during their tertiary education are preparing for the outside world (Kiersch & Peters, 2017:149).

Additionally, numerous researchers and academics (Dugan & Komives, 2007; Eich, 2008:176; Hilliard, 2010:95-96) together create a compilation of a growing body of which discusses the importance of student leadership development and the benefits of such leadership. Put together, all can lead into a conceptual model in understanding the approaches to leadership, with a focus also on social change. The paradigm of social change connects with the philosophy that each individual has a level of responsibility to share with others in order for the betterment of a society (Komives, Wagner & Associates, 2009). The social change model of leadership development is an approach that defines leadership as a collaborative activity that creates change for the community, with a central focus on student development (Komives *et al.*, 2009).

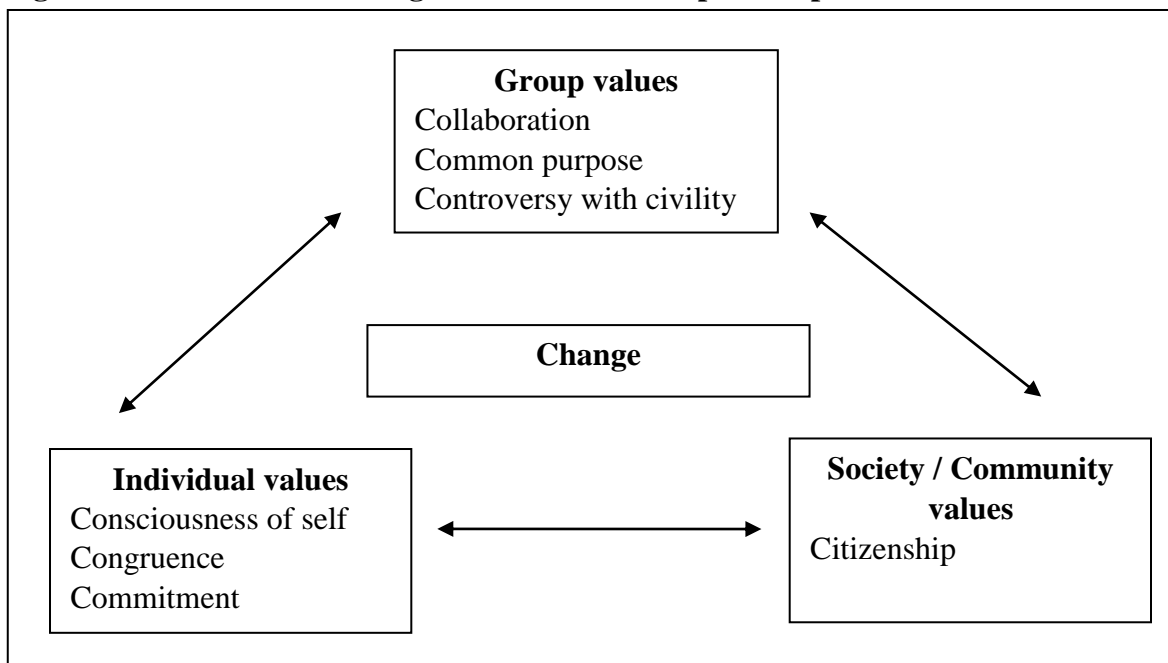
### **4.2.1. The social change model of leadership development**

Some state that the education system within the country is not meeting the needs of today’s youth, be it in their preparation for employment or the development of necessary skills (Nsele, 2016:2). The question that Nsele (2016:2), raised is; how can the education system whether in South Africa or globally prepare young adults for the job market?

The answer to this is in the creation and implementation of a systematic framework that guides such organisations in helping students develop. One particular model that creates a well-rounded approach to address the development of students, specifically in their leadership abilities is the social change model. The social change model was created for tertiary students and is said to meet the changing dynamics of leadership which students face (Dugan & Komives, 2007:9). This model has contributed significantly to the formulation of leadership education for students (Kezar, Carducci & Contreras-McGavin as cited in Komives *et al.*, 2009).

The social change model of leadership development is labelled the most widely implemented student leadership model by institutions of higher education (Komives *et al.*, 2011). Below, Figure 4.1 is a graphic illustration of the social change model of leadership development.

**Figure 4.1: The social change model of leadership development**



(Dugan & Komives, 2007)

Haber & Komives (2009:138) have identified the social change model (SCM) to be “the most used model of student leadership development in higher education”. As the study has a focus on the importance of student leadership development, exploring the insights of the social change model of leadership development is necessary.



By doing this, the researcher is provided with an understanding of the factors and contributions that are needed for the development of student leadership.

The social change model is founded on the principle, that leadership is a combination of values that creates social change (Dugan & Komives, 2007). According to the Higher Education Research Institute (as cited in Komives, Owen, Longerbeam, Mainella & Osteen, 2005:594) individuals, groups, and societies are important ingredients for change. The idea of leadership within this model is considered “purposeful, collaborative, and value-based”, all of which combined, results in social change (Higher Education Research Institute cited in Haber & Komives, 2009:138).

Values incorporated in this model are of importance to an individual, group, and society (Dugan, 2006:219). These values are identified as consciousness of self, congruence, commitment, collaboration, common purpose, and controversy with civility, citizenship, and change (Wagner, 1996:9). The hypotheses of the model state that leadership is a collaborate process involving groups of individuals, and that leadership is founded on key values which presents itself to all students who desire the opportunity to contribute to change (Wagner, 1996:8).

The value paradigm of the model is explained as the following. The three categories of leadership values within the model as mentioned above are, firstly, individual, second, group and third, society / community and under each category are leadership values (Dugan & Komives as cited in Haber & Komives, 2009:138). The individual level of the model identifies the values of consciousness of self, congruence, and commitment. According to Haber and Komives (2009:139), the individual level creates the basis for the essential factors that are necessary for leadership development. The factor of consciousness of self is described as being aware of one’s cognitive behaviours, such as beliefs, emotions, values, and others (Wagner, 1996:9). Students being self-aware have the ability to toughen up their strengths and reduce their weaknesses (Komives *et al.*, 2009). Congruence explained by Wagner (1996:9), is the ability to act according to one’s values and beliefs, by being true and honest. It is the ability to align one’s actions with one’s inner values and beliefs (Dugan, 2006:219). This at times can be influenced by one’s frame of reference. The wiliness to support activities or other individuals explains one’s level of commitment (Wagner, 1996:9).

This weighs an individual's level of motivation in their effort to contribute (Dugan, 2006:219).

The group value of collaboration explains the partnership present among individuals working together to achieve a common goal (Wagner, 1996:9). This value matches the definition of leadership as being a collaborate process. Leadership is a practice of engaging with others and to foster this partnership, Komives *et al.* (2011) suggests group exercises can be created to develop leadership capabilities among students with a system of collaboration. Working with other individuals introduces numerous advantages, as diversity is present a range of new ideas, skills, and knowledge can be produced (Dugan & Komives, 2007). Looking at common purpose, under group values, links individuals forming a group as they come together to share goals and values (Wagner, 1996:9). This formation forms the hub for the group's objectives. Having a common purpose additionally keeps the group together (Komives *et al.*, 2009).

The last concept of group values is controversy with civility. Diversity and contrasting worldviews are unavoidable as there are differences in the viewpoints of individuals; however, these must be addressed (Wagner, 1996:9). What is important is to respect and acknowledge these individual differences and to appreciate the diversity present within groups. Citizenship, under society and community values, is defined as an activity of participation, whereby individuals group together to form a community in sharing their communal responsibilities with each other (Komives *et al.*, 2009). Individuals and groups are able to better the society (Wagner, 1996:9). Therefore, the importance of working with others and the influence that individuals have on each other has become acknowledged.

Having a collectivist lookout on one's societal position leads us to the philosophy of ubuntu. Defined by James (2008:371), Ubuntu, is a notion founded on the concept of "I am because we are". A further explanation by Desmond Tutu (as cited in Komives *et al.*, 2009) explains ubuntu as a belief that an individual's existence is a result of the contribution made by that of other individuals. Within the social change model of leadership development, individuals' working together is viewed as a positive means to help tackle change, as change is believed to be important for the building of successful societies (Wagner, 1996:8). It is additionally important to understand the environment of societies, as this also contributes to varied positions and outcomes of leadership (Haber & Komives, 2009:137).

Furthermore, creating partnerships through leadership can lead to the attainment of positive outcomes within societies / communities (Watt & Ziegler, 2009:44). The SCM model promotes this view, as student involvement is seen as a collaborate practice (Komives *et al.*, 2009). This leads to the importance of the society /community value of citizenship.

All the above values merge to achieve change (Komives *et al.*, 2009). The cardinal concept forming the social change model of leadership development is change (Wagner, 1996:8). Dugan (2006:219) explains that change can influence one to brace and withstand challenging conditions. The combination of these values can lead to the effective implement of the SCM in institutions of higher education.

Developing skills of individuals is a complex process; as it takes more than theory to build successful leadership (Day *et al.*, 2014:63-64). Therefore, models such as the social change model of leadership development, Chickering's theory of identity development and together with interventions and policy development that are explained later on can provide the necessary guidance and structure for student development by taking into account the developmental needs of all individuals.

#### **4.2.2. Chickering's theory of identity development**

Throughout the study, it has been argued that a holistic approach should be adopted when providing for student leadership development. This is stated due to students having diverse characteristics, needs, and wants. Additionally, the student population of individuals are exposed to different environments compared to that of others. With this said Chickering's theory of identity development – the seven vectors, has been identified as a theory that will assist in understanding the development of college students.

This theory explores education and identity by suggesting that psychosocial development occurs in seven vectors (Leggette, Whitaker & Miranda, 2017:34). These vectors are grouped as, developing competence, managing emotions, moving through autonomy toward interdependence, developing mature interpersonal relationships, establishing identity, developing purpose and developing integrity (Leggette *et al.*, 2017:34).

The seven vectors stated above are key as they can be used to determine student progress, as they look at factors “that students must go through while developing their identity” (Chickering, 1969).

Chickering (1969) explains these seven vectors as the following:

1. Developing competence – is grouped into three categories, namely into: intellectual, manual skill and interpersonal competencies (intellectual competences provides students with the ability to understand, analyse and put together factors, manual skills refer to students being able to physically manage tasks and interpersonal competences look at working together and creating relationships).
2. Managing emotions – as students develop abilities to manage this vector, they become more aware and able to manage their emotions. This vector is key as students need to balance the different emotions that come with their learning and development
3. Moving through autonomy toward interdependence – this vector points to students taking ownership and responsibility. Students should be able to accomplish their own goals and tackle their own challenges, thus gaining their independence at the same time practicing respect of others.
4. Developing mature interpersonal relationships – this vector celebrates diversity. Being a student provides for the interaction with others and being exposed to individual differences allows students to gain important skills needed for their development.
5. Establishing identity – this vector analyses how one is perceived by others.
6. Developing purpose – here the reason for being a student is identified, be it the reason for the chosen degree, need for employment or other reasons that make them happy and fulfil their purpose.
7. Developing integrity – this vector looks at humanising and personalising values. By students being able to develop integrity, students are able to “assemble and practice the values that are actually consistent with their own beliefs” (Chickering, 1969).

Together with the SCM of leadership development and the Chickering’s theory of identity development, the core of this study is created. Exploring and understanding such ideologies on leadership development and student development is essential. The more one gains information on such practices, the more one understands. Thus, using these frameworks creates a support for the investigation of student leadership development and all its themes.

### **4.3. Benefits of student leadership**

Casey (as cited in Mulenga *et al.*, 2016:142) and Hilliard (2010:94) have identified beneficial factors from having student leadership within the structures of higher education institutions. According, to Casey (as cited in Mulenga *et al.*, 2016:142), students are able to take on exemplary leadership behaviour once they are in leadership roles, where they are able to provide peer support, engage effectively with others and become more involved in their surrounding environments and communities.

To identify the exemplary behaviour of students that Casey speaks about, the leadership practices inventory (Student LPI), can be used (Posner, 2004:444). These acts of behaviour are categorised using the same themes as that mentioned in the transformational model of leadership. These practices of exemplary leadership formed a conceptual frame that corresponds with the leadership of students. This version was developed through case-study research that was used to investigate similarities of student leadership behaviour to that of managers (Brodsky; Posner & Brodsky as cited in Posner, 2004:444). The Student LPI points out the feedback received from students as they reported their best when in leadership (Kouzes & Posner, 2007). With this inventory, students are able to select and use best practices from their skills and abilities in leadership roles.

Using such behaviour student leaders develop a sense of accountability; they become more aware of their ethical responsibilities within societal and academic communities and their contribution and team spirit to their peers additionally provides for peer and personal development (Hilliard, 2010:94). They are additionally, found to be a practical and a cost saving means to a higher education institutions body of staff (Casey as cited in Mulenga *et al.*, 2016:142). As they can be recruited in many forms of employment, which can be further used as developmental mechanisms for students.

### **4.4. Student leadership challenges**

The youth of South Africa face a myriad of challenges. Today South Africa's youth are balancing in a world where the history of apartheid and post-apartheid conditions, influence their present and future experiences (Jobson, 2011:4).

Modern societies create new and improved living conditions; however, challenges are still prevalent and are faced by many young individuals. These challenges may emanate from social, economic, or scant employment opportunities.

According to Nico (as cited in Jobson, 2011:6) approximately a million of young individuals require employment and learning and development opportunities and provisions. Resulting from limited skills and workplace experience is the high level of unemployment (SABC, 2011; The Presidency: Republic of South Africa, 2015:12).

Contributing factors to the unemployment rate is also the premature withdrawal of students from tertiary education systems (The Presidency: Republic of South Africa, 2015:12). Turbulence in the labour market or the economy can additionally influence the employability of many. Other documented challenges that students face are those mentioned by (Cebekhulu, Mantzaris & Nhlapho, 2006).

Cebekhulu *et al.* (2006:241), state that students' across the global face similar challenges in leadership roles. They have identified the following challenges of student leadership: "equal opportunity and equal access to higher education, knowledge attained should be transferred to society, there should be independent critical thinking from student leadership, and student leadership must become the voice of the voiceless" (Cebekhulu *et al.*, 2006:241). Explained differently; it is said that socio-economic factors such as poverty, fair opportunity, and education strain students and their leadership, knowledge should be an item of exchange, as it is of value to student leaders and their communities and inabilities of not working together would pose as difficulties (Cebekhulu *et al.*, 2006:241).

Challenges maybe rife, however it is important to attend to the needs of the youth of the country as they play in key role in being a catalyst for social change and future successes (Jobson, 2011:5). The solution to these challenges is in the active involvement and participation from all government and private sectors. With there being considerable growth in private institutions of higher education, this is possible (Janse *et al.*, 2007:174).

Using policies and various other developmental interventions as guided frameworks can provide the necessary support. Extensive evidence suggests that today, numerous opportunities are provided to specifically develop the leadership capabilities of young people (Redmond & Dolan, 2016:261). Both government and private institutions of higher education contribute significantly to the development of learning and growth of scores of individuals. With governments and tertiary institutions investing in leadership development, different strategies can address the importance and need for leadership development (Harun & Mom, 2014:66).

#### **4.5. Higher Education institutions**

Before the discussion to leadership development interventions is presented, a brief overview is provided on higher education institutions. Higher education institutions can be defined as organisations that include “universities, institutes of technology, colleges, academics, specialised or professional institutes, trade schools and other organisations awarding academic degrees or professional certification” (OECD, 2011:1).

Higher learning institutions are established to provide various functions and the White Paper has identified the following (Department of Education as cited in Badat, 2010:3):

- To develop and enhance individual capabilities by promoting lifelong learning
- To supply proficient individuals to the workforce that are equipped with skills and knowledge to contribute to the economy
- To take on the responsibility of providing and investing in the development and application of new knowledge
- To contribute to production, delivery and advancement of knowledge
- To contribute to the growth and development of society and aid in tackling country wide challenges
- To contribute to the comprehensive development of a society and its citizens

Education sectors have been identified as great providers of much needed assistance in alleviating the skills shortage and developing students for the labour market (Janse *et al.*, 2007:174). They have been considered ideal in developing leaders who can contribute to positive social change (Astin; Astin & Astin; & Carry as cited in Ingleton, 2013:220).

Commitment and contribution to student learning is an objective to be met by higher education institutions, with the use of an integrated approach, effective policies and programmes can be applied to leadership development (Weiss & Molinaro, 2006:6). The encouragement of workplace learning in higher education institutions can ignite significant change in the development and administration of improving knowledge and skills (Barnard & van der Merwe, 2016:212).

Other opportunities can also provide students to develop their leadership skill and practice them. Within UKZN for instant is a student leadership development office, this office works together with academic and student service bodies to provide increased opportunities for leadership development for all students (University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2017). It does that by offering various courses and workshops on leadership (University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2017).

Similar development is carried out at other education institutions within South Africa. The University of South Africa (UNISA) undertakes interventions that help in improving “student’s knowledge, skills, attitude and social behaviour” (University of South Africa, 2016). It also addresses student leadership development and implements strategies for effective leadership (University of South Africa, 2016). The student affairs body of the University of Cape Town (UCT) also is seen to provide a number of leadership development opportunities for students (University of Cape Town, 2017). Although there are a number of private and government higher education institutions within the country, comparing just three have shown a match, as they all provide for student leadership development. More on methods used to support and promote student leadership is discussed in the following section.

#### **4.6. Interventions for student development at higher education institutions**

Strong leadership drives success in higher education institutions. Key to this approach is encouraging the development of learning. Present in all business sectors should be an environment that is supportive to developing talent and leadership. The rationale for leadership development is to attain effective leadership that will contribute to the success of organisations in completing daily activities and overcoming challenges (Amagoh, 2009:997). However, a gradual passage is needed for the preparation of leadership development (Walker as cited in Valentine, 2011:127).



Strategising the activity of student leadership development, with the use of various tools, can assist institutions. Together with other stakeholders, higher education institutions can formulate leadership interventions necessary for leadership development (Nica, 2013:190). A planned and thought out formulation of leadership development should therefore, be considered, as a well-designed leadership development plan can provide numerous institutional and student benefits as Bush (2011) mentions.

#### **4.6.1. Types of student interventions**

##### **4.6.1.1. Student leadership development series (SLDS)**

The exploration of effective leadership mechanisms were tested in a case study conducted at Drake University, a private education institution that supports leadership development for students (Chesnut & Tran-Johnson, 2013:1). Students at this institution were, exposed to leadership and learning during the duration of their education programmes (Chesnut & Tran-Johnson, 2013:1). In order to maximise on leadership development, Drake University implemented a student leadership development series (SLDS), which is an intervention used to develop leadership skills of pharmacy students (Chesnut & Tran-Johnson, 2013:1). This tailored programme allowed students to develop and strengthen their leadership abilities. As a successful initiative, students become encouraged, supporting fellow learners with leadership skill development and developing an interest in pursuing future leadership positions (Chesnut & Tran-Johnson, 2013:4).

Optimising on programmes like the SLDS can result in leadership development success. This will provide for the development of future leaders and will contribute to the strategic administration of an organisation's talent pool.

##### **4.6.1.2. Academic and co-curriculum activities**

Student leadership development has sparked the interest of many within higher education institutions, which has thus led to the creation of many leadership development programmes and activities (Mulenga *et al.*, 2016:142).

Academic and co-curriculum activities are now necessary to provide students with both learning and practical experiences. Both these are found to be teaching mechanisms for students leadership (Riggio, Ciulla & Sorenson; Schwartz, Axtman & Freeman as cited in Eich, 2008:176).

Tailored academic courses provide students with leadership knowledge and additionally provide opportunities of learning leadership, through practice. As early studies show, “service and experiential learning in leadership education” is ultimately important “and especially through group experience” (Kolbi as cited in Eich, 2008:177). This is where students collaborate and work together in teams on group activities, and practices of leadership is carried out within the group in order to accomplish the objective of the activity. These are largely used, in class work and group presentations.

Leadership programmes can be assembled through a variety of co-curricular activities. Co-curriculum activities are additional activities that at times are used to extend the academic learning of students. Sports and cultural activities have become a popular tool in integrating leadership. “Sport and cultural activities can create healthy, active citizens, instil a sense of national pride and contribute to social and economic change” (The Presidency: Republic of South Africa, 2015:15). There is a high presence of sport activities on the grounds of many educational institutions. This is evident as a large number of students take part in sport programmes (Komives *et al.*, 2011). The social influence and support required for student development can be attained also from the alumni of a college. A college’s alumni is an important thread that connects individuals to their former schools. It builds and maintains relationships (Komives *et al.*, 2011). From this, a number of services can be offered such as mentorship, and recruitment assistance, and much more that provide for student support. In addition, common activities of co-curriculum involve student practice of leadership within university structures are those of “tutors, residence assistants and other research assistance roles” (Mulenga *et al.*, 2016:141).

There are two-folds to this. One, programmes like the above provide individuals with life skills and abilities and two, these programmes allow for active engagement and participation (Jobson, 2011:13). This provides for active learning, which is discussed later on. It further prepares individuals for their future careers, and allows them to acquire skills, which will assist them to confront economic change and challenges (Wurr & Hamilton, 2012:214-215).

Both academic and co-curriculum programmes provide increased opportunities for students to develop their leadership skills. The wide range of these programmes offered at higher education institutions are created with the aim of strengthening the student's leadership development capabilities and of which increases their learning (Eich 2008:177).

#### **4.6.1.3. Service learning**

“Youth leadership programmes, represent a tangible way of harnessing the energy and vitality of young people to contribute meaningfully to their communities as well as benefiting the community directly from their endeavours” (Redmond & Dolan, 2016:261). Deciding on implementing effective leadership development programmes can be a daunting task for institutions. However, implementing student leadership development programmes such as service learning can prove to be an effective choice for higher education institutions (Bringle & Hatcher, 2000:274).

It is an effective form of learning that engages the interest and participation of students. Service learning provides a link to and insight into leadership development. This form of student engagement can be described as an experiential activity, which involves the participation of students in addressing civic needs and which assists students in gaining an improved understanding of the relationship between their learning content and their social responsibilities (Bringle & Hatcher as cited in Bringle & Hatcher, 2000:274). It fosters leadership development by initiating projects that are unique for student growth. Service learning develops skills for positive leadership attributes such as those seen in transformational, authentic, servant leadership and other leadership styles. Service learning is considered tremendously beneficial and is an excellent method to develop leadership talent (Des Marais *et al.*, 2000:279).

There are different community driven exercises that can form part of service learning. One that celebrates the legacy of Nelson Mandela is the Nelson Mandela day. Acknowledging one's responsibilities and taking on active leadership in helping to build better societies is the theme of this day (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2017).

Together with such community-based projects, developmental activities can be created for students (Garcia-Pletsch & Longo, 2016:67). This can also be drawn from the co-curriculum activities discussed above. As service learning finds ways to provide opportunities for students to work and serve their communities.

Fuelling the development of students' needs be a continuous practice hence, identifying other mechanisms to develop their leadership is required. With this said, action learning is also explored.

#### **4.6.1.4. Action Learning**

According to the World Institute of Action Learning (as cited in Volz-Peacock, Carson & Marquardt, 2016:3) action learning is defined as “a process that involves a small group working on real problems, taking action and learning as individuals, as a team and as an organisation”. It is a process of shared learning where individuals in small units are given opportunities to apply and develop skills by completing activities and solving challenges (Miller, 2003). This process of learning can be considered as a primary method to build and improve leadership abilities (Leonard & Lang, 2010:1).

Reg Revans founded the concept of action learning. Revans, suggested that people develop the ability to learn more effectively when they are actually carrying out an action on tasks and problems (Leonard & Lang, 2010:2). This method favours an individual's active involvement and participation than that of a passive one. As individuals are stimulated, they develop a sense of empowerment and are given opportunities to grow and learn from experiences that are different from their traditional norms (Raelin, 2006:157).

As institutions find effective means for development, the practice of exercising action learning can be a cost effective tool, as minimal financial capital is required (Marquardt, 2004:28). Action learning creates leadership abilities and skills that develop into routine practices (Peters, 2013:57). This form of learning provides an individual with the opportunity of continuous learning and development, allowing for the application of current and relevant skills for business operations (Meyer, 2007).

All forms of activities and programmes of action learning allow students to become involved and actively engaged in their own development. Individuals who participate in such developmental interventions; have been found to grow skills of “civic responsibility; leadership skills; multicultural awareness, understanding of leadership theories and personal and societal values” (Ingleton, 2013:221). These positive influences can contribute to personal and social growth.

Strengthening the contributions made by developmental interventions are policy frameworks, as they will aid institutions by providing guidelines and best practices for development support.

#### **4.7. Higher education policies on student leadership**

The University of Pretoria (UP) has documented their views of student leadership in a policy titled: *Policy on Student Leadership Development and Training*. According to this policy the mission of UP is to deliver young individuals who are well-rounded and who can positively contribute to student life as well as to society (University of Pretoria, 2012:1). This policy is aimed at providing guidelines for the training and development of students.

This policy states that developmental opportunities are present with the student affairs body of the institution (University of Pretoria, 2012:1). Five strategies for student development have been identified. These strategies are to offer a variety of leadership developmental activities for students; and that there needs to be effective use of resources when coordinating such activities (University of Pretoria, 2012:2). Programmes should be frequently evaluated and when necessary re-adjusted; there should be networks created among student leadership structures within the university, and that student leaders should be monitored on their progress (University of Pretoria, 2012:2).

According to the policy, much training takes place over a year, as leadership training runs across a twelve month cycle (University of Pretoria, 2012:2). This training happens through programmes such as “theoretical orientation, teambuilding, motivational training, soft skills training, experiential training, portfolio training, diversity training, and conflict training” (University of Pretoria, 2012:3).

Additionally the policy mentions off-campus developmental activities that are made available to students (University of Pretoria, 2012:3). This relates to the co-curriculum development that was mentioned earlier.

The Constitution for Student Governance lays down structure and guidance for UP. It sets legislation on student rights, student representative councils, and constitutional tribunals to mention a few (University of Pretoria Constitution for Student Governance, 2013). Representative councils are widely used means to involve students in the business matters of the institution (Lizzio & Wilson as cited in Deane & Stanley, 2015). Similar to UKZN's Student Representative Council (SRC) Constitution, objectives, functions and responsibilities of committee members are addressed. Such councils represent and provide support for both institution and student; however, the interests of students are primary.

Representing all students, encouraging student participation in leadership, facilitating effective communication, promoting a culture of academic excellence and supporting the development of student structures are some of the objectives of such councils (University of Pretoria Constitution for Student Governance, 2013:4; The University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2006:3).

Exploring the policy development at UP and UKZN, has brought insight into the strategies used at these institutions. Findings from this research can in particular contribute to the current and future policies that are implemented for student development. This is necessary, as the governance of the institution when preparing and providing for student leadership development can adopt new and contributing information from this study.

#### **4.8. National and international policy frameworks**

Influence and contributions made by young people of South Africa is noticed, as it can be seen in literature. At a *Common wealth conference*, former President Zuma (2013) addressed a gathering and stated, “we are all present here today because young people hold the key to our future. We can only prosper if there are dedicated efforts to invest in the youth”. It is with 36.2% of the population of South Africa, that the presence of young individuals is largely distinguishable (Statistics South Africa, 2016).

These efforts are those of policy, programme, and strategic inventions that contribute and support the growth of young individuals.

South Africa is considered to be that of an emerging country, of which a country that still is confronted by challenges (Hewitt, 2012:51). With this being said, South Africa is one of the few African countries that is able to create and at its best implement policies for the youth (The National Youth Development Agency as cited in Kanjere, 2014:78). With this, a strong platform has been set for the development of young individuals. As government has identified this imperative need, it is therefore key that this development take centre stage. The following policies have been identified as primary contributors that lay down structure and guidance for youth development. These policies expand their focus encompassing all factors that are considered necessary.

#### **4.8.1. The National Youth Policy**

In recognising the need to support youth and address their challenges, the National Youth Policy (NYP) was put together (South African Government News Agency, 2015). NYP is a government policy developed for the enhancement of the youth of South Africa (The Presidency: Republic of South Africa, 2015:2). The objective of this policy is to meet the needs of young individuals by ensuring opportunities for growth (South African Government News Agency, 2015; The Presidency: Republic of South Africa, 2015:5). Therefore, this makes development opportunities a necessity for the youth.

Founded from the Constitution of South Africa (1996) and developed from The National Youth Policy of 2009-2014, is The National Youth Policy 2020 (The Presidency: Republic of South Africa, 2015:5). This policy provides the essential means for youth development in South Africa (South African Government, 2017). The policy came into existence to cater for the changing needs of the youth in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (National Youth Policy, 2009). The NYP 2020 does not discard the previous policy but provides for an updated framework that can address the new and changing challenges that the youth encounter (South African Government, 2017a:6). This policy thus understands the need for transformation and adapts approaches that cater for this change. It is here that the policy allows for the addressing of past obstacles by rectifying them into positive current practices.

This policy aims to assist the youth by addressing challenges that they face and by creating positive environments that fosters their growth and development (The Presidency: Republic of South Africa, 2015:2). It aims to provide areas for growth and support structures that will provide for the needs of the youth. What is key is that this policy acknowledges the contribution made by the youth to the South African economy, and this will result in more ambition and drive with the empowerment of the youth.

#### **4.8.2. National Youth Development Agency (NYDA)**

The National Youth Development Agency was created in 2009 after the merger between Umsobomvu Youth Fund (UYF) and the National Youth Commission (NYC) (National Youth Development Agency, 2015:1). The purpose of its creation was to address youth development and youth challenges (Kanjere, 2014:78).

“The National Youth Development Agency Act 54 of 2008 gave rise to the National Youth Development Agency” of which directives are passed from (Kanjere, 2014:78; National Youth Development Agency, 2015:1). The Act regulates the NYDA, it encourages all sectors of society, that of government, private and non-profit organisations to have a fair and equal approach to the development of youth (National Youth Development Agency, 2015:6). Therefore, this brings in all stakeholders together for the provision for youth development.

Many pillars frame such an act, to name but a few, “principles of youth development, and roles of organs of state, companies and civil society organisations in youth development” (Government Gazette: Republic of South Africa, 2009:3). These sections of the act are examined more closely as they form a mandate for youth development programmes and interventions are stipulated. Within the context of this study, these pillars were identified as relevant.

Similar to National Youth Development, is the African Youth Charter. Such policies argue for the importance of youth development and stipulate key structures that can be used.



### **4.8.3. The African Youth Charter**

Together with national policy frameworks for youth development, there are also international forms that are present and implemented. South Africa has a number of these international policies and charters for the development of youth; and one in particular is the African Youth Charter (Kanjere, 2014:80).

The African Youth Charter represents a document that serves as a guide in providing for the development and empowerment of the youth. It focuses on “education, skills and competence development, employment and sustainable livelihoods, youth leadership and participation, health and welfare, peace and security, environmental protection, and cultural and moral values” (The Presidency: Republic of South Africa, 2015:7; National Youth Development Agency, 2015:17). This legal document provides for the development of the youth at all levels on the African continent (UNFPA East and Southern Africa, 2017).

The African Youth Charter addresses a number of provisions that are necessary for the encouragement and support of youth development. Transcribed in the charter are 31 articles, each presenting mechanisms for youth enhancement and advocacy. Some of these articles speak of key topics that are of relevance for this research. The theme of article ten speaks of development. It specifies that, “parties shall encourage youth organisations to lead youth programmes and ensure the exercise of the right to development” and that there should be access to learning and development for young individuals to build their leadership and stance in society, to understand their roles and responsibilities and strengthen important skills (African Youth Charter, 2006:5). Article eleven discusses youth participation. It denotes the need for professional work development and the formulation of training and development programmes within higher education institutions and other training organisations (African Youth Charter, 2006:17). Having career centres are said to provide for this provision by assisting and preparing individuals for the labour market. In addition, this addresses opportunities that allow for the development of work readiness skills that can occur through a number of interventions as explored earlier. Other articles speak of addressing youth challenges, building strong education and development systems, encouraging sustainable livelihoods and employment, social and economic needs and others (African Youth Charter, 2006).

All of the above are established by government, however further to government, initiatives are those that are non-government. Used to empower the youth and present their voices in youth policies is the non-government establishment of The South African Youth Council (Kanjere, 2014:81). This council was founded in 1997, and was established based on the role-played by young individuals and their contribution to the growth of the country (South African Youth Council, 2010:3).

Whether it is policies or committees or councils, all aid in providing structure and guidance that endorse best practices to service and delivery of empowering and developing individuals. These assist in the transformation of building positive social-economic changes for all. Government and non-government initiatives together with all other partners can make sure that young individuals have the ability to access developmental opportunities that will assist them to become skilful members of a society.

Additionally, be it interventions for leadership development, or policy frameworks that guide institutions in their support of students, it is worthy to note that such are present within the structures of South Africa. Therefore, government and institutions are capable of encouraging the development of young people.

#### **4.9. Summary**

The literature review has brought in discussion of key attributes of leadership and leadership development. It presents idealised behaviour characteristics that are considered valuable and important for leadership. Thereafter, the literature examined the evolution of leadership development and factors of influence. Following this, the literature review has been concluded with an analysis of student leadership development.

Students are said to be in a malleable age, as they are in the transitional stages of life (Berg as cited in Ingleton, 2013:220). Grooming these individuals has become a concern for many, as they are the next generation leaders. Finding avenues in which their development can take place has thus become rather significant.

Higher education institutions have been found to be ideal places of learning and growth, as studies revealed that students can and are able to develop their leadership abilities during their tertiary education (Pascarella & Terenzini as cited in Dugan & Komives, 2007). With societies, being in constant development of policies and programmes for such development, problems, and challenges that are faced can be eradicated (Kanjere, 2014:78). With the provision of various interventions, the utilisation of policies and the required guidance from institutions in all economic sectors, young individuals will be able to grow and develop.

Working together will create and contribute to the growth of successful communities. Building upon the leadership abilities of young individuals is therefore vital. These young individuals will carry the torch forward in leading societies. With the literature culminating to student leadership development, an interest is grown. The insight gained from the literature review, will therefore further contribute to the investigation into the need for student leadership development.

In order to understand the mechanisms that had been used to conduct this study, a research methodology is provided, which follows in the next chapter, Chapter 5. It is in this chapter that details of this study is addressed.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **5.1. Introduction**

The preceding section provided for the creation of the literature review chapter by introducing and exploring the subject of leadership together with other related themes. The literature review chapter is significant since it provides a comprehensive insight and foundation of knowledge that is necessary for the purpose of this research. It has grounded this research study and provided for a continuous discussion of the topics and themes of leadership (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). With this groundwork, this research methodology chapter seeks to discuss the concepts of research methodology that underpinned this study. This chapter discusses the exploratory and descriptive design of the study. It includes discussion on the study's population, and the sampling design and the research instrument used, together with the collection and analysis of data, and further explains quality control and ethical practices that was involved in this study.

#### **5.2. Main research objective and specific aims**

##### **5.2.1. The main objective of the study**

To understand student leadership development at the University of KwaZulu-Natal

##### **5.2.2. Specific aims**

The specific aims of the research are:

- To understand the importance of leadership development for students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal
- To determine the need for leadership development activities for students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal
- To identify interventions that foster leadership development for students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal

- To identify the challenges that the University of KwaZulu-Natal students face when adopting a leadership role during their studies

### **5.3. Research questions**

- Why is leadership development important for students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal?
- Is there a need for leadership development activities for students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal?
- What interventions are implemented that foster leadership development for students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal?
- What challenges do the University of KwaZulu-Natal students face when they take on leadership roles during their studies?

### **5.4. Research philosophy**

Lurking behind the construct of any research is a philosophy. According to Dudovskiy (2016), a research philosophy is a body of knowledge that focuses on the supply of information, the character of it, and its development. In essence, the concept of a research philosophy explains the process of how a research was conducted, the strategies used, and the execution of data collection instruments used for answering the research questions.

The manner, in which research is carried out, can be grouped into different schools of thought or different paradigms. There are key concepts, which relate to a research philosophy and which are in particular, linked to qualitative research methods. Ontology and Epistemology are two disciplines of research philosophy. As this study digs into understanding the importance of leadership development for students, it also seeks to assert the perceptions of how students' value this skill and how this skill could be development. Hence, with this, both philosophies are relevant to this study, since ontology studied the realities of nature of how a student's social world affected their ideologies and epistemology studied how knowledge was attained and how skills such as leadership was built (Al-Saadi, 2014:1; Moon & Blackman, 2014:1170).

The researcher used both philosophies in exploring the ideologies students' had on the importance of leadership development, as both philosophies complemented each other and guided this research.

Since this study further investigated the influences that affected leadership development, an interpretivism paradigm assisted in understanding how students' developed their leadership abilities. Linking patterns of thought together under the concepts of interpretivism and ontology, the researcher was able to understand the social constructs of the students' realities. This was done by understanding their experiences of leadership, as they had mentioned in the data collection instrument. Ontology seeks to understand and gain meanings from; experiences that each individual has, this is according to his or her frame of reference (du Plooy-Cilliers, Davis & Bezuidenhout, 2014:29). Understanding each individual's experience of leadership was necessary, as not all experiences would be the same.

Leading the research into a frame of interpretivism and epistemology, the research had taken on a specific structure, and directed its focus on the honours students of the School of MIG on the Pietermaritzburg campus of UKZN. This has influenced the research methodology that; was used in this study and therefore, only paid attention to the particular environment that the study focused on (du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2014:29).

## **5.5. Research design**

Sekaran and Bougie (2016:95) have explained a research design as “a blueprint or plan for the collection, measure, and analysis of data, created to answer your research questions”. This plan can take on three different forms, namely exploratory, descriptive, and causal. Exploratory research is research that seeks to uncover new knowledge and clears up vague phenomena, as its objective is to provide a strong foundation for further studies (Mayer, 2015:53). It is thus the aim of exploratory research to bring in light and understandings of unknown phenomena. In a situation where little is known, an exploratory design can provide improved interpretations and awareness and allow for more investigations into a particular study.

A researcher can use a descriptive design when wanting to attain deep insights and wanting to address certain topics (Rossman & Rallis, 2012; Mayer, 2015:53). It provides the description of a study and the study's variables. In contrast, causal research explores and distinguishes the effects of one element to another. It studies and explains the relationships among variables (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009 as cited in Mayer, 2015:53).

The use of an exploratory and descriptive design was considered suitable according to the purpose of this research. The exploratory design provided for developing a general insight into the topic of student leadership development. As knowledge of the importance of student leadership development is scant at the site of study, exploratory research was necessary. This design allowed the researcher to gain more awareness of leadership development.

The researcher further wanted to understand the perceptions and views that students had on leadership development and how they described this skill. It was here that a descriptive approach was applied to gain enlightenment and seek detailed information about leadership development. Important attributes that was noted, was described using the descriptive design of the study. Both exploratory and descriptive research designs contributed to the “theoretical background” and provided a “guided overview” to the topic that was important and needed for the study (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:53).

Once the researcher had understood the relationship of ontology and epistemology and their philosophical contribution it had on the study, the design and methodological framework was identified.

### **5.5.1. Quantitative and Qualitative research approaches**

Research can take on different methods of investigation for instance, quantitative or qualitative methods of investigation. Quantitative research studies phenomena in a natural setting, whereas qualitative research studies phenomena in a social science setting (Mayer, 2015:56). A quantitative method focuses mainly on studying variables according to “how much or how many” and presents results of gathered information numerically (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:5). A theory can be tested by using a quantitative method, as it uses closed-ended question techniques, which are developed from existing knowledge (Mayer, 2015:56).

A qualitative study in contrast seeks to answer questions and tries to make sense of the real world through interpretations gathered from many methods of inquiry (Rossman & Rallis, 2012; Mayer, 2015). This method uses open-ended questions to collect data of which theories can be developed from (Mayer, 2015:57).

In the context of this research, the best methodology to use was qualitative. This methodology played a role in facilitating the achievement of the research objectives and in answering the research questions. It was used to see how individuals saw “the world from their point of view” (Barnham, 2015:841). The qualitative method framed this study. It was pertinent to this study, as the researcher investigated and gathered critical data from the views of the respondents.

It aided in the study of the social phenomena of student leadership development and created an opportunity to understand individual realities in their natural settings (Barnham, 2015). It provided in-depth insight to the field of student leadership development, of which is essential in becoming a value-add to the discipline of human resource development (Anderson, 2017).

## **5.6. Overview of the organisation**

### **5.6.1. History of UKZN**

UKZN was established in 2004, by a merger between the University of Durban-Westville and the University of Natal (University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2017). This merge created for the single entity as the university. UKZN is located on five campuses, Westville, Edgewood, Howard College, Medical School, and Pietermaritzburg, which are all located in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa (University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2017). This institute of higher learning offers both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes and with global partnerships, the university offers for international academic exchange through teaching, learning, and research (University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2017).



## **5.7. Population**

To ensure the attainment of the research objectives, the target population should be clearly identified (Hennink, Hutter & Bailey, 2011). A population is defined according to Sekaran and Bougie (2016:236) as “the entire group of people, events, or things of interest that the researcher wishes to investigate”. Other writers define population similarly; Keyton (cited in du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2014:97) explained population as grouping “of all units, or the universe, people or things, possessing the attributes or characteristics in which the researcher is interested”.

The population that was of interest to the researcher was students within the School of MIG at UKZN Pietermaritzburg. This group was identified since these individuals share similar characteristics that were of value to the research. The honours students matched these characteristics, as a large contributing factor is that these students have spent approximately four years studying. With this number of years, they would have gained a great understanding of student leadership and it is assumed with these many years of being a student that they would have had some form of exposure and experience to student leadership.

### **5.7.1. Description of research population**

The population was from the disciplines of the school, which are, Management and Entrepreneurship, Marketing and Supply Chain Management, Human Resource Management and Labour Relations, Information Systems and Technology and Public Governance. The table below (Table 5.1) shows the distribution of students across the various disciplines and indicates the research population. The population was narrowed to concentrate on the honours students.

**Table 5.1: The composition of students within the disciplines of the School of Management, Information Technology and Governance**

Discipline	Number of students
Management	12
Entrepreneurship	4
Marketing	17
Supply Chain Management	13
Human Resource Management	12
Information Systems and Technology	18
TOTAL	76

Totalling, student numbers from the above table, the population size for this study was 76, all of which; were registered for the 2017 academic year. As Table 5.1 illustrates, the population is made up of, 12 Management students, 4 Entrepreneurship students, 17 Marketing students, 13 Supply Chain Management students, 12 Human Resource Management students and 18 Information Systems and Technology students.

### **5.8. Sample**

To make the research more manageable, a sample from the selected population had been selected. Sekaran and Bougie (2016:239) have identified this process as sampling. “Sampling is the process of selecting a sufficient number of the right elements from the population, so that a study of the sample and an understanding of its properties or characters make it possible for us to generalise such properties or characteristics to the population elements” (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:239). du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.* (2014:170) provides a definition and defines a sample as “a subset of a population that is considered to be representative of the population”.

### **5.8.1. Sampling design**

A subset of the population can be selected either through a probability or through a non-probability sampling design. As the selected sample population could not be specified, non-probability sampling was selected as the sample design. This design does not allow for the probability of the inclusion of all individuals within a sample (Rowley, 2014:318). Neither does the chosen sample fully represent the population; however, it still fits into the parameters and characteristics of the population (du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2014). As a result of this, it can be further stated that although representativeness of the population is of importance, this study has a qualitative research design, thus the focus was largely directed to gaining detailed knowledge and information on a specified topic, which in this instant was student leadership development (du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2014). This is where selecting the appropriate sample design was needed, as it helped in creating a meaningful research study. For this reason as well, non-probability sampling fits best as a sample design.

#### **5.8.1.1. Non-probability sampling**

Non-probability sampling takes on a number of forms, one being a purposive design. This sampling method was relevant for this study; as the researcher, “hand-picked” the sample based on their valuable contribution to the study (Rowley, 2014:18). To fulfil the research problem and objectives, the researcher deliberately decided on the study’s sample, which had lead to the researcher purposefully choosing the sample.

Based on the criteria that was used in identifying the population, this sample technique assisted the researcher to employ the relevant subjects for the study. These subjects were chosen based on the knowledge that they possessed on the topic that was investigated (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). This technique also acknowledged the diversity of the research subjects (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). Being familiar with the school further helped the researcher in her purposive selection.

Purposive sampling provided the shape for the sample technique that was used in this study, as it assisted in identifying the respondents for this study. This sampling technique matched the use of questionnaires as data collection instruments.

## **5.9. Sample size**

The study selected a sample of honours students from the School of MIG on the Pietermaritzburg campus. The sample size was calculated using Krejcie and Morgan sample size table. With a confidence of 99% and a confidence interval of 3.5, and a population of 76, the sample size was calculated to a number of 72.

## **5.10. Data collection**

Data was gathered using both primary and secondary collection methods. Primary data collection relates to the activity of collecting new information and is an activity that is performed by the researcher. It represents the gathering of information that is unique to a particular study and of which contributes rich and value-added data to a research (Myers, 2011).

To gain rich data, meaning creation and exploring the practical nature of the study, the researcher employed a questionnaire as the primary data collection method. Sekaran and Bougie (2016:142) spell out a definition of a questionnaire as “a preformulated written set of questions to which participants record their answers”. Rowley (2014:2) goes on to explain a questionnaire as a piece of documentation that has both opened and closed-ended questions for which participants can answer.

Using a questionnaire suited the nature of this study; it further catered for its descriptive characteristics (Rowley, 2014:4). The questionnaires administered in this study met the research objectives and was used to note the responses from 45 voluntary research respondents. The administration of questionnaires was more effective as a data collection instrument as it would have been difficult to conduct interviews with 45 respondents.

Much planning went into the development of the questionnaire. The researcher looked at the wording, the types of questions, and the structure and appearance of the questionnaire; by careful consideration of these factors, biasness was reduced (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:145).

Additionally, the content, structure, non-academic language used; to ensure understanding, and questions met the objectives of the research; additionally suited the respondents and the researcher (Rowley, 2014:4). Considering these factors made the questionnaire more valid and reliable. As this questionnaire formed the primary method used for data collection, the researcher depended on it, to collect the vital data that was needed for the research.

To list but a few elements of the questionnaire, it began with a brief introduction that provided contact details of the supervisor and the researcher and the research topic. It announced that participation was voluntary and confidential and further went on to thank the respondents for their contribution to the research, it also possessed the ethical clearance number, and this was all followed by a series of opened and closed-ended questions.

The questionnaire was grouped in two sections, firstly Section A, questioned the respondents of their demographics. This section had nine categories (gender, age, ethnic group, home language, marital status, level of education, year of study, qualification, and faculty of discipline) of which the respondent had to tick or fill in an answer. Section B, the second section was designed to obtain the views and responses of the respondent. It consisted of twenty-two questions and the last area of the questionnaire asked respondents for recommendations on how their tertiary institute can provide additional support for their leadership development. Open-ended questions allowed respondents to express their views. Open-ended questions aimed to analyse the knowledge and meaning that the respondent had on the topic of investigation whereas closed-ended questions, was used for specific answering. Using different types of questions allowed for varied responses, as it gathered referential and opinionated answers (Rowley, 2014:310). This suited the qualitative characteristics of this study, as these types of questions collected insightful data, which was used to create a rich study. The use of two clearly marked sections made the questionnaire clear and uncluttered. This design also improved the professional and structured appeal of the questionnaire. Completing the questionnaire took twenty minutes.

The researcher considered a number of factors when designing the questionnaire and one of these factors was that of time constraints. Having analysed the time frame that was needed to collect primary data, a cross-sectional approach was a better choice than that of a longitudinal one. This approach was deemed relevant in collecting the necessary data for the study.

The researcher herself; administered the questionnaires. This was done by scheduled visits to lecture venues, which was approved by respective lecturers. They had granted permission for the researcher to administer the questionnaires. Lecture venues provided a safe environment for the respondents as it was the normal environment of which they were familiar with. Using a lecture venue made the “research site both applicable and accessible” (du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2014:180). The respondents were safe and were comfortable as the venue created for a non-contrived setting (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:100).

By personally administering the questionnaires, the researcher was able to brief the respondents of the research. Biasness was further omitted from the study, as the researcher only visited and administered the questionnaires on the day of the study. No previous and further meetings were held with the study’s respondents before or after, data collection. Additionally the presence of the researcher did not interfere whilst the respondents completed the questionnaire. Hence, the researcher’s involvement was partial. The research respondents knew the researcher however, objectivity and validity of the study was maintained, as the researcher did not fully immerse herself with the respondents (du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2014). This maintained the integrity and ethical conditions of the study.

Together with primary data, secondary data was also collected. Secondary data refers to data that the researcher collected from previously published works (Myers, 2011). This information played a significant role in this study as it took on the exploratory stance of the research. Secondary methods was used to gather and explore material that was already in availability, such as internet sites, textbooks, journals, and newspaper articles which spoke of the various themes of leadership. Both primary and secondary data collection methods were essential in contributing critical information to the study, and in meeting the study’s objectives. These collection instruments were used to study the importance of leadership development for students, the need for leadership development activities, the interventions that was used to develop such skills and it further was used to investigate leadership challenges.

### 5.11. Research quality control

To ensure that the data collection instrument was applied correctly and consistently throughout the research and was used to obtain the desired outcome of the research, data quality control was needed. The quality of this research was matched against the *criteria for excellent qualitative research* that author Tracy (2010:840) sets out, as shown in Table 5.2.

**Table 5.2: Criteria for research quality control**

Criteria for excellent qualitative research	The characteristics of this study
Worthy topic	<p><i>Leadership development: Is this skill important for students at UKZN?</i></p> <p>As young individuals prepare themselves for entry into industry, it is essential to gain insight into the importance of skill building, specifically that of leadership. This topic is significant as 36.2% of South Africa’s population consist of youth (Statistics South Africa, 2016), thus the focus is on student leadership development.</p>
Rich rigor	<p>The study made use of appropriate theoretical constructs. Methodology (qualitative frame), non-probability sampling technique, the use of questionnaires and analysis of the collected data was suitable to this study.</p>
Sincerity	<p>Minimal interference from the researcher was directed to the study’s respondents, thus reducing subjectivity and biasness.</p>

	Accurate, honest, and true interpretation of the collected data was maintained.
Credibility	The qualitative nature of this study provides thick, insightful knowledge of the topic. It used data triangulation as a method to warrant reliability and validity. Triangulation ensured the correct interpretation of the raw data during the data analysis stage. Data triangulation was achieved by collecting data from different respondents who were from different study disciplines. Similarities and differences were marked and the overlapping themes suggested higher levels of results, thus ensured valid and reliable results, hence was the same scales when the Cronbach's Alpha was calculated.
Resonance	This research extends its scope to a variety of readers. Thus, it is transferable to a wide audience. The descriptive characteristic of this study, allowed for the presentation of the views of many individuals, as it conveyed their experiences of leadership, which was portrayed in detail graphical illustrations.
Significant Contribution	This study contributed to the knowledge field of leadership development. Gained insight was added to the discipline of human resource management.



	<p>As this topic had been identified as one that was investigated insufficiently at the site of study, this research therefore filled the gap in knowledge. As the importance of youth development grows, a needed skill such as leadership; with this research has been brought to the foreground as a significant and influential factor.</p>
Ethics	<p>As the subjects of the study was human participants, much ethical considerations were adhered to. Respondents provided their voluntary consent for their participation. There were no harmful acts and respondents were not exposed to any danger. There was no form of deception. The researcher had minimal interference. Data gathered remained confidential and was solely used for the purpose of the research. Other ethical considerations were maintained such as the integrity of data during its analysis.</p>
Meaningful coherence	<p>All methodological factors used in this study were related and supported the objectives of the investigation. The aim of this research was achieved with the use of a qualitative design. The chapters were connected to each other, which created for a cohesive flow from primary and secondary data, to analysis and findings, and to conclusions and recommendations.</p>

(Tracy, 2010:840)

### **5.11.1. Pre-testing**

A pre-test was conducted on the data collection instrument. The concept of the research and the criteria of the population for the pre-test were kept similar to the main study itself. The test involved administering the questionnaire to a subset of the population (Etchegaray & Fischer, 2011:143; Rowley, 2014:13). One is able to use four to five individuals in a pre-test but not more than thirty (Hair, Money, Samouel & Page, 2007:279). Taking this into account four individuals participated in a pre-test for this study. Pre-testing assisted in determining and evaluating the constructs of the data collection instrument, and time factors, and provided a means to rectify areas to the instrument to ensure reliability and validity.

### **5.12. Data analysis**

Qualitative research lies within the constructs of social sciences; and embedded in this is the documentation of human experiences (Myers, 2011). The purpose of the questionnaire was to record the responses of the respondents' with reference to the topic of student leadership development. Once the questionnaire fulfilled its function of collecting primary data, the analysis process commenced. Therefore, data analysis only began after all data was collected and not during the collection of it (Rossman & Rallis, 2012).

At the data analysis stage of the research, the researcher employed methods that broke down the raw data in order to study it more effectively. By doing this the researcher was "making sense out of the data" collected (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016:202). Flick (as cited in Mayer, 2015:53) describes data analysis as a critical stage in such qualitative studies as it has a significant influence on the results of a research.

Data was analysed using both statistical software and content analysis. Statistical software was used for the descriptive statistics of this research. Data was analysed by content analysis, for the interpretation of the data with the objective of developing a detailed description of the social realities that were mirrored by the respondents' answers provided in the questionnaire (du Plooy-Cilliers *et al.*, 2014). Content analysis examined the salient responses from the questionnaire and aided in illustrating these responses using graphics.

### **5.13. Data presentation**

Leading from, data analysis was the next significant step, which was data presentation. Analysed data was presented and arranged in a condensed manner and was assembled with the use of graphics (Mayer, 2015:58-59). Word clouds, bar graphs, pie charts, and frequency tables were used to present the findings. Additionally, summaries and significant responses were documented and quoted verbatim.

### **5.14. Delimitations of the study**

Not all research hallmarks can be achieved, as difficult encounters can sprout up and which are beyond the control of the researcher. As voluntary participation was present, not all subjects from the sample population participated in the study. Seventy-two individuals according the calculations from Krejcie and Morgan sample size table, formed the sample, however 45 individuals participated. The researcher had chosen to use a qualitative method of study to understand the social phenomena of student leadership development. However; with this choice, constraints became apparent; because of this research design, and sampling strategy, which was non-probability sampling, results could not be generalised. This created a limitation in lack of representation from all schools with UKZN, this sample was nevertheless, chosen for its knowledge contribution to this specific study, as the objective of this study was to ascertain the degree of importance that leadership development has on this particular subset.

However, although the above posed as delimitations to the study, the contributions made from the study findings are significant and should be noted. In conjunction with existing literature, the findings of this study can be an add-on to the body of knowledge relating to the importance of student leadership development. This study provides valuable insight into understanding the importance of student leadership development at UKZN. It can further assist in policy evaluation and development that would aid in simulating interventions for student leadership development.

### **5.15. Ethical considerations**

For this study to be carried out, relevant documentation was necessary. The first document was the gatekeepers letter (Appendix C), given by the registrar of the university; provided permission to conduct research at UKZN Pietermaritzburg. An ethics application was thereafter send to the ethics committee and this committee had approved and granted full approval of this study (Appendix D).

The data was gathered using the data collection instrument of a questionnaire (Appendix B). For the principle of voluntary participation to be adhered to, as informed consent was attached to the questionnaire (Appendix A). This consent, explained the research to the participant, provided relevant and necessary information and informed the participant of their participation and consent and the value of their contributions at no monetary gain. It was primarily used to record the participant's anonymity and voluntary participation in the study, as they signed the informed consent form.

The integrity of UKZN and of the respondents involved was not compromised. The research was carried out in the respondents' natural environment, thus keeping the respondents safe, secure, and comfortable. The information and views that the respondents had provided were kept strictly confidential and private and solely used for the purpose of this study. Further to this, the researcher ensured that there was no misinterpretation or any form of distortion during the collection and analysis of the data (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016:160). All hard and soft copies of the data used during the study were stored in a secure place and was only accessible to the researcher and the supervisor and after five years, it will be disposed off. Proper procedure according to the School of MIG will be adhered to when the data is disposed.

Ethical principles were adhered to at all times, prior, during and after the completion of the research. Honesty, confidentially, anonymity and respecting the research respondents and the institution under study was maintained throughout.

## **5.16. Summary**

This chapter provided a framework of how the research was conducted, as it spoke of the research methods, designs, approaches, and others. This provided the theoretical practices and concepts that influenced and directed the study. Adding to this summary is Table 5.3, which follows; it provides an illustration of specific aims of the research together with the questionnaire questions. This table is provided as it forms a visual representation of the core factors of this study.

Chapter 6, which follows thereafter, will constitute the analysis of the collected data. The analysis chapter will provide the results of the study respondents' responses and document them in themes and graphic depictions.

**Table 5.3: Specific aims and questionnaire questions**

Specific aims of research	Questionnaire questions
<p>Aim one: To understand the importance of leadership development for students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal</p>	<p><i>Question 1: What is your understanding of student leadership?</i></p> <p><i>Question 2: Do you think student leadership is important?</i></p> <p><i>Question 3: Why do you think leadership development is important for students?</i></p> <p><i>Question 4: Do you think that developing your leadership skills at tertiary level is important?</i></p> <p><i>Question 5: Why is it necessary to develop your leadership skills during your tertiary education?</i></p>
<p>Aim two: To determine the need for leadership development activities for students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal</p>	<p><i>Question 6: Is there a need for leadership development activities for students? (If yes, how important are these activities)</i></p> <p><i>Question 7: Is it important to take part in leadership development activities, e.g. team leader for an assignment? (If yes, please elaborate)</i></p> <p><i>Question 8: Do you think leadership activities help you to build your leadership skills?</i></p> <p><i>Question 9: How do leadership activities help you build your leadership skills?</i></p> <p><i>Question 10: Which of the following do you think develop leadership skills for students? (mentoring, class representatives, coaching, community drives, formal classes, other)</i></p> <p><i>Question 11: Which of the following characteristics would you relate to student leadership? (responsible, emotionally intelligent, trustworthy, proactive, courageous, assertive, other)</i></p> <p><i>Question 12: Do different leadership activities influence your behaviour, e.g. building your confidence? (If yes, please elaborate)</i></p>

	<p><i>Question 13: Which of the following leadership behaviour do you consider most important? (assisting others, inspire others through a shared vision, model the way for others, supporting others, taking on challenges)</i></p>
<p>Aim three: To identify interventions that foster leadership development for students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal</p>	<p><i>Question 14: How does UKZN provide for student leadership development?</i></p> <p><i>Question 15: Are you taking any formal course or module dealing with leadership?</i></p> <p><i>Question 16: Are you part of any activity that helps you to develop your leadership skills? (If yes, what are these activities)</i></p> <p><i>Question 17: Do classes and activities influence your leadership ability and development? (If yes, please elaborate)</i></p> <p><i>Question 18: Do leadership classes and activities help you to become a better leader? (If yes, please elaborate)</i></p> <p><i>Question 19: Are there any specific classes and activities that you would like to take to better your leadership abilities?</i></p>
<p>Aim four: To identify the challenges that the University of KwaZulu-Natal students face when adopting a leadership role during their studies</p>	<p><i>Question 20: What challenges do you face when taking on leadership roles as a student?</i></p> <p><i>Question 21: What have you done to overcome these challenges?</i></p> <p><i>Question 22: What advice can you give to remedy the challenges that student leaders face?</i></p>

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **FINDINGS**

#### **6.1. Introduction**

Following the creation of the methodological framework for the research in Chapter 5 is the presentation of the findings that was collected from questionnaires, which was used as the primary data collection instrument. This chapter forms one of the main chapters of this dissertation, as it announces the outcomes from the research that was done. All of the research findings were collected through the research instrument and the gathering of this data was used to provide answers to the research questions.

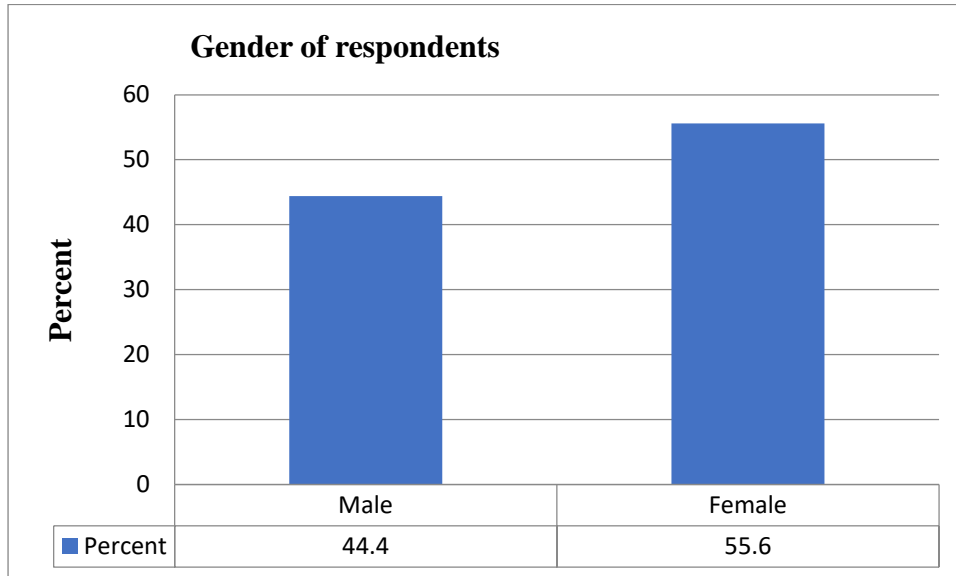
The findings from the study that was collected are presented graphically and in themes. The findings are provided below, firstly according to the demographics of the research respondents and thereafter presentations are made in reference to the specific aims of the study as provided in Section 1.5.2.



## 6.2. Demographic presentation of the research respondents

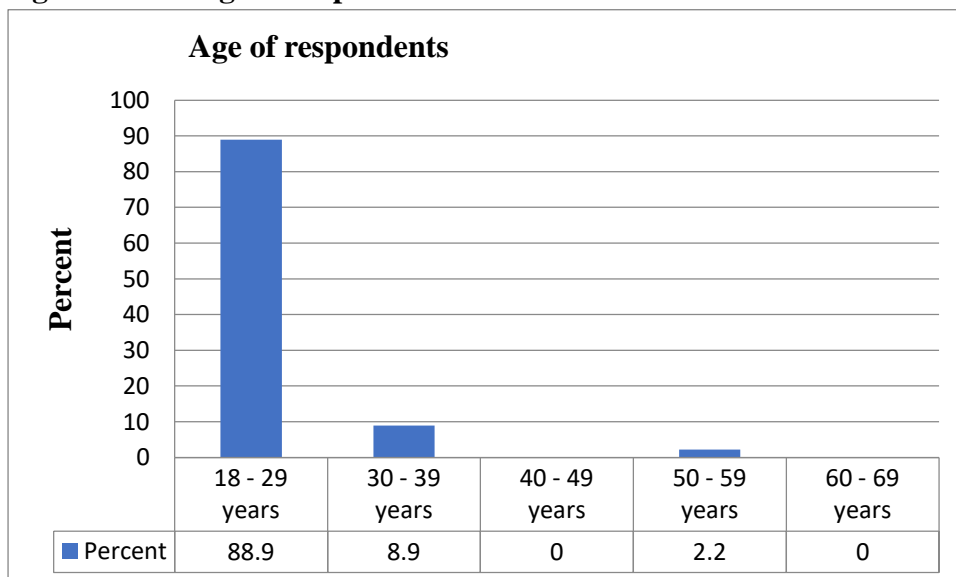
The following section presents the findings according to Section A of the questionnaire.

**Figure 6.1: Gender of respondents**



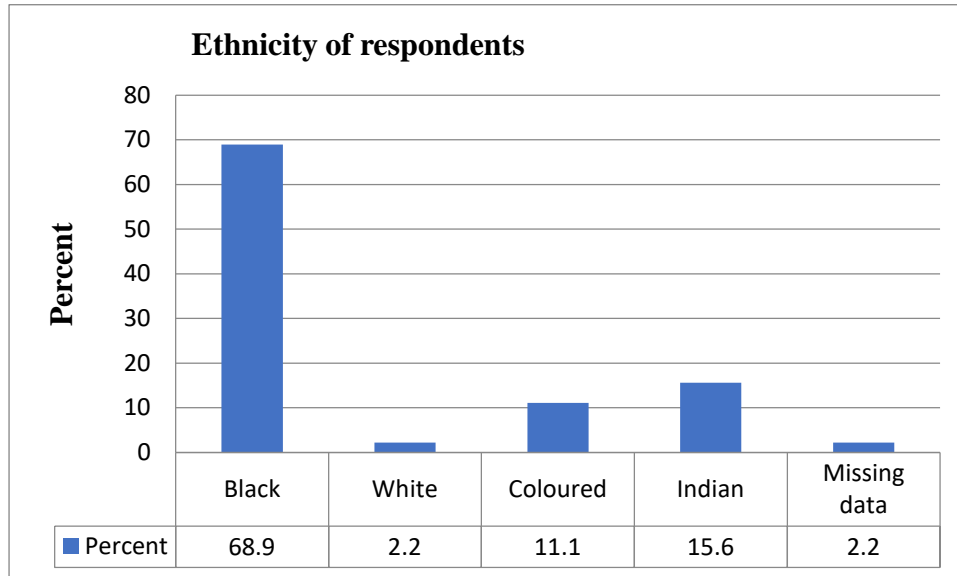
In Figure 6.1, it was found that there were more females (55.6% / n = 25) than males (44.4% / n = 20) that comprised the sample respondents. Thus, females comprised a larger percentage of this sample than males.

**Figure 6.2: Age of respondents**



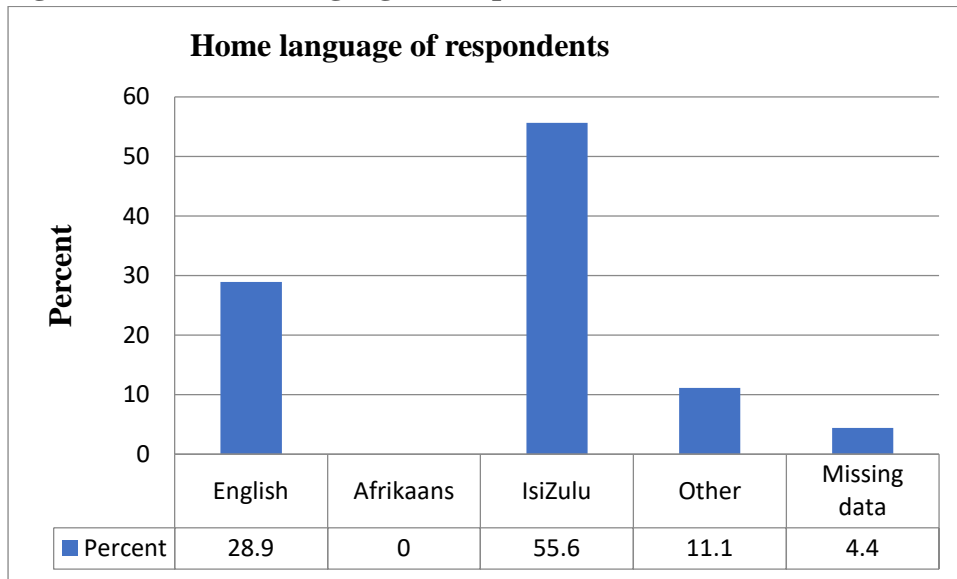
The results from the above graphic (Figure 6.2) show that majority of the sample i.e. 88.9% (n = 40) were in the age group of 18 – 29 years followed by 8.9% (n = 4) in the age group of 30 – 39 years and 2.2% (n = 1) of the respondents were grouped in the age group of 50 – 59 years. There were no respondents from the age cohorts of 40 – 49 (n = 0) and 60 – 69 (n = 0).

**Figure 6.3: Ethnicity of respondents**



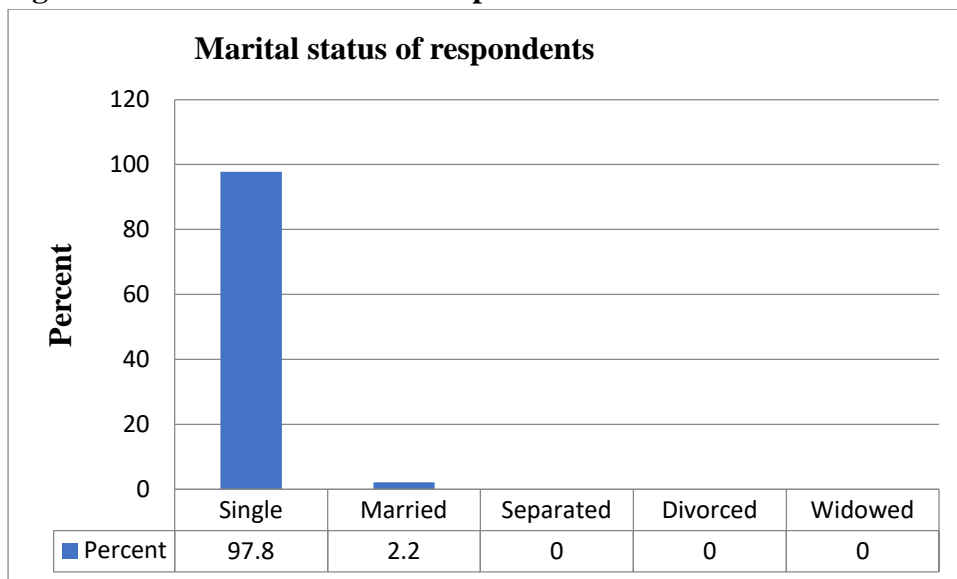
The modal ethnic group as seen in the above bar graph (Figure 6.3) was Black (68.9% / n = 31), followed by Indian (15.6% / n = 7), Coloured (11.1% / n = 5) and White (2.2% / n =1) ethnic groups. Additionally, it was found that there were 2.2% (n = 1) of the respondents who did not indicate the group they belonged to, thus creating missing data. It is difficult to identify the reason for missing data; however, it may be due to the human error of mistakenly not answering, the question. Missing data can be rather serious, however here and in other demographic details, missing data does not affect the results of the study as the demographics was ignored in relation to the research problem, as there was no relationship that was found.

**Figure 6.4: Home language of respondents**



The above graph (Figure 6.4) illustrates the modal home language as IsiZulu (55.6% / n = 25) followed by English (28.9 % / n = 13) and other languages at 11.1% (n = 5). Further to this, it was found here as well that there were 4.4% (n = 2) of the respondents who did not indicate the home language that they speak, thus creating missing data in this section of the questionnaire.

**Figure 6.5: Marital status of respondents**



The marital status of the sample as pointed out in Figure 6.5 were that majority respondents were single, n = 44 (97.8%) and n =1 (2.2%) being married.

**Figure 6.6: Year of study of respondents**

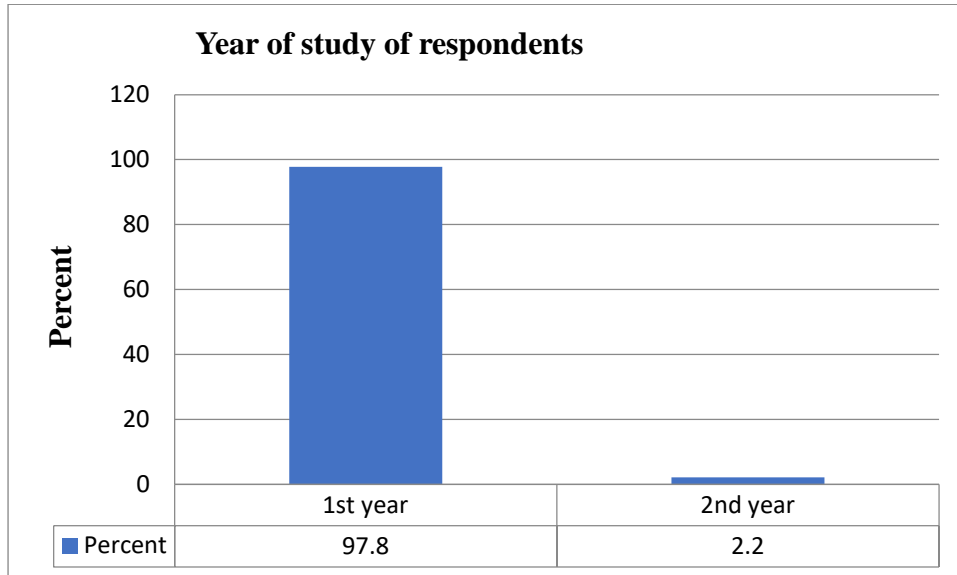
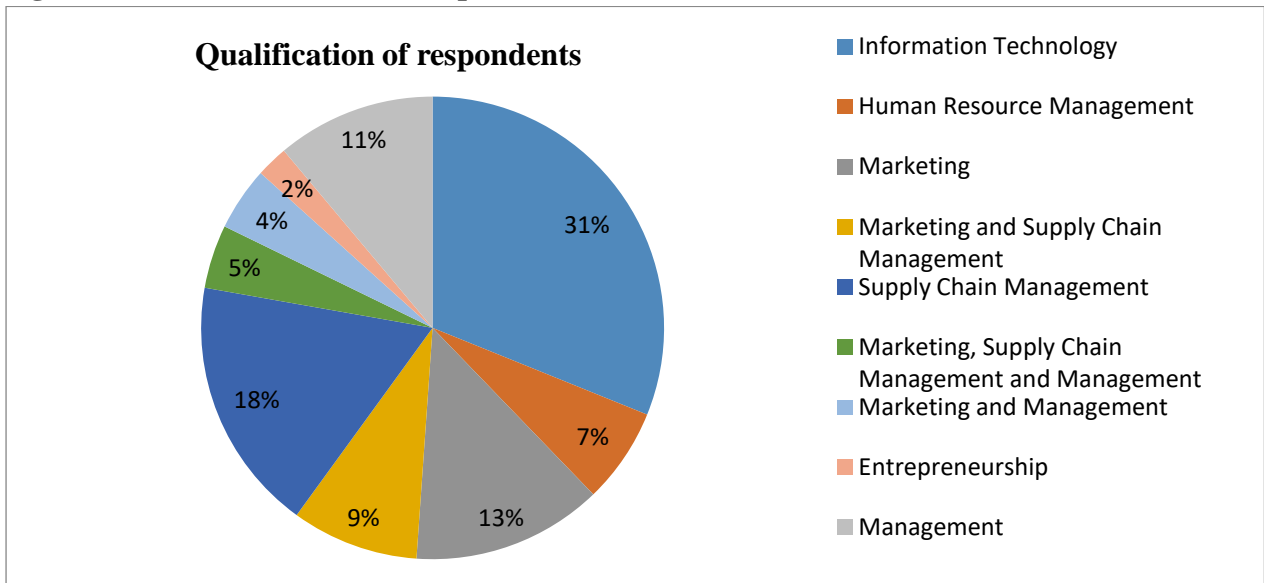


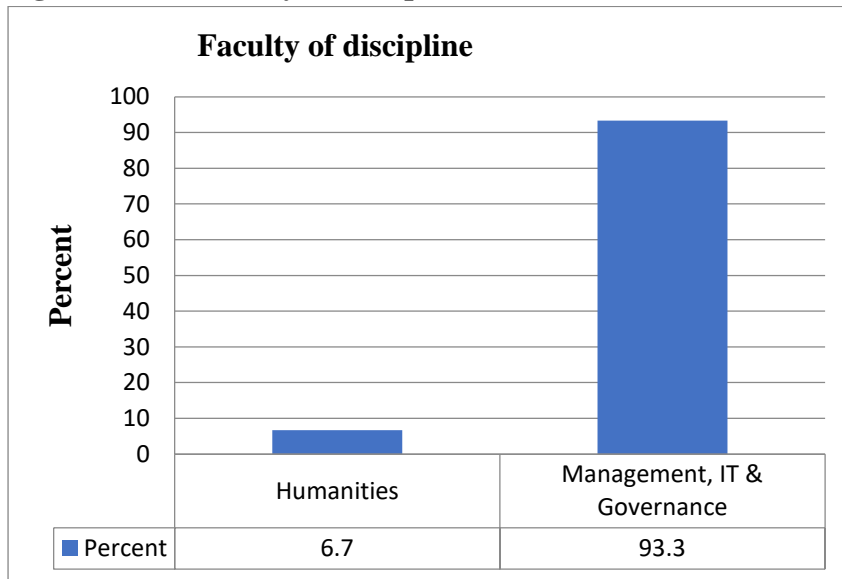
Figure 6.6, shows the year of study of the respondents. An Honours degree according to UKZN post-graduate programme information, states that post-graduate studies can be completed in one year (i.e. 1<sup>st</sup> year) of which 97.8 % (n = 44) of the respondents are full-time students, (University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2017). This degree can also be completed over a two year duration, thus making the 2.2% (n = 1) of the respondents part-time students, therefore completing their studies over four semesters.

**Figure 6.7: Qualification of respondents**



All research respondents have obtained an under-graduate qualification; this forms as the entry requirements for post-graduate studies (An Honours Degree). The respondents have qualifications from the subjects of Information Technology (31% / n = 14), Human Resource Management (7% / n = 3), Marketing (13% / n = 6), Marketing and Supply Chain Management (9% / n = 4), Supply Chain Management (18% / n = 8), Marketing, Supply Chain Management and Management (5% / n = 2), Marketing and Management (4% / n = 2), Entrepreneurship (2% / n = 1) and Management (11% / n = 5). It can be seen in Figure 6.7; respondents have bachelor qualifications with more than one principle subject.

**Figure 6.8: Faculty of discipline**



With the above Figure 6.8, it was found that 93.3% (n = 42) of the respondents in their undergraduate study came from the School of MIG with only 6.7% (n = 3) of the respondents who came from Humanities. They all now are pursuing their Honours degree within the College of Law and Management Studies, which is within the School of MIG.

### **6.3. Presentation of findings according to the aims of the study**

The following section presents the findings according to Section B of the questionnaire in relation to the specific aims of the study.

The main objective of the study was to understand student leadership development at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, with the specific aims of the research being:

- Aim one: to understand the importance of leadership development for students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal
- Aim two: to determine the need for leadership development activities for students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal
- Aim three: to identify interventions that foster leadership development for students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal
- Aim four: to identify the challenges that the University of KwaZulu-Natal students face when adopting a leadership role during their studies

**Aim one: to understand the importance of leadership development for students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal**

The findings from question one to question five relate to research aim one.

For the researcher to gain an understanding of the importance of leadership development for UKZN students, five questions were asked of the respondents. Question one of the questionnaire asked respondents to provide their understanding of student leadership. The response they provided to this question was purely descriptive in nature.

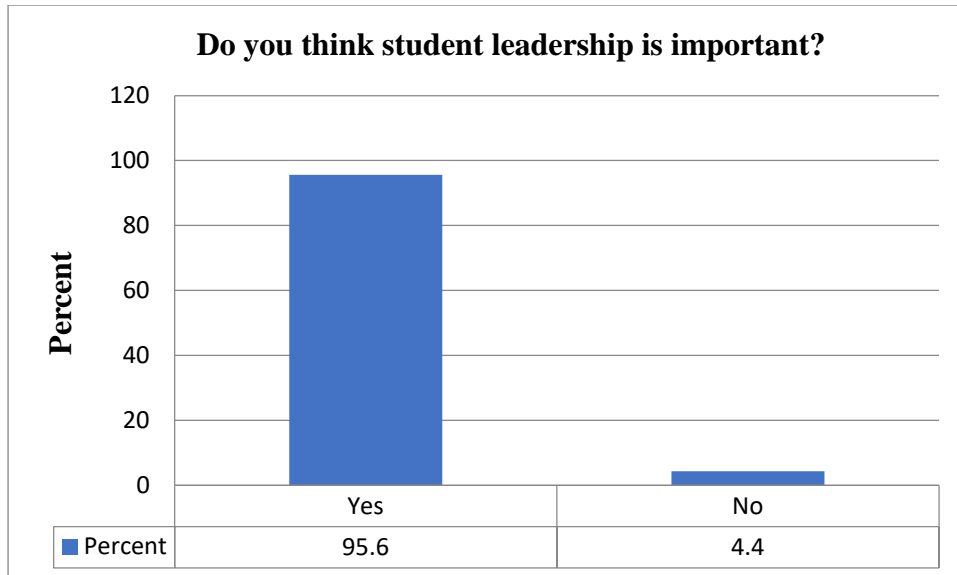
**Figure 6.9: Word cloud - student leadership**



The above word cloud (Figure 6.9) indicates the frequency of key words used by the respondents in their responses to the question, the word cloud, therefore highlights important words used. Words, which are larger as seen in Figure 6.9, are those words that were frequently used by respondents. For example one of the respondents pointed out that student leadership “*its a **role** that can be held by a person or group of people that **guide** and lead students*”. Another mentioned that student leadership is “***empowering students** into taking on **roles as leaders**”, and other stated that “*being a student that leads and does not follow, sets an **example** and motivates others into being better and doing better*”. The words indicated in bold represent some of the words that are frequented in Figure 6.9.*

The next question was question two, which asked respondents if they thought student leadership is important.

**Figure 6.10: Importance of student leadership**



The responses to the above question as indicated by Figure 6.10 show that 95.6% (n = 43) of the sample respondents stated that student leadership is important. The reasons for this was asked of the respondents with the use of the following question, question three.

Question three asked respondents why they thought leadership development is important for students. A number of reasons are highlighted in Table 6.1.

**Table 6.1: Reasons for student leadership development**

Themes	Frequency of responses
Helps in becoming future leaders	10
Prepares one for the workplace	8
Allows one to help others	3
Helps in overcoming challenges	4
Builds skills, knowledge and cognitive abilities	11
Builds relationships	2
Provides for empowerment	2
Helps understand organisations and their governance	2
Provides learning	1

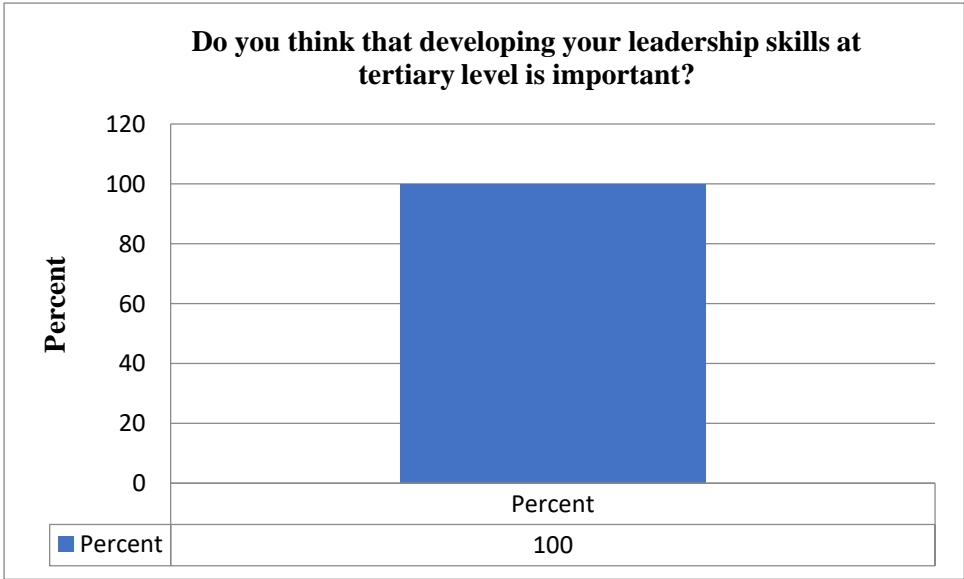


No reason	2
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From Table 6.1 above, it can be seen that nine themes emerge. Majority of the responses are grouped into three main themes, which were found to be that of practicing leadership as students allows one to become further leaders, it helps build skills, knowledge and cognitive abilities and also helps understand an organisation and its governance. It is also noted that some respondents have not provided a reason or an answer; this is seen for other questions that follow as well. With this said, the principle of voluntary participation had been adhered to.

Question four, required respondents to indicate whether they felt developing their leadership skills at tertiary level was important.

**Figure 6.11: Importance of developing leadership skills at tertiary level**



As this is a yes or no question, reasons for this development at tertiary level were asked of respondents in question 5.

The last question covering research aim one was question five. Here respondents needed to provide a reason as to why leadership development would be a necessary skill to develop during their tertiary education. Table 6.2, provides the themes that were identified in the reasons for such development at tertiary level.

**Table 6.2: Reasons for development at tertiary level**

Themes	Frequency of responses
Allows for workplace preparation	19
Allows for practice of skills and abilities	11
Exposed to leadership development and practice	6
Allows for improved employment opportunities	2
Able to gain necessary experience	1
Is the final stage for development	1
Makes one more responsible	1
Provides one academic performance	1
No reason	3

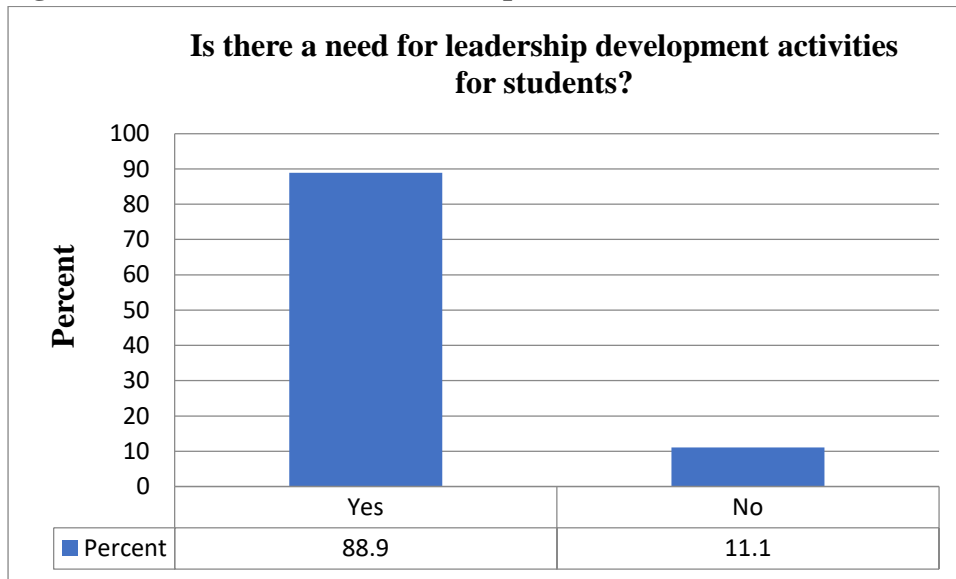
Table 6.2 shows eight themes that emerged from question 5. The top three themes were that developing leadership skills at tertiary level allows for workplace preparation, allows for the practice of skills and abilities and that it provides exposure for leadership development and practice. Three statements from the respondents are highlighted. They state the following: *“because at tertiary level you get exposed to a lot of initiatives that require leadership qualities, these skills come in handy when entering the working environment, it is a formal setting, that provides a good environment to develop skill of leadership before entering the working force”*.

**Aim two: to determine the need for leadership development activities for students at UKZN**

The findings from question six to question thirteen relate to research aim two.

In order to determine the need for leadership development for UKZN students’, eight questions were asked of the respondents. Question six, the first question under research aim two, asked respondents firstly if there is there a need for leadership development activities for students and secondly if there is a need for these activities, how important are they. Figure 6.13 provides findings to this question.

**Figure 6.12: The need for leadership activities for students**



The results reveal that 88.9% (n = 40) that stated “yes” to the abovementioned question and 11.1% (n = 5) stated no. Themes as to why this is important were drawn as seen in Table 6.3.

**Table 6.3: The need for leadership development activities**

Themes	Frequency of responses
Develops future leaders	2
It is a platform needed to develop necessary skills	2
Promotes the development of students into leaders	8
Boosts student confidence	2
Improves skills	3
Allows one to prepare for the future	2
Cultivates positive habits	2
Provides leadership experience	4
Yes – with no reasons	15
No – there is no need for activities	5

The above, Table 6.3 shows eight themes and the frequency of the responses. Eight responses dominated the theme, that leadership activities are important as it promotes for the development of students into leaders. Four respondents indicated that activities provides leadership experience and three responses indicated that such activities improves skills.

Respondent 13 stated that “*yes there is a need for such activities because they sharpen leadership skills and prepare students for very demanding tasks in leadership*”, respondent 20 stated that, “*for students to get a first hand experience on what is needed in leadership through activity engagement*”.

Question seven, wanted to examine if taking part in leadership development activities is important, for instance students being a team leader for an assignment, if the answer to this question was yes, respondents were asked to elaborate.

Ninety-seven point eight percent of respondents (97.8% / n = 44) that stated yes felt that it is important to take part in leadership development activities. Two point two percent (2.2% / n = 1) stated no, that it is not important to take part in leadership activities. The reasons for the importance in participation in leadership development activities included some of the following, which are found in Table 6.4.

**Table 6.4: The reasons for taking part in leadership development activities**

Themes	Frequency of responses
It helps to develop leadership skills	18
Grooms students	1
Allows one to work efficiently	1
Allows one to learn to lead and guide others	2
Helps to develop professional skills	4
Important for growing capabilities	2
Helps to gain experience	9
Yes – with no reasons	7
No – no not important	1

Seven themes emerged from question 7. Two themes were found to be popular according to Table 6.4. Eighteen respondents suggested that by taking part in leadership development activities, it helps to develop leadership skills and nine suggested it helps to gain experience.

Question eight of research aim two, asked respondents if they thought leadership activities helped in building their leadership skills. The total number of 45 respondents stated yes to leadership activities assisting them in building their leadership skills.

Following question eight, question nine, wanted to understand how these activities aided in grooming leadership abilities. The table below (Table 6.5) highlights the reasons.

**Table 6.5: Reasons why leadership activities help build leadership skills**

Themes	Frequency of responses
Leadership activities help build communication skills	2
Improves an individual's assertiveness	4
Allows one to be more responsible to handle situations	5
Builds problem solving skills	3
Develops skills to work with other people from different cultures	7
Enhances leadership skills	8
Provides experiences to develop skills	10
No reason provided	6

Table 6.5 above indicates seven themes that emerged from the respondents. Thirty-nine responses provided reasons as to why leadership activities help build leadership skills and six did not provide an answer. Missing data can be rather serious, nevertheless in this instance, the researcher maximised on the qualitative frame of this study. The top three themes received from the respondents were, that activities provide experiences to develop skills, activities provide for the enhancement of leadership skills and they develop skills to work with other people from different cultures.

Question ten; wanted respondents to indicate which activities they thought were those that developed their leadership skills. This question allowed respondents to choose more than one answer and this is clear as the findings show in Table 6.6, that the respondents had chosen more than one activity to build their leadership skills.

**Table 6.6: Activities that develop leadership skills**

Themes	Frequency of responses
Mentoring	76 % (n = 34)
Class representatives	60% (n = 27)
Coaching	56% (n = 25)
Community drives	36% (n = 16)
Formal classes	18 % (n = 8)
Other	9% (n = 4)

Mentoring, class representatives and coaching are the top three activities that respondents indicated in developing their leadership skills. This is followed by coaching, community drives, and formal classes. Thus, Table 6.6 indicates evidence that students desire more than one activity to develop their skills.

Question eleven wanted respondents to indicate which characteristics they thought relates to student leadership. The intention of this question was to investigate which behavioural traits respondents considered applicable to student leadership. Table 6.7 highlights the different characteristics that relate to student leadership.

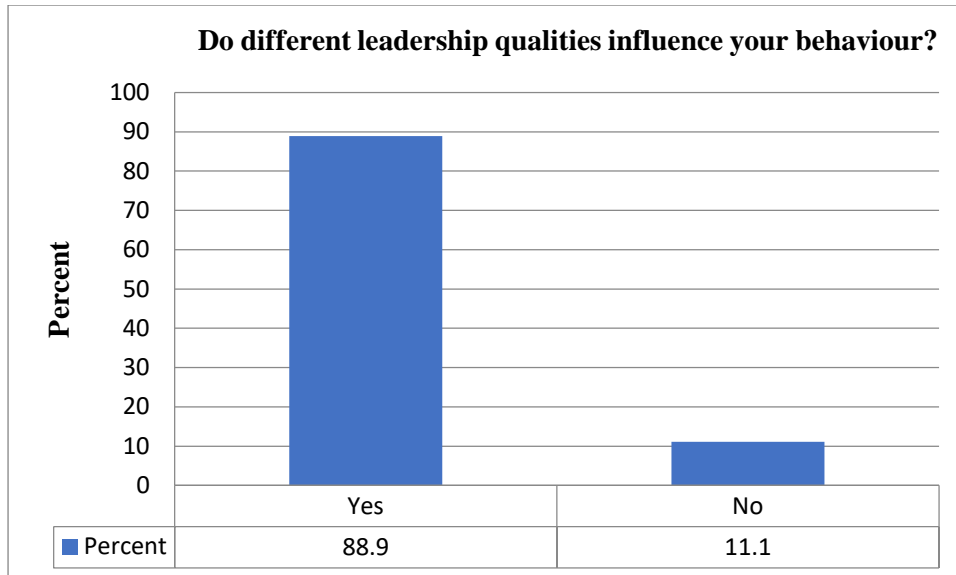
**Table 6.7: Characteristics that relate to student leadership**

Themes	Frequency of responses
Responsible	71% (n = 32)
Emotionally intelligent	64% (n = 29)
Trustworthy	60% (n = 27)
Proactive	53% (n = 24)
Courageous	53% (n = 24)
Assertive	40% (n = 18)
Other	2% (n = 1)

For Question 11, respondents also chose more than one characteristics that they felt related to student leadership. From Table 6.7 above, the top three characteristics that respondents indicated relate to student leadership included responsible (71% / n = 32), emotionally intelligent (64% / n = 29) followed by trustworthy (60% / n = 27).

Question twelve of research aim two asked respondents if different leadership activities influenced their behaviour, and thereafter were required to elaborate on their response.

**Figure 6.13: Different leadership qualities influencing one’s behaviour**



Eighty-eight point nine percent (88.9 % / n = 40) of respondents stated yes to the influences of different leadership, and 11.1% (n = 5) stated no. Themes that were identified by the respondents who said yes are provided in Table 6.8.

**Table 6.8: Different leadership qualities influencing one’s behaviour**

Themes	Frequency of responses
Influences one’s self-esteem	7
Improves confidence, communication and problem solving skills	9
Helps with one’s morality and character	12
Encourages individuals by seeing others participate	3
Allows for learning and skill development through experiences	3
Increases thinking abilities	1
Provides better opportunities for one’s career	1
Allows one to test leadership abilities differently in different environments	3
Yes – no reason	11
No – different leadership abilities do not influence behaviour	5

From Table 6.8, it is indicated that eight themes were derived from the respondents' responses to question twelve. Two themes were found to be dominant. Nine respondents felt that different leadership activities improved confidence and communication and seven responses suggested that activities influence their self-esteem. From the above themes, respondent 7, stated that *"the more you involve yourself with leadership activities the more you learn on how to tackle different problems that gives you experience and confidence"*, and respondent 44 stated that, *"experience is essential for cementing good skills and even learning and developing new ones"*

The last question, question thirteen of research aim two asked respondents to select from a choice which leadership behaviour they considered most important. As Table 6.9 indicated, respondents chose more than one leadership behaviour.

**Table 6.9: Most important leadership behaviour**

Themes	Frequency of responses
Assisting others (encouraging involvement and the empowerment of your fellow learners)	53% (n = 24)
Inspire others through a shared vision (having a vision that can be accepted by others)	49% (n = 22)
Model the way (practicing desired behaviours that lead to common goals)	38% (n = 17)
Supporting other (caring, fuelling the spirit of others)	38% (n = 17)
Taking on challenges	31% (n = 14)

The two most important leadership behaviours identified from the responses were, assisting others and inspiring others through a shared vision followed jointly by modelling the way for others and supporting others. A small percentage of 31 (n = 14) had chosen taking on challenges to be important leadership behaviour. These responses are key in that, it reflects directly to the leadership behaviour concepts of the Kouzes and Posner's model in transformational leadership. The responses to this question are found to be parallel to the notions that Kouzes and Posner point out in their leadership model.



**Aim three: to identify interventions that foster leadership development for students at UKZN**

The findings from question fourteen to question nineteen relate to research aim three

To identify the interventions that are currently in practice at UKZN for student leadership development, six questions were asked of the respondents. Question 14, was the first question under research aim three, and asked respondents to point out how UKZN provides for student leadership development.

Through the responses, it was found that UKZN provides for student leadership development. Table 6.10 indicates the activities mentioned by the respondents.

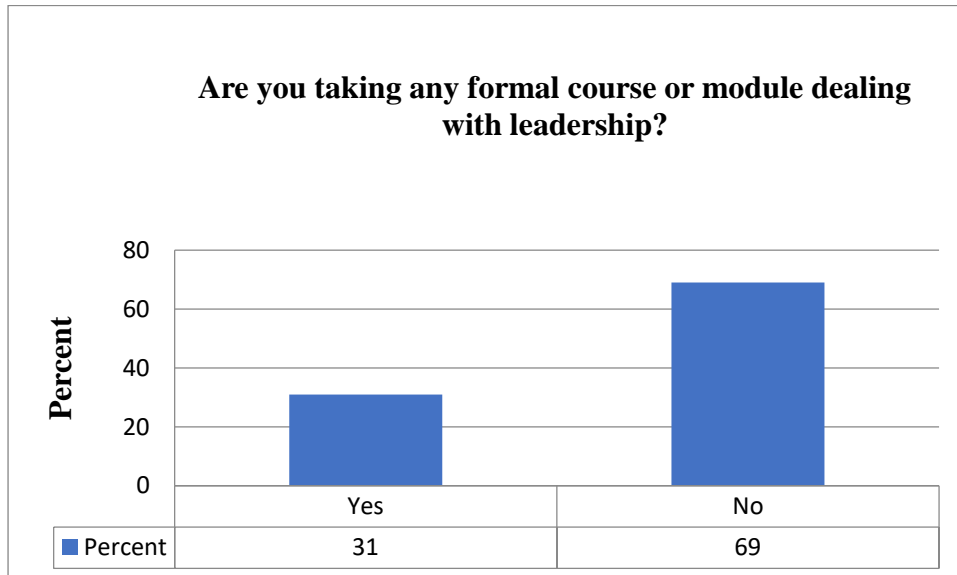
**Table 6.10: Student leadership activities at UKZN**

Themes	Frequency of responses
Group assignments and class presentations	5
BIM / ENACTUS	2
Students are tutors and mentors	3
Religious and community services and projects	2
Student representative councils	6
Class representatives / group leaders	6
Challenges uncounted at UKZN build skills	1
Not aware of how UKZN provides for student leadership development	14
No answer	6

Twenty-five respondents were aware of how UKZN provided for student leadership development, fourteen respondents were not aware of any practice and six respondents did not provide an answer. This is seen, as participation was voluntary as mentioned previously.

Following question fourteen, the intention of question fifteen was to ask respondents if they were taking any formal course or module dealing with leadership. The graphic below provides findings to this question.

**Figure 6.14: Formal courses or module taken dealing with leadership**



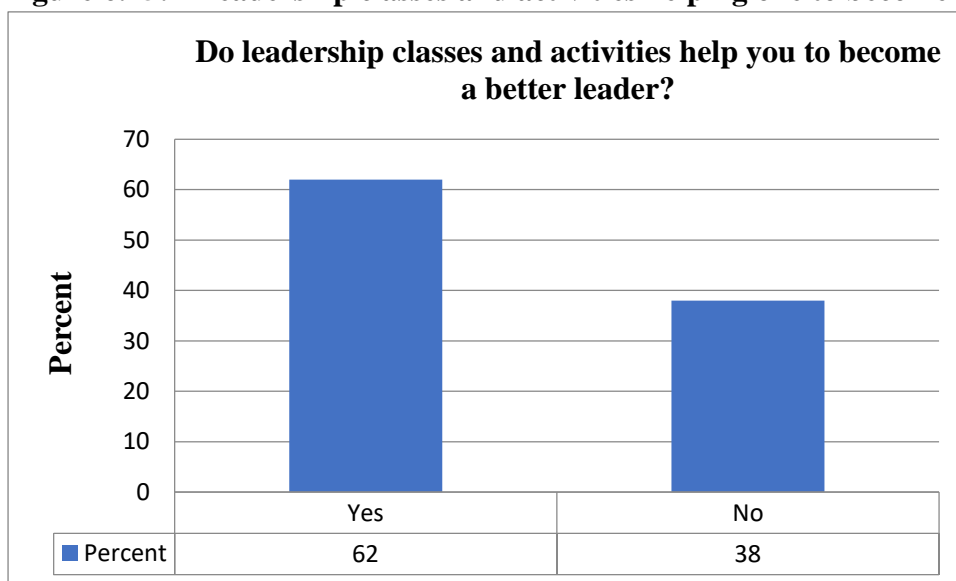
The results reveal that 69% (n = 31) of the sample are not taking a formal course or module dealing with leadership whilst only 31% (n = 14) are doing so. This response is noted as pertinent, since this skill is deemed to be important as the responses where 100% yes to developing their leadership skills at tertiary level (Question 4), however, only 14 respondents are developing these skills through formal courses or modules.

Question sixteen, was used to expand on question 15. Question sixteen was used in twofold, firstly it wanted to investigate if respondents took part in any activity that helped them to develop their leadership skills, and secondly the question asked respondents to elaborate on these activities. The findings are as follows. Sixteen respondents stated that they are part of leadership development activities. Respondents took part in activities like that of coaching and mentoring other students (n = 4), group assignments and presentations (n = 4), UKZN clubs and societies (n = 2), work projects (n = 2), tutoring (n = 3), and were class representatives (n = 1). Twenty-three respondents were not part of any activity and six respondents did not provide an answer.

The seventeenth question, asked respondents whether classes and activities influenced their leadership ability and development, and went on to ask respondents to elaborate on their view. Twenty-six respondents stated yes to classes and activities influencing their leadership ability and development. These respondents stated that classes and activities provide the following: improved thinking abilities (n = 2), allows for class presentations and group assignments that increase responsibility (n = 15), creates a space where skills are learnt (n = 1), makes one more confident (n = 3), allows for practice of skills making them perfect (n = 2), challenges and stress are overcome by working together (n = 2), and allows one to realise their leadership potential (n = 1). Thirteen respondents stated no, and six respondents did not provide an answer.

Question eighteen of the questionnaire required respondents to indicate whether they believed that leadership classes and activities helped them to become a better leader, and if so why. The figure below reveals the findings to this question.

**Figure 6.15: Leadership classes and activities helping one to become a better leader**



Sixty-three percent (63% / n = 28) of the respondents agreed that leadership classes and activities are helpful however, 38% (n = 17) of the respondents disagreed.

From the respondents that did agree to question eighteen, some stated the following. Respondent 23 response was that “*it allows for channelling of your skills so you can focus on your strengths*”, Respondent 8 stated that “*you can determine your strengths and weakness to become a better leader*” and Respondent 6 views were that of “*I am taught how to deal with different individuals*”.

The last question that was asked under research aim three was question 19. This question asked respondents to state any specific classes and activities that they would like to take to better their leadership abilities.

Forty-four point four percent (44.4% / n = 20) of respondents wanted classes and activities that will help them better their leadership abilities. Of these responses, respondents wanted guidance and public speaking classes, leadership courses and mentoring and coaching. Twenty-four point four percent (24.4% / n = 11), stated that they need specific classes and activities to better their leadership abilities but did not state exactly what classes and activities. Thirty-one point one percent of respondents (31.1% / n = 14) did not respond.

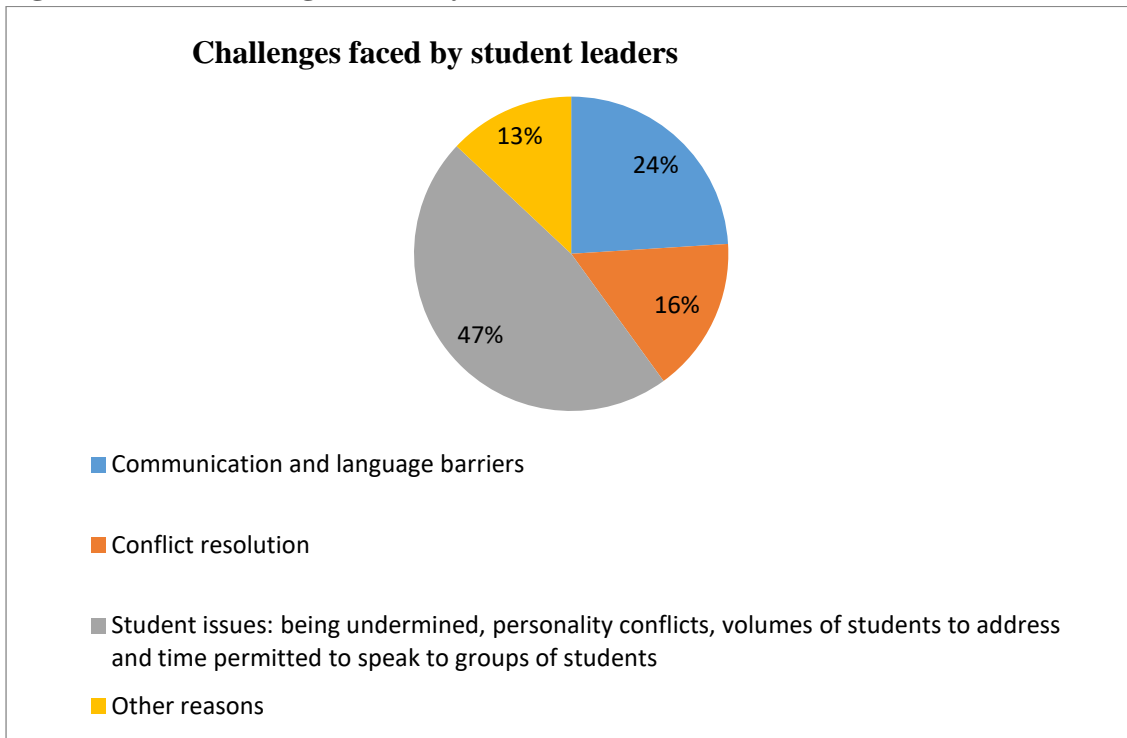
**Aim four: to identify the challenges that UKZN students face when adopting a leadership role during their studies**

The findings from question twenty to question twenty-two relate to research aim four.

To fulfil the objectives of research aim four, three questions were asked of respondents. Question twenty was the first question under this aim and asked respondents to discuss the challenges that they face when in student leadership roles.

The challenges faced by student leaders are found in Figure 6.16 below.

**Figure 6.16: Challenges faced by student leaders**



Respondents’ mentioned more than one challenge that they faced as seen in Figure 6.16. The challenges came from communication and language barriers (24% / n = 11), conflict resolutions (16% / n = 7), being undermined, personality conflicts, large number of students to address and time restrictions (47% / n = 21) as well as other factors (13% / n = 6).

In order to find out how students overcame the challenges that they faced question 21 was asked of respondents in the questionnaire.

**Table 6.11: Strategies to overcome challenges**

Themes	Frequency of responses
Improve communication skills	7
Work together	6
Participate in sports	1
Implement authority	1
Use social media and forums	3
Try to understand people	4
Seek mentor assistance	3

Practice in more leadership roles	2
Tackle challenges	1
Avoid leadership roles	1
Remain calm	1
Improve one's self evaluation	1
Improve time management	1
Implement authority	1
Improve decision making	1
No answer	11

Thirty-four respondents provided views as to how they overcome challenges. These views are indicated in Table 6.11. It can be seen in this table that fifteen themes emerged from the responses to question 21. Eleven respondents did not provide an answer.

The last question of research aim four was question 22. This question asked respondents to state their views on how student leadership challenges can be rectified. Respondents stated more than one form of advice as seen below.

The modal themes to this question were:

- Improving intrapersonal and interpersonal skills (78% / n = 35)
- Improving habits, behaviour, and / or skills (13% / n = 6)
- UKZN to provide essential training courses and encourage students to attend these courses (9% / n = 4)

The questionnaire provided for a final opportunity for respondents to provide any relevant and / or necessary information that they considered important for student leadership development. This was provided for in a section of the questionnaire titled additional information. It was here that the respondents were asked *what can UKZN do to provide additional support for student leadership?* Sixteen respondents did not provide an answer, however majority did, these twenty-nine respondents responses revealed the following themes in Table 6.12 below.

**Table 6.12: Additional support required from UKZN**

Themes	Frequency of responses
More leadership classes and activities	10
Employ more tutors	1
Offer study and coaching programmes	2
Provide sufficient opportunities	3
Continue with current practices	2
Provide for presentations and seminars	3
Improve communication	1
More societies for student participation	2
More leadership workshops and programmes	3
Market other activities	2
No answer	16

Ten themes were drawn from the respondents who responded to the question. The most salient theme was that respondents suggested more leadership classes and activities.

#### 6.4. Descriptive statistics

**Table 6.13: Descriptive statistics**

	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Deviation	Variance
Gender	1.5556	2.0000	2.00	.50252	.253
Age	1.1556	1.0000	1.00	.52030	.271
Ethnicity	1.7273	1.0000	1.00	1.18839	1.412
Home Language	2.5116	3.0000	3.00	1.05497	1.113
Marital Status	1.0222	1.0000	1.00	.14907	.022
q2	1.0444	1.0000	1.00	.20841	.043
q4	1.0000	1.0000	1.00	.00000	.000
q8	1.0000	1.0000	1.00	.00000	.000

The descriptive statistics was only processed for the closed-ended questions since the open-ended questions had been entered into a data set and re-coded and as noted, there has been missing data so there is of loss of information. The mean, mode, median, sample variance and the sample standard deviation was considered. The mean or the arithmetic mean is the sum of all the values divided by the sample size, the mode is the most frequent response given by the respondents and the median is the middle most value when the data (per variable / question) is arranged from highest to lowest. The sample variance is the degree or quantity by which each observation varies one from another.

The sample standard deviation is the square root of the sample variance. From the table above, the majority of the questions have a mode of “1” and these can be translated in accordance with the responses from the scales of the relevant questions. The standard deviations are consistently about “1” and this indicates good consistency between the observations due to the low variability. The mean and median values are consistent with modal values. The descriptive statistics serve to confirm the graphical statistics.

## 6.5. Reliability

Coakes and Steed (2010:140) stated that there are a number of different reliability coefficients. One of the most commonly used is the Cronbach’s alpha, which is based on the average correlation of items within a test if the items are standardized. If the items are not standardized, it is based on the average covariance among the items. The Cronbach’s alpha can range from 0 to 1. Cronbach’s alpha was also calculated as part of the reliability test to assess how consistent the results were and similar results could be obtained for generalisability if the sample size were to be increased. A value of 0.7 or higher represents a good value that can lead to the researcher getting the same results if the investigation is carried out with a larger sample of respondents. The Cronbach’s alpha was calculated for all the questions, which have the same scales in each section, which was question 2, 4, and 8. The Cronbach’s alpha was calculated to be 0.67.

**Table 6.14: Reliability: Cronbach’s Alpha**

Question	Cronbach’s Alpha
2, 4 and 8	0.67



## **6.6. Summary**

In the current student context, student leadership development at UKZN has been found to be vitally important in the holistic development of a student. Hence, there must be some inclination in leadership development for a student registered at UKZN. One of the most salient findings of the research is the need to develop students into leaders by using different tools and resources.

The respondents showed a clear and deliberate understanding of student leadership where students must lead by example and by virtue of their morality and character. Students leadership was viewed as very important by the respondents involved in the study and some of the key reasons as to why it is important for students, included developing them as key contributors in society and to the economy of South Africa. Furthermore, student leadership prepares a student for the working world and for his/her future as well as growing themselves into leaders of industry. Therefore, developing student's leadership skills is extremely important in tertiary education.

The role of training students as leaders warrants the need of student development activities such as workshops, seminars and classes just to name a few, so as to foster a culture or an environment of developing leaders in tertiary education. Leadership activities will aid the student by helping them with their self-image, confidence, the ability to communicate, interpersonal and intrapersonal skills and empowering them for conflict resolution. The most important activities for developing leadership skills included mentoring, class representatives and coaching whilst the characteristics most needed that can relate to student leadership are those of being responsible, emotionally intelligent, and trustworthy. The results show that leadership qualities that affect one's behaviour included self-esteem, confidence, communication and morality.

Majority of the respondents are not taking a formal course or module in leadership neither are the majority of them part of any activity to develop their leadership skills. However, respondents agreed that these leadership activities and courses would definitely help in developing the students into better leaders. It was found that some of the challenges that respondents faced when taking on leadership roles as students included:

- Communication and language barriers
- Conflict resolution
- Student issues such as being undermined, personality conflicts, volumes of students to address and time permitted to speak to groups of students

In order to overcome some of these challenges the respondents agreed, that they need to change their leadership style, improve their communication, and attend more leadership training courses. The crucial finding of the research is that UKZN needs to offer more courses, modules, and even seminars on leadership that can be offered to students. There is a gap that needs to be bridged and it must be done to produce graduates with leadership skill and ability, as students and employees' desire this development.

The chapter that follows is Chapter 7. This chapter provides for the discussion of the research findings.

## CHAPTER 7

### DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

#### 7.1. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to interpret and discuss the significant findings found from this research in relation to both the research questions and existing literature. Furthermore, this chapter examines the perceptions of the study's respondents on their views to the importance of student leadership.

This investigation was explicitly carried out to explore the importance of leadership development for students and to contribute to the growth of literature in this discipline of study. Together with the existing literature and the contributions made by this study, found in this discussion chapter, a deeper understanding of the need for student leadership development is achieved.

No discussion to part one (demographics of respondents) of the questionnaire has been made, as there is no association with the primary variables of the study. The discussion of this investigation focuses primarily on the responses, from the respondents to questions in part two (Section B) of the questionnaire. This discussion on the findings is addressed according to the specific aims of this study.

The main objective of the study was to understand student leadership development at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, with the specific aims of the research being:

- To understand the importance of leadership development for students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal
- To determine the need for leadership development activities for students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal
- To identify interventions that foster leadership development for students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal
- To identify the challenges that the University of KwaZulu-Natal students face when adopting a leadership role during their studies

## **7.2. Discussion of finding based on the specific aims of the study**

This section critically reviews the findings from the study with direct reference to the research aims and collected literature. This is done to examine whether the findings are homogeneous to existing literature or dissimilar. It is with this that the study can contribute and add value to the present body of knowledge to student leadership development.

### **Research Aim one: To understand the importance of leadership development for students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal**

The first aim of this research was to understand the importance of leadership development for students at UKZN. Using the Social Change Model, Dugan and Komives brought much attention to student leadership development at tertiary level (Dugan & Komives, 2007:8). This framework created for the intended purpose of this aim, which was to look into the importance of student leadership for particularly students at this university, and explore their perceptions.

The first intention was to examine the perceptions that the respondents had on student leadership, from their understanding of this concept. Trying to understand leadership and defining its characteristics have been a continuous activity since the 1920's, as research has pointed out (Richards, 2011:88). Conceptualising leadership has taken on many forms, as a study that Shertzer and Schuh (2004:113) conducted, *on college students' perceptions of leadership*, aimed at studying the views that students and student leaders had on leadership. From their study, a number of themes emerged as to how students' defined and understood leadership.

Themes that surfaced were those of "leadership is an individual possession, leadership is positional, leaders possess particular qualities and skills and leaders act from internal motivations" (Shertzer & Schuh, 2004:116). Comparable to these themes are those that were found in this research.

To examine the views of the respondents at UKZN a word frequency approach deemed applicable, as important, and repeated words had been highlighted. Student respondents spoke here of student leadership in terms of individuals that are involved in student representative councils (SRC), of which looks at individuals in leadership positions. These councils are made up of student bodies that represent the larger student community in the governance of educational institutions and these bodies are mandatory in public higher education institutions (The University of KwaZulu-Natal SRC Constitution, 2006:1; Higher Education Act 101 of 1997:23). Respondents further mentioned, to name a few; key words as, empowering, responsibility, teams, challenges, skills, guides, and leading. These words draw on the characteristics of individuals, having leadership skills and abilities.

Respondents have also identified the extrinsic factors that affect such leadership, by mentioning words such as challenges. These words are reflections of how students, the study's respondents understood student leadership. The use of words such as teams can be linked to the social change model of leadership development, where group involvement form central values of shared goals, collaboration and others (Dugan & Komives, 2007:9).

Analysing the interpretations of respondents' understanding of leadership and that of student leadership formed the basis to the questions that followed, as their understanding of such; influences their approach and views as Shertzer and Schuh mentioned (2004:112). As Shertzer and Schuh (2004:112) state that, "a student's definition of leadership may play a significant role in whether or not the student perceives him/herself as a leader".

Although, interpretations differ and the degree of influence varies, leadership and leadership development have been of interest to many, and time has proved that leadership and its development is a "desired outcome for students at many institutions of higher education" (Astin & Astin as cited in Shertzer & Schuh, 2004:112). This desire, attention and the importance that has been directed to leadership still stands. As the second question under research aim one brought in evidence that students do think that student leadership is important.

The researcher wanted to study the scale of this importance, since according to secondary research, student leadership development is considered vital (Dugan & Komives, 2007:8; Eich, 2008:176; Hilliard, 2010:96). Respondents' perceptions were analysed and the finding revealed that 95.6% (n = 43) of the respondents concurred that student leadership is important and the entire group (100% / n = 45) felt that it is necessary to develop this skill.

These percentages indicate and highlight the importance of this study and the need for student leadership development. These findings are similar to those found in a Deloitte survey of 2014 and are also similar to the notions stated in Shertzer and Schuh (2004) research. The findings from this study thus highlight the continuum of the importance of such development. Findings from the Deloitte survey also pointed to individuals specifically generation Y placing importance on leadership development (DTTL Global Brand and Communications, 2014:2). A study on the *Perceptions of South African youth of leadership development programmes* was carried out in the Limpopo Province. Findings that were gathered from this study were also found to be similar to the findings of this study, as the perceptions of the respondents were parallel with stating that leadership development is necessary and important (Kanjere, 2014:84). All of these studies are in favour of the perceptions that UKZN students have. Until today, in this current study, students' have indicated their noteworthy stance on the importance of student leadership.

Not only have these students' pointed out this need but also individuals of societies and organisations (Flores *et al.*, 2012:223). It is stated that leadership development is necessary and the development of it must be addressed (Garvin & Datar as cited in Vasbinder, 2012:2). This leads to a number of reasons. Research states that developing such skills can improve performances of organisations but most importantly in this context, it builds on essential skills that students require (Mckee, 2015:40). Respondents' conveyed similar notions as they stated that "*as students are the future drivers of the economy and businesses as a result leadership is a skill that needs to be developed*", another stated that such skill "*helps students to gain confidence to stand before crowds and address them. Also prepares them to be leaders of tomorrow and to take responsibility and accountability*".

Reasons as to why UKZN students felt that student leadership development is important, leads to them preparing themselves as future leaders. They feel that this development prepares them for the workplace and that it builds crucial skills, knowledge, and cognitive abilities. They also view such development as important in building relationships, supporting others, overcoming challenges, understanding organisations and their governance, provides for learning and creates empowerment. These views from the respondents are comparable to those shared and presented in government structures. This points to all parties involved in student / youth leadership development having the same beliefs and objectives.

The development of leadership abilities can occur at any stage of an individual's life, as literature pointed, some skills are considered to be bred while other skills are considered genetic or even those that begin during early development. This study wanted to examine if this development was necessary at tertiary level. An impactful result had surfaced, as all respondents (100% / n = 45) expressed that this skill should be developed at tertiary level, as it is here that they ready themselves for the workplace as they have stated. Reasons for the need at tertiary level ranged from opportunities to practice skills and abilities, to exposure to leadership development and practice to name a few. This can be argued as having a relationship to education and identity that Chickering speaks of. This can be looked as the occurrences used to develop competencies. As the results show that student respondents' understand why this development is needed.

The findings for aim one of this research was particularly interesting in that it has a direct correlation to the reflections of current literature as well as it directly addressed the research question of leadership development being an important skill for students at UKZN.

**Research Aim two: To determine the need for leadership development activities for students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal**

The intention of the above aim was to determine the need for leadership development activities for students at UKZN. As student leadership development is considered a critical activity as Eich (2008:176) pointed out, it is therefore, necessary to explore the interventions that are used to groom such skill.

This aim firstly, was used to study the need for developmental activities, and secondly to explore the types of activities that the respondents considered as those that encouraged the development of their leadership.

The findings for the first part revealed that 88.9% (n = 40) of the respondents agreed that there is a need for development activities, whereas 11.1% (n = 5) disagreed. The perceptions of the majority of the respondents were found to be similar to those that were found in literature. The consensus among the respondents, to name a few, were that activities would provide them with opportunities to develop their skills, it would help them prepare for the future, develop them into leaders, build positive habits and confidence and it will help them to build their leadership abilities with experience. These responses are considered important. These views show that students acknowledge that activities create for both learning and practical experiences.

Although, majority (n = 40) have stated, that it is key to participant in leadership development activities and further provided reasons as to why it is necessary, it is interesting to find that there were a percentage of respondents (n = 5) that did not consider such developmental activities necessary. Curiosity has built, in understanding why such respondents have such perceptions.

Ricketts (as cited in Scott, Whiddon, Brown & Weeks, 2015:73) stated that when students are exposed to leadership development, they gain an increase in the amount of opportunities that allow them to grow. This is found consistent with the views that the respondents had. Ninety-seven point eight percent (97.8% / n = 44) of the respondents agreed that students should participate in leadership development activities and 2.2% (n = 1) said there was no need to be involved in such activities. From the respondents (n = 44) seven themes emerged which directly had a connection to reasons for leadership development activities.

Those that agreed stated that “*activities encourage leadership skills*”, “*it helps in coordinating members of a team and giving them direction*”, and also some stated that it “*helps a person grow their skills and even develop new skills during the process*”. These statements made by the respondents can be explored in relation to the concept of action learning, as the World Institute of Action Learning (as cited in Volz-Peacock *et al.*, 2016:3) defined as being “a process that involves a small group working on real problems, taking action and learning



as individuals, as a team and as an organisation". Providing an opportunity for students, encourages their involvement as respondents mentioned, it further helps to build and strengthen skills and abilities as also mentioned by respondents. Here the stance that had been taken was that of a pro-active view in the involvement of leadership development. Implementing positive practices from leadership development approaches and philosophies can achieve this.

The findings from this aim were found to be contrasting. Although 11.1% (n = 5) state that leadership development activities is not important and 2.2% (n = 1) that state that it is not important to be involved in such activities, 100% (n = 45) of the respondents agreed that leadership activities build their leadership skills. These findings are conflicting. One reason for this could be that perceptions of individuals are naturally subjective in nature and therefore; will lean towards the particular experiences of the respondents'.

However, it is essential to understand what drives the youth in their participation of such development (Van Velsor, 2011:8). Van Velsor (2011:13) further states that youth development should not be viewed in relation to what adults do but rather should be viewed from the sight of young individuals, and in this way, activities can attract the full engagement of these individuals. In retrospective, however, further research can set new questions to attain more knowledge as to what really interests young people and how activities can fully encourage their participation.

From the analysis of the activities that developed leadership skills, it was clear that respondents chose more than one activity. The activities, which were favoured by the respondents, and which were rated highly were for example; mentoring (76% / n = 34), class representatives (60% / n = 27) and coaching (56% / n =25), these were followed by community drives (36% / n = 16), formal classes (18% / n = 8), and other activities (9% / n = 4).

Mentoring (76% / n = 34) was found to be the most favoured activity from the respondents' perceptions. Review of literature has found that there are essential principles for creating leadership at tertiary institutions, and one principle has been identified as mentoring (Harun & Mom, 2014:69).

Mentoring is an interesting find since according to literature, it is a method where individuals are in control of their own learning and it provides for support structures that help with one's development, as it guides an individual in their long-term learning (Meyer & Fourie, 2004:50). Furthermore, it is a method of development that; can focus largely on learner-centred relations (Marcus as cited in Leskiw & Singh, 2007:455).

It was also asked of respondents, what characteristics relate to student leadership, as there are a number of key behavioural assets that young individuals are said to have as the future leaders. The illustration (Figure 7.1) below; draws on key strengths of the next generation leader that Van Velsor and Wright (2012:9) mention.

**Figure 7.1: Strengths of the next generation leader**



(Van Velsor & Wright, 2012:9)

Adding to Van Velsor and Wright strengths of young leaders, the respondents of the study indicated the following traits. Responsible (71% / n = 32), emotional intelligent (64% / n = 29), trustworthy (60% / n = 27), proactive (53% / n = 24), courageous (53% / n = 24), assertive (40% / n = 18) and other characteristics (2% / n = 1) were identified as some of the characteristics related to student leadership, as seen respondents chose more than one characteristic.

Identifying leadership traits are key, as they encompass practices such as the Student LPI. As literature has mentioned, this is where exemplary leadership behaviour can be taught and measured (Posner, 2004:443-444). These findings have corresponded with Kouzes and Posner's Student LPI and further added knowledge to the topics of leadership characteristics that are mentioned by Van Velsor and Wright as stated above and to that mentioned in other literature.

Eighty-eight point nine percent (88.9% / n = 40) of respondents mentioned that different leadership qualities influence their behaviour, where as 11.1% (n = 5) disagreed. Eight themes were found in the responses from the respondents, with the three most popular ones being, different leadership qualities influence one's self-esteem, it improves confidence, communication and problem solving skills and helps with one's morality and character. These can be argued as positive factors that are brought in from having effective leadership qualities. As literature showed, there are qualities of some forms of leadership like that of transactional leadership that can be limit leadership development and practice. Thus, identifying such positive outcomes as mentioned by the respondents is important as it relates to the various practices of leadership. This leads into the last question that was asked of the respondents under research aim two. According to Kouzes and Posner's model in transformational leadership, there are five key practices. Respondents were asked to indicate the practice they felt were the most important leadership behaviour.

Using Kouzers and Posner's model, respondents selected among the practices of *assisting others*, *inspire others through a shared vision*, *model the way for others*, *supporting others*, and *taking on challenges*. Respondents chose more than one behaviours and rated as 53% (n = 24), 49% (n = 22), 38% (n = 17), 38% (n = 17) and 31% (n = 14) respectively. With respondents' understanding and selecting these traits, it shows that they are able to reflect and acknowledge the influence and importance that these behavioural practices have on their leadership.

Finally, the results from this aim suggest that these UKZN student responses of the research, value active application and participation when it comes to leadership development rather than passive activities or exercises and this is further evident in the characteristics and behaviours that they deem important in leadership.

**Research Aim three: To identify interventions that foster leadership development for students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal**

The intention with the third aim of the research was to identify interventions that encourage leadership development for students at UKZN. This aim was set out to study the interventions that are used to nurture and advance student leadership, how these interventions help students to develop their leadership abilities, and how have they benefited from them.

Providing opportunities for leadership development have been seen as a long-standing desire of students, as students seek such chances to grow and strengthen their abilities (MacBeath as cited in Dempster & Lizzio, 2007:279). Young individuals who participate in a range of developmental activities are said to attain more chances to leadership opportunities (Hancock, Dyk & Jones, 2012:85). Eich (2008:182) points out beneficial contributions that leadership programmes provide. The table below provides an overview into these contributing factors.

**Table 7.1: Benefits of leadership programmes**

1.	Leadership programmes assist students in their practice of leadership skill and concepts, whether by, group development activities or those that are individual exercises.
2.	Such programmes create opportunities for out of class leadership practice through institution and community engagement.
3.	Leadership programmes further offer practices as students assume roles and responsibilities as they participate and assist fellow students.
4.	Programmes provide opportunities for students to become more involved in communities and organisations.

(Eich, 2008:182)

With the background of this literature and that mentioned in Chapter 4 together with analysing the findings of this aim, students' have opportunities to grow their leadership abilities at UKZN. This is an important find, as literature pointed out that organisations need to have mechanisms in place to aid in the facilitation of developing individuals. Furthermore, Schreiber (2014:212) mentions that higher education institutions have been expected to integrate student development, support, and student services.

According to the findings, the university facilitates student leadership through developmental activities of having class representatives / group leaders, religious and community services and projects, and leadership programmes. They also provided opportunities through group assignments and class presentations. Research has also shown that the university integrates leadership development knowledge and opportunity through its curriculum of traditional courses / modules such as *impactful leadership for women*, *leadership development*, *senior leadership development*, and *executive leadership development* and others. With a variety of programmes and activities, it is clear that opportunities for leadership development are granted to students at UKZN.

These interventions at UKZN conform to what research also states, that “leadership programs in higher education offer a variety of elements or activities designed for the purpose of enhancing student leadership development” (Eich, 2008:177). This is directed to what Ashford (as cited in Kanjere, 2014:79) alludes to, by saying that with the implementation of policies and programmes, developmental opportunities can be awarded to individuals for the purpose of their empowerment. This practice is evident at UKZN, however a question arises as to how these interventions provide maximum leadership development and benefit for students?, as it is necessary to always investigate the returns of development. Further examination can be utilised in exploring answers to this question.

When respondents were asked if they were part of a formal course / module or activity, significant findings were gathered. It is worthy to note that 31% (n = 14) of respondents were taking part in leadership courses / modules that the university provides however, 69% (n = 31) of the respondents were not taking part in any course / module. From the respondents that did respond to Question 16, 51% (n = 23) of the respondents were not part of any leadership development activity, whereas, 35% (n = 16) of the respondents were. A possible reason for the lack of involvement could be found in literature. As Kanjere (2014:85) states young individuals desire leadership development programmes / activities that are “interesting” and that are designed and cater for their needs rather than being generic.

Further to this, individuals also want development opportunities that allow them to be proactive in their learning, where learnt skills can be implemented practically, as mentioned as well under the discussion of research aim two (Kanjere, 2014:85).

This implies that more awareness of the activities that are provided by the university needs to be made, as for instance announcements can inform and encourage students to participate, thereby increasing the number of students who become more actively aware and involved in their leadership development. In addition, Shertzer and Schuh (2004:112) stated that students' understanding of leadership might directly influence their actual participation in leadership. They further stated that students in leadership receive more praise, support, and opportunities than those who were not, thus increasing the participation of a select number of individuals (Shertzer & Schuh, 2004:112). Therefore, this could be reasons as well as to why there is limited participation from students.

Twenty-six percent (26%) of respondents stated that classes and activities influence their leadership development and that these interventions of leadership development classes and activities help them to become better leaders. They believed that classes and activities help them with their confidence; their involvement increases their responsibility, a space is provided where skills are grown, and allows them to practice their skills in making them perfect. Classes and activities further help overcome challenges and stress as it allows students to work together and lastly respondents mentioned that they are able to realise and develop their leadership potential.

Consequently, with these findings it can be said that involving young individuals in the creation of leadership development programmes / activities are also likely to increase their participation (Kanjere, 2014:87). As seen also in the Deloitte survey, that young individuals value being involved and yearn to be proactive (DTTL Global Brand and Communications, 2014:7). These individuals are considered to be "more empowered, have more knowledge, know their rights and can gain access to unknown information faster than before" (Hewitt, 2012:50). Therefore, understanding young individuals and studying them should not be done in isolation, as developmental systems theories point to the need of studying the youth holistically, by exploring their behaviour, relations and other factors jointly with their external environments (Mueller, Phelps, Bowers, Agans, Urban & Lerner, 2011:1116).

Additionally, notions can be pulled out from the integrated-solution approach in the evolution in leadership development, as it was said this would allow for increased synergy (Weiss & Malinaro, 2006:7). As all parties involved in student development need to be actively involved, particularly students themselves. Reference to Chickering's theory of identity development can also be made here, as students should take ownership and responsibility for their leadership development by participating in them. Together with all of the above, it is important to acknowledge and use such information in the design and implementation of leadership development interventions.

The final question under this research aim was to allow respondents to state their specific wants of classes and activities necessary for their leadership development. It is important to mention that 31% (n = 14) of respondents did not answer this question, and therefore it has resulted in missing data. Although this was expected, as mentioned previously biasness was reduced by maximising on the qualitative data that was collected by the remainder of the respondents. Forty-four point four percent (44.4% / n = 20) stated their specific wants and 24.4% (n = 11) stated that they need specific classes to better their leadership abilities but did not state exactly what classes and activities these were. Forty-four point four percent (44.4% / n = 20) of the respondents who stated their wants, wanted interventions to improve leadership skills like that of guidance and public speaking, leadership courses, mentoring and coaching.

It is found in this study that there is a presence of a variety of leadership development opportunities at UKZN; however, if respondents are still stating specific desires for their development, it suggests that these practiced interventions by the university are not meeting all their needs.

As Mortensen *et al.* (2014:451) state, that while there may be a number of developmental interventions, many also miss addressing the needs of individuals. Therefore, it is important that institutions such as UKZN align their policies with that of student learning and practice (Richards, 2011:86).

**Research Aim four: To identify the challenges that the University of KwaZulu-Natal students face when adopting a leadership role during their studies**

Under the final aim, the objective was to identify the challenges that UKZN students' face when adopting a leadership role during their studies. Further to this, the researcher also explored the coping strategies that students used to overcome their leadership challenges.

Funnelling into the challenges that student leaders face; proves that young individuals are in leadership roles. Before this aim is discussed, a critique is made on previous literature. According to Des Marais *et al.* (2000:679) young individuals are not equipped to perform fully in leadership but rather are able to practice or just rehearse it, they further state that adults are not relinquishing their leadership responsibilities to younger people, thus resulting in limited opportunity for development. However, today it is seen that young individuals are in leadership roles as this study's findings reveal.

According to Dodge (as cited in Mulenga *et al.*, 2016:142) student leadership is somewhat demanding and stressful. The pressures of student leadership roles can be seen in the challenges that are encountered. Respondents mentioned more than one challenge that they face, with the majority (47% / n = 21) of the respondents stated that they face being undermined, experience personality conflicts, and have difficulty addressing voluminous numbers of students with time constraints. Following this, respondents (16% / n = 7) also faced challenges in conflict resolutions, communication, and language barriers (24% / n = 11) and other challenges (13% / n = 6). This extends the knowledge of student leadership challenges found in literature. Since Deane and Stanley (2015) in their investigation found that student leaders face challenges like that of time management, balancing their studies, working with diverse individuals, communication, and not feeling supported. Comparing these results to international studies make known, that students at UKZN face similar and other challenges as student leaders. As mentioned by Cebekhulu *et al.* (2006:241), students of UKZN encounter challenges like that of other students' country wide and globally.



As this research adopted both an exploratory and descriptive design comparing experiences and views of students was necessary in developing more insight and improved knowledge on student leadership development. These challenges can have a direct influence on students' intrinsic motivation, which may lead to increased stress. Stress in student leaders creates a sense of dissatisfaction; they become uninterested with the operations and policies of their university and perform academically poor (Onoffrietti as cited in Mulenga *et al.*, 2016:144). Fifteen themes emerged from Question 21, with popularity being that challenges can be overcome by improving communication skills and working together. Therefore, students here have been able to develop mature interpersonal skills as strategies used to overcome challenges.

One interesting theme that was revealed, was that challenges were overcome by avoiding leadership roles. This leads to students' need for having the ability to manage their emotions. As Chickering (1969) states that for students to develop, they must maintain a balance between their different emotions that come with their learning and development. College environments bring in different experiences and challenges and by practising positive behaviour, students' can become pro-active and fully engaged in their growth. Hence, with a positive shift in behaviour, challenges can be overcome as seen in the findings that follow.

Findings revealed that student respondents were aware of their leadership style and the need for transformation; they suggested improved intrapersonal and interpersonal skills as some methods to overcome challenges, and they would be able to overcome challenges by improved habits, behaviour, and / or skills. This indicates that students have been able to apply their leadership abilities to overcome their own challenges. Further to this, respondents also stated that UKZN should provide essential training courses and encourage students to attend these courses. Implementing collaborative skills and efforts would allow student leaders to carry out their leadership more effectively. Challenges that are faced should be timeously managed. As Cebekhulu *et al.* (2006:242) points out, challenges that student leaders face need to be tackled head on and without any form of hesitation.

It is with the final section of the questionnaire, that respondents were given an opportunity to address additional support that they need for student leadership. Twenty-nine (64.4%) respondents provided their views. Themes that were drawn from the sections were found to be similar to that from Question 19. Themes in the final section spoke of more leadership classes and activities, more societies for student participation, and more leadership workshops and programmes. Respondents also suggested that more tutors should be employed, that sufficient opportunities should be provided, that the university should market other activities and they should improve communication, however some did mention that UKZN should continue with current practices. These responses indicate the diverse needs that students have. In order to manage such suggestions, universities like UKZN can utilise policy frameworks, as guides to providing effective developmental measures that cater for all involved.

### **7.3. Summary**

The findings from this investigation are considered noteworthy, with a correlation of these findings with that from other research, a number of significant findings have been made. Re-examining the importance and need for student leadership at UKZN has been reinforced by student perceptions together with existing knowledge in this area. The implications of the findings of this research are critical. The learning experiences and the perceptions of the respondents have contributed to new thoughts to student leadership development, and also added to the reflections on this subject that have already been made. It is of utmost importance to attain the views of students, as they are the main stakeholders in the higher education sector (Richards, 2011:86). The expectations of leadership development have been brought to the forefront. Findings have shown that both students and tertiary institutions place student leadership as a key developmental objective. With active involvement from students and their university, leadership development can become a common practice.

Despite many hurdles that are found with student leadership development, withstanding challenges, and addressing student leadership development through innovative thought can positively transform this activity. A number of benefits can be crafted from the development of student leadership and from this, essential growth to both student leadership and skill development can be achieved (Mulenga *et al.*, 2016:141).

## CHAPTER 8

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 8.1. Introduction

This study has highlighted key factors of the concept of leadership development, particularly focusing on student leadership development. Chapter 1 provided an introduction of the study; it discussed the importance of leadership development and explained the reason for the investigation into the study of student leadership development at UKZN. Chapter 2, 3 and 4 provided for the literature review of the study. This secondary research was subdivided into different topics of discussion. Chapter 4 specifically discussed student leadership development. Significant to this chapter was the research frameworks that were used, which was the social change model of leadership development and the Chickering's theory of identity development. These frameworks created essential supporting structures in understanding student leadership. Gaining insight into the dynamics of tertiary students is what these frameworks assisted with.

Central to this research is the research methodology, which formed Chapter 5. The research philosophy, design, study population, sampling techniques, as well as the data collection instrument, research quality control and the analysis of the data had been discussed in this chapter. It extensively explains how this research has been conducted. Moving on from Chapter 5, Chapter 6 provided graphical illustrations and themes that were found during the analysis of the data that was collected, this thereafter lead for the discussion of the findings.

Chapter 7 presented the discussion of the research findings. It explained and described the importance of the findings with reference to what is already known about the research problem. Findings were discussed against present literature and new understandings of student leadership were formed.

Finally, Chapter 8, the present chapter, was used to conclude this research as it draws this study to a close. Cardinal to this chapter is the summary of the major findings, with contributions to the body of knowledge and recommendations being made. It goes on to speak of suggestions for research in the future, and lastly a reflection is provided as a glance into the peregrination of this master's research.

## **8.2. Summary of main research findings**

A summary of the findings in reference to the specific aims of this research is made.

The main objective of the study was to understand student leadership development at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, with the specific aims of the research being:

- To understand the importance of leadership development for students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal
- To determine the need for leadership development activities for students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal
- To identify interventions that foster leadership development for students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal
- To identify the challenges that the University of KwaZulu-Natal students face when adopting a leadership role during their studies

### **Research Aim one: To understand the importance of leadership development for students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal**

The first aim of this research was to understand the importance of leadership development for students at UKZN. The initial intention of this aim was to gain an understanding of how students perceived student leadership. Themes that surfaced from the perceptions of the respondents' were that student leadership involved individuals who were engaged in leadership positions, which lead and guide others. Respondents' also spoke of student leadership as a form of building skills and abilities as well as having responsibilities and facing challenges. It had been noted that much correlation is present between that of extant literature to the views of student leadership that the respondents had.

The objective of this aim went on to further explore student leadership. The findings indicated that majority, 95.6% of respondents' felt that student leadership is important. Most respondents' believed that such development helps with building skills and abilities.

It furthers their knowledge, prepares them for the workplace, and provides them with opportunities to grow as future leaders. Building leadership skills at tertiary level was deemed important by 100% of the respondents. They felt that they are able to practice workplace skills and abilities and that at a tertiary level they are exposed to leadership and are also able to practice it.

**Research Aim two: To determine the need for leadership development activities for students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal**

The purpose of the above aim was to determine the need for leadership development activities for students at UKZN. As pointed out by Eich (2008:176) student leadership development is an important exercise. Thus, using research aim two in exploring activities for student leadership development was considered necessary. Majority of the respondents (88.9%) stated that there is a need for leadership development activities for students. The most common reason for this need was that activities aid in developing students as future leaders. Ninety-seven point eight percent (97.8%) of respondents' felt that being involved in such activities was needed as it helped them to build skills and gain needed experience. Although not all respondents' felt the need to be proactively engaged in activities, all respondents' (100%) revealed that activities help build leadership skills. The most frequented responses were that activities help build skills, it improves one's leadership abilities and additionally allows for the provision of intercultural engagement. Further to this, it was found that the most common activities that helped in leadership development were that of, mentoring, class representatives and coaching.

Further to the findings under aim two, key factors were highlighted which marked characteristics respondents related to student leadership. Respondents indicated more than one characteristic with there being popularity of three characteristics, which were responsible (71%), emotionally intelligent (64%), and trustworthy (60%). Eighty-eight point nine percent (88.9%) of respondents felt that leadership activities do influence ones behaviour.

The reasons that were prominent were that leadership activities influence behaviour by improving confidence and communication and that it influences ones self-esteem.

From the final question under this aim, the most salient forms of leadership behaviour indicated by the respondents were assisting others and inspiring others through a shared vision. This finding relates the factors of positive leadership behaviour that Kouzes and Posner speak of in their work.

### **Research Aim three: To identify interventions that foster leadership development for students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal**

The objective of the above aim was to explore the interventions that promote student leadership development at UKZN. Findings indicate that UKZN does provide for such development through practices like that of having group assignments and class presentations, where leadership can be groomed. Additionally, student representative councils, class representatives, and group leaders create for leadership positions and responsibilities. Although formal interventions were also present in the form of courses / modules, only 31% of the respondents took part in them. However, many (69%) respondents were engaged in other leadership building activities, such as being coaches and mentors, involved in group assignments and presentations, clubs and societies, work projects, tutoring and some respondents were class representatives. With these results it can be stated that the respondents were involved in some form of leadership development intervention at UKZN, be it formal or informal.

Fifty-seven point five percent (57.5%) of respondents were in agreement to the influence that classes and activities have on their leadership ability and development. These respondents stated that such interventions assisted them by improving their thinking abilities and it increased the amount of responsibilities that are taken on in class presentations and group assignments.

Respondents further stated that interventions assist them as they are provided with opportunities where skills can be learnt, and they are able to exercise these skills through practice. They additionally stated that working with others through interventions help them overcome challenges and they are able to manage their stress, parallel to building their leadership potential. More respondents (63%) stated such classes and activities helped them in becoming better leaders. An overlap in responses was noted, as these 63% of respondents also stated that interventions built skills and provided opportunities to work with others. Final results under this aim found that the respondents (44.4%) wanted specific support for their leadership development. They suggested guidance and public speaking classes to be made available, as well as that of leadership courses, mentoring and coaching support.

**Research Aim four: To identify the challenges that the University of KwaZulu-Natal students face when adopting a leadership role during their studies**

The purpose of this aim was to look into the challenges that UKZN students face and the mechanisms they use in overcoming their challenges. Respondents of the study mentioned more than one challenge that they had encountered in their leadership roles. The challenges that were encountered were communication and language barriers (24%), conflict resolutions (16%), being undermined, personality conflicts, and large number of students to address and time restrictions (47%), as well as other challenging factors (13%).

The most popular strategies that the respondents used to overcome their challenges were that of them improving their communication skills, and working together with other individuals have also assisted as well as it was noted important in trying to understand others. Respondents suggested important factors that would help others with their leadership challenges. They mentioned factors such as improving intrapersonal and interpersonal skills, improving habits, behaviours and / or skills, and that UKZN should provide key training courses and that the university should also encourage attendance for such courses. In the end, it was noted that UKZN students wanted more of their university in encouraging and supporting their leadership development, significant from the views of the respondents was that, they wanted more leadership classes and activities. A brief illustration of the major findings as discussed above is provided in Table 8.1, this is done in relation to the specific aims of the research and the questionnaire questions.

**Table 8.1: Summary of major findings**

Specific aims of research	Questionnaire questions	Main findings
<p>Aim one: To understand the importance of leadership development for students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal</p>	<p><i>Question 1: What is your understanding of student leadership?</i></p>	<p>Student respondents perceived the concept of student leadership, as similar to those found in extant literature. The perception was that student leadership is a role a person takes to help and guide others. Student leadership involves students who lead.</p>
	<p><i>Question 2: Do you think student leadership is important?</i></p>	<p>Majority of the respondents (95.6%) stated that student leadership is important.</p>
	<p><i>Question 3: Why do you think leadership development is important for students?</i></p>	<p>From the respondents who believed in the importance of student leadership, stated reasons for its development. The most popular reasons were that leadership development is important for students as it builds skills, knowledge, and cognitive abilities, prepares one for the workplace, and helps in becoming future leaders.</p>



	<p><i>Question 4: Do you think that developing your leadership skills at tertiary level is important?</i></p>	<p>All respondents (100%) agreed to the importance of developing their leadership skills at tertiary level.</p>
	<p><i>Question 5: Why is it necessary to develop your leadership skills during your tertiary education?</i></p>	<p>The most salient reasons for leadership development at tertiary level were that it allows for practice of skills and abilities, it allows for workplace preparation as well as it provides exposure to leadership development and practice.</p>
<p>Aim two: To determine the need for leadership development activities for students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal</p>	<p><i>Question 6: Is there a need for leadership development activities for students? (If yes, how important are these activities)</i></p>	<p>Eighty-eight point nine percent (88.9%) of respondents revealed that there is a need for leadership development activities. The most common theme was that leadership activities promote the development of students into future leaders.</p>
	<p><i>Question 7: Is it important to take part in leadership development activities, e.g. team leader for an assignment? (If yes, please elaborate)</i></p>	<p>Ninety-seven point eight percent (97.8%) of respondents stated that it is important to take part in leadership development activities. The two most popular reasons were that taking part helps to develop leadership skills as well as it helps to gain experience.</p>

	<p><i>Question 8: Do you think leadership activities help you to build your leadership skills?</i></p>	<p>All respondents (100%) stated yes to leadership activities assisting them in building their leadership skills.</p>
	<p><i>Question 9: How do leadership activities help you build your leadership skills?</i></p>	<p>Question 9 allowed respondents to provide a reason as to how leadership activities help build leadership skills. The most common reasons were that activities provide experiences to develop skills, activities provide for the enhancement of leadership skills and they develop skills to work with other people from different cultures.</p>
	<p><i>Question 10: Which of the following do you think develop leadership skills for students?(mentoring, class representatives, coaching, community drives, formal classes, other)</i></p>	<p>Finding from Question 10 indicated that respondents provided more than one response. Mentoring, class representatives and coaching were the top three activities that respondents indicated in developing their leadership skills.</p>

	<p><i>Question 11: Which of the following characteristics would you relate to student leadership?(responsible, emotionally intelligent, trustworthy, proactive, courageous, assertive, other)</i></p>	<p>Finding from Question 11 indicated that respondents provided more than one response. The top three characteristics that respondents indicated relate to student leadership included being responsible (71%), emotionally intelligent (64%) followed by trustworthy (60%).</p>
	<p><i>Question 12: Do different leadership activities influence your behaviour, e.g. building your confidence? (If yes, please elaborate)</i></p>	<p>Eighty-eight point nine percent (88.9%) of respondents stated yes to the influences of different leadership. Reasons that dominated were that respondents felt that different leadership activities could improve confidence and communication and influence their self-esteem.</p>
	<p><i>Question 13: Which of the following leadership behaviour do you consider most important?(assisting others, inspire others through a shared vision, model the way for others, supporting others, taking on challenges)</i></p>	<p>The two most important leadership behaviours identified from the responses were, assisting others and inspiring others through a shared vision.</p>

<p>Aim three: To identify interventions that foster leadership development for students at the University of KwaZulu-Natal</p>	<p><i>Question 14: How does UKZN provide for student leadership development?</i></p>	<p>Student leadership development is provided through the following popular practices; group assignments and class presentations, Student representative councils and class representatives / group leaders.</p>
	<p><i>Question 15: Are you taking any formal course or module dealing with leadership?</i></p>	<p>The results from Question 15 revealed that 69% of the sample are not taking a formal course or module dealing with leadership whilst only 31% are doing so.</p>
	<p><i>Question 16: Are you part of any activity that helps you to develop your leadership skills? (If yes, what are these activities)</i></p>	<p>Thirty-five point five percent (35.5%) of respondents stated that they are part of leadership development activities. These respondents took part in activities like that of coaching and mentoring other students, group assignments and presentations, UKZN clubs and societies, work projects, tutoring, and were class representatives.</p>

	<p><i>Question 17: Do classes and activities influence your leadership ability and development? (If yes, please elaborate)</i></p>	<p>Fifty-seven point seven percent (57.7%) of respondents stated yes to classes and activities influencing their leadership ability and development. These respondents stated that classes and activities provide the following: improved thinking abilities, allows for class presentations and group assignments that increase responsibility, creates a space where skills are learnt, makes one more confident, allows for practice of skills making them perfect, challenges and stress are overcome by working together, and allows one to realise their leadership potential.</p>
	<p><i>Question 18: Do leadership classes and activities help you to become a better leader? (If yes, please elaborate)</i></p>	<p>Sixty-three percent (63%) of the respondents agreed that leadership classes and activities are helpful. Respondents suggested that it builds skills and strengths, it helps one to become a better leader and helps one to work with others.</p>

	<p><i>Question 19: Are there any specific classes and activities that you would like to take to better your leadership abilities?</i></p>	<p>Forty-four point four percent (44.4%) of respondents wanted classes and activities that will help them better their leadership abilities. Of these responses, respondents wanted guidance and public speaking classes, leadership courses, mentoring and coaching.</p>
<p>Aim four: To identify the challenges that the University of KwaZulu-Natal students face when adopting a leadership role during their studies</p>	<p><i>Question 20: What challenges do you face when taking on leadership roles as a student?</i></p>	<p>Respondents mentioned more than one challenge that they faced. They stated challenges that arise from communication and language barriers (24%), conflict resolutions (16%), being undermined, personality conflicts, large number of students to address and time restrictions (47%) as well as other factors (13%).</p>
	<p><i>Question 21: What have you done to overcome these challenges?</i></p>	<p>The most popular strategies used to overcome challenges were improving communication skills, working together and trying to understand people.</p>

	<p>Question 22: What advice can you give to remedy the challenges that student leaders face?</p>	<p>Respondents suggested improving intrapersonal and interpersonal skills, improving habits, behaviours, and / or skills, and that UKZN should provide essential training courses and encourage students to attend these courses.</p>
	<p>Additional support that was required from UKZN</p>	<p>The most salient suggestion was that respondents suggested more leadership classes and activities.</p>

### **8.3. Contribution to the body of knowledge**

The contribution that this study has made to the body of knowledge is significant. The evidence from this study's findings has shown similarities to already present literature. Research evidence indicated that students at UKZN believe in the importance of student leadership and its development. Finding correlations among student perceptions to literature, enhances the attractiveness of this study. Valued insight gained from this study adds to the body of knowledge of student leadership development. Furthermore, critical factors that this research presents can be strategically utilised in policy creation and implementation, as nurturing student leadership development is essential.

### **8.4. Recommendations**

Directed from the findings of this research, it can be documented that leadership is an important and necessary skill that needs to be developed for students at UKZN. To enhance student leadership development, recommendations have been made as follows:

- a) Applying strategies from government initiatives and that of other organisations can largely aid universities when supporting the developmental needs of its students. Collaborating with government, corporate bodies, and other tertiary institutions can also be used in strengthening the interventions created and implemented for student leadership development.
- b) Policies should be implemented for the provision of student leadership development, as they would assist with the implementation and monitoring of student development.
- c) More emphasis towards interventions that promote and encourage student leadership development needs to be made. From the research findings, the university does have developmental opportunities for students, yet many students were not aware of and are also not participating in them. It should be a mission of tertiary institutions to cement the involvement of students in developmental exercises.



Together with the SRC, purposeful engagement with students will enlighten them of the importance of skill building like that of leadership.

- d) It is known that there is a constant shift to the leadership developmental needs of students, opportunities to develop and groom students are therefore regularly needed. This can be achieved by performing a needs analysis, as it will serve to custom design programmes and activities that can cater for the developmental needs of students.

Finding ways to expose students to leadership development is essential, as taking part in them are extensively beneficial for the student and for the university, as student improved knowledge and skills will positively feedback into the systems of the university. Leadership practice for students can be largely beneficial, as it will help them to utilise their skills more effectively when in class, and / or when they enter the workforce. Using the tag line of UKZN, *inspiring greatness*, inspiring young individuals to become a generation of great leaders can be achieved. As an eye needs to be kept on the growth of our future leaders, we must be able to provide support mechanisms and developmental opportunities to enrich our societies and its people. A responsive culture for student leadership development is therefore needed.

## **8.5. Recommendations for future research**

- This investigation has identified salient findings and from this, a similar study can be carried out. As this study only focused on one of the four colleges of the university, further research can expand this investigation to all the colleges, making the scope of the study more extensive. Therefore, for a larger picture of the importance and need of student leadership, a study can be carried out in all colleges; on all five UKZN campuses. This will provide for further insight on student leadership at tertiary institutions.

- A comparative analysis would provide for identifying whether there are any differences in the perceptions of student leadership across the university. Differences and similarities of leadership development activities can be investigated on a broader scale, and this can be used if found necessary to create further student leadership development policies and programmes. Additionally, it can also provide for an investigation into the need for new or improved activities that can be implemented to expose and excite students, to develop their leadership abilities.
- For a widespread investigation, a possible study of other universities can also be carried out. This could add more to the topic of student leadership development and additionally add diverse dimensions to this area of the topic.

Exploring and digging deep into this topic is necessary, as the body of knowledge in this area should constantly grow and add to the literature of the past and present.

## **8.6. Reflection**

My academic career enticed me to take on post-graduate studies. I used to believe that furthering my studies was a way for expanding my knowledge capital however after being involved in my research, my perceptions have shifted and I have come to understand that post-graduate studies create for a holistic opportunity to develop oneself as a researcher. I found the topic of student leadership particularly interesting and need for this development created motivation for this study. The assumptions of student leadership development prior to this study was somewhat linear in nature and now that this investigation has been carried out, it can be accurate to state that a broader understanding of student leadership and its development including leadership roles, activities and challenges has been attained. I have come to understand that the importance of student leadership calls for much attention. Pursuing this research has provided me with an enriched experience of research practice and has created temptation to explore my research abilities further with this area of study and that of others.

## **8.7. Concluding statement**

With the youth forming 36.2% of the South African population, opportunities for this group to contribute to the growth and success of the country is ample (Statistics South Africa, 2016). Therefore, placing importance on their development is critical. However, much research in this area has shown that the development of students; young individuals in leadership is focused on and influenced by corporate-related models (Thompson, 2013:1). The findings from this study provides further evidence of this, as the study's respondents still required more for their leadership development that specifically caters for their needs as young individuals. Constructing effective developmental opportunities is necessary but equally important is providing fair opportunities for all students to participate. As Hatum (2010:29) pointed out such practices cannot be overstated due to its heightened importance. Allowing young individuals to reach their highest potential and attain essential skills, lies in the philosophy of collectivism. It is said that *it takes a village to raise a child*, thus with dedicated efforts made by both individuals and organisations, positive outcomes from the grooming and strengthening of the essential skills of young people can be attained.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A: Letter of informed consent

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL  
School of Management, IT and Governance

Dear Respondent,

#### Research Project

Researcher: Shushentha Naidoo (Telephone number: 0729017494) (Email: shushentha@gmail.com)

Supervisor: Dr Brian Kwazi Majola (Telephone number: 0332605220) (Email: Majolabk@ukzn.ac.za)

Research Office: Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Administration, Govan Mbeki Building,  
Westville Campus, Tel: + 27 (0)31 260 8350, Email: [hssreclms@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:hssreclms@ukzn.ac.za)

I, Shushentha Naidoo am a Masters of Commerce student in the School of Management, IT and Governance, at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. You are invited to participate in a research project entitled: *Leadership development: Is this skill important for students at UKZN?*

The aim of this study is to investigate student leadership and analyze the importance of student leadership development at tertiary level.

Your participation in this project is voluntary. You may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time with no negative consequence. There will be no monetary gain from participating in this research project. Confidentiality and anonymity of records will be maintained by the researcher and the School of Management, IT and Governance, UKZN. All collected data will be used solely for research purposes and will be destroyed after 5 years.

This study has been ethically reviewed and approved by the UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (approval number HSS/0263/017M).

I appreciate your time in taking to complete the questionnaire, and will be grateful for your participation. The questionnaire should take about ten minutes to complete.

Sincerely

Researcher's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
[Shushentha Naidoo]

*This page is to be retained by participant*

**UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL**  
**School of Management, IT and Governance**

**Research Project**

**Researcher:** Shushentha Naidoo (Telephone number: 0729017494) (Email: shushentha@gmail.com)

**Supervisor:** Dr Brian Kwazi Majola (Telephone number: 0332605220) (Email: Majolabk@ukzn.ac.za)

**Research Office:** Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Administration, Govan Mbeki Building, Westville Campus, Tel: 27 31 2604557, Email: [HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za)

CONSENT

I \_\_\_\_\_ (full names of participant)  
hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project,  
and I consent to participating in the research project by completing a questionnaire. I understand that I  
am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

Additional consent, where applicable

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*This page is to be retained by researcher*

## Appendix B: Questionnaire: UKZN Students

### Research Project

**Researcher:** Shushentha Naidoo (Telephone number: 0729017494) (Email: shushentha@gmail.com)

**Supervisor:** Dr Brian Kwazi Majola (Telephone number: 0332605220) (Email: Majolabk@ukzn.ac.za)

**Research Office:** Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Administration, Govan Mbeki Building, Westville Campus, Tel: + 27 (0)31 260 8350, Email: [hssreclms@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:hssreclms@ukzn.ac.za)

This study has been ethically reviewed and approved by the UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (approval number HSS/0263/017M).

### Questionnaire for students

Topic: *Leadership development: Is this skill important for students at UKZN?*

I (Shushentha Naidoo – 205509891) am currently studying towards a Master of Commerce Degree. A requirement for the completion of this qualification is to conduct practical research on the above-mentioned topic. Part of this research will be conducted through a questionnaire where your participation is appreciated. Your involvement in this research is strictly confidential and your participation will remain anonymous. You have the option to withdraw from this research at any time. All the information you provide will be solely used for the purpose of this research. Thank you for your participation in completing this questionnaire.

### Section A: Demographic data

Please tick or fill in answer to the following.

Gender:	<input type="checkbox"/> Male	<input type="checkbox"/> Female			
Age:	<input type="checkbox"/> 18 -29	<input type="checkbox"/> 30 - 39	<input type="checkbox"/> 40 - 49	<input type="checkbox"/> 50 - 59	<input type="checkbox"/> 60 - 69
Ethnic group:	<input type="checkbox"/> Black	<input type="checkbox"/> White	<input type="checkbox"/> Coloured	<input type="checkbox"/> Indian	
Home language:	<input type="checkbox"/> English	<input type="checkbox"/> Afrikaans	<input type="checkbox"/> IsiZulu	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (        )	
Marital status	<input type="checkbox"/> Single	<input type="checkbox"/> Married	<input type="checkbox"/> Separated	<input type="checkbox"/> Divorced	<input type="checkbox"/> Widowed

Level of education:

Year of study:

Qualification:

Faculty of discipline:

Section B: Questions

Please answer the following questions.

1. What is your understanding of student leadership?

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2. Do you think student leadership is important?

Yes		No	
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3. Why do you think leadership development is important for students?

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4. Do you think that developing your leadership skills at tertiary level is important?

Yes		No	
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5. Why is it necessary to develop your leadership skills during your tertiary education?

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6. Is there a need for leadership development activities for students? (If yes, how important are these activities)

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7. Is it important to take part in leadership development activities, e.g. team leader for an assignment? (If yes, please elaborate)

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8. Do you think leadership activities help you to build your leadership skills?

Yes		No	
-----	--	----	--

9. How do leadership activities help you build your leadership skills?

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10. Which of the following do you think develop leadership skills for students?

Coaching		Formal classes	
Class representatives		Mentoring	
Community drives		Other (Specify)	

11. Which of the following characteristics would you relate to student leadership?

Proactive		Assertive	
Responsible		Trustworthy	
Emotionally intelligent		Other (Specify)	
Courageous		Other (Specify)	

12. Do different leadership activities influence your behaviour, e.g. building your confidence? (If yes, please elaborate)

---

---

13. Which of the following leadership behaviour do you consider most important?

Model the way for others (practicing desired behaviours that lead to common goals)	
Inspire others through a shared vision (having a vision that can be accepted by others)	
Taking on challenges	
Assisting others (encouraging involvement and the empowerment of your fellow learners)	
Supporting others (caring, fuelling the spirit of others)	

14. How does UKZN provide for student leadership development?

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15. Are you taking any formal course or module dealing with leadership?

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16. Are you part of any activity that helps you to develop your leadership skills? (If yes, what are these activities)

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17. Do classes and activities influence your leadership ability and development? (If yes, please elaborate)

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18. Do leadership classes and activities help you to become a better leader? (If yes, please elaborate)

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19. Are there any specific classes and activities that you would like to take to better your leadership abilities?

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20. What challenges do you face when taking on leadership roles as a student?

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21. What have you done to overcome these challenges?

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22. What advice can you give to remedy the challenges that student leaders face?

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Additional information

What can UKZN do to provide additional support for student leadership?

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## Appendix C: Gatekeepers Approval Letter



7 March 2017

Ms Shushentha Naidoo (SN 205509891)  
School of Management, IT and Governance  
College of Law and Management Studies  
Pietermaritzburg Campus  
UKZN  
Email: [shushentha@gmail.com](mailto:shushentha@gmail.com)

Dear Ms Naidoo

### RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Gatekeeper's permission is hereby granted for you to conduct research at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN), towards your postgraduate degree, provided Ethical clearance has been obtained. We note the title of your research project is:

*"Leadership development: Is this skill important for students at UKZN?"*

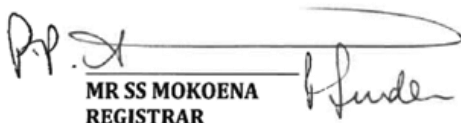
It is noted that you will be constituting your sample by handing out questionnaires to honours students from the School of Management, IT and Governance on the Pietermaritzburg Campus.

Please ensure that the following appears on your notice/questionnaire:

- Ethical clearance number;
- Research title and details of the research, the researcher and the supervisor;
- Consent form is attached to the notice/questionnaire and to be signed by user before he/she fills in questionnaire;
- gatekeepers approval by the Registrar.

You are not authorized to contact staff and students using 'Microsoft Outlook' address book. Data collected must be treated with due confidentiality and anonymity.

Yours sincerely

  
**MR SS MOKOENA**  
**REGISTRAR**

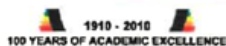
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#### Office of the Registrar

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Website: [www.ukzn.ac.za](http://www.ukzn.ac.za)



Founding Campuses:  Edgewood  Howard College  Medical School  Pietermaritzburg  Westville



## Appendix D: Ethical Clearance Approval



04 April 2017

**Ms Shushentha Naidoo (205509891)**  
School of Management, IT & Governance  
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Dear Ms Naidoo,

**Protocol reference number: HSS/0263/017M**

**Project title:** Leadership development: Is this skill important for students at UKZN?

### Full Approval – Expedited Application

In response to your application received on 24 March 2017, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol have been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

**Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.**

**PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.**

**The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.**

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

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**Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)**

/ms

Cc Supervisor: Dr BK Majola  
Cc Academic Leader Research: Professor Brian McArthur  
Cc School Administrator: Ms Debbie Cunynghame

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### Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

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